The Relationship between Collective Efficacy and Suspension Rates in Select Virginia Middle Schools

---

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Curry School of Education

University of Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

---

by

Justin Adam Malone

August 2014

ABSTRACT

Advisor: Dr. James Esposito

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which collective teacher efficacy explained variance in middle school discipline, as measured by out-of-school suspensions, over and above the school characteristics of school size, race, and socio-economic status. To achieve the study's purpose, non-experimental survey research methodology was utilized. The sample population was 14 Region V middle schools located in central Virginia.

The unit of analysis for the study was the school. The researcher sought and received permission to conduct research with 7 Region V school divisions each of which had middle schools defined as grades 6th through 8th. Collective Teacher Efficacy scores were collected from the 14 middle schools in the spring of 2013. Out-of-school suspension data were retrieved from the Virginia Safe School Information Resource (2013), a publicly available database maintained online by the Virginia Department of Education. Suspension data for the top seven offenses reported for the 2012-2013 school year were used for this study. These offenses were selected due to the frequency with which out-of-school suspensions were rendered as a consequence. The discretion that is allowed when rendering a sanction for these offenses further warranted their inclusion in the study. Demographical data were collected from the Virginia Department of Education's *Fall Membership Reports* on enrollment and demographics.

Hierarchical regression analysis was utilized. The regression analysis did not reveal a statistically significant relationship ($p < .05$) between collective efficacy, and its constructs of group competence and task analysis, and discretionary out-of-school suspensions. Correlation analyses did indicate that race was strongly correlated with discretionary out-of-school suspensions.

Implications for practice and future research were discussed. Recommendations for

identifying consistent discipline reporting practices amongst schools within a school division were included.

DEDICATION

To Madeline and Linus: May you never again have to endure your dad utter the word "dissertation" and all that this word encompasses. I owe you some time.

To Mom and Dad: Among many values you've modeled, thank you for inspiring the stamina and perseverance needed to complete this journey.

To Ranji: How thoughtful and giving you were even when I was a stubborn malcontent. You are wonderful.

To Melissa, my love: Insert a laugh and a cry here.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. James Esposito, lovingly known as “Espo” in the Malone home. Even after years of urging, nudging, and the pesky dilemma of his retirement, Dr. Esposito always devoted his time, his experience, and his candor in helping me realize the value of this journey. Moreover, Dr. Esposito modeled how to apply an analytic mind to research, the behaviors of people, and to my own words and actions. Dr. Espostio, Melissa and I both thank you for all you’ve done for us.

Dr. Sara Dexter balanced the often extreme stresses of this process with her warm, thoughtful manner and advice. Your presence in my proposal and defense helped me keep calm when I could have otherwise been a bit more anxious. Thank you for your adaptability, kindness, and guidance.

Dr. Mark Hampton provided the most critical lens to my writing and to the structure of my dissertation. Your thorough critiques were always valued as I knew they would help inform a better outcome. I hope I didn’t let you down. Thank you for modeling how to write what you mean and for reminding me of my responsibilities as a doctoral student at the University of Virginia.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The public school landscape is enduring considerable change from the policies they were beholden this past decade. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) prioritized student achievement for all students (2002). However, the methods proposed to meet the NCLB's specific requirements were often debated for their unrealistic expectations. Additionally, many educators believed the consequences for failing to meet required objectives were too harsh. Presently, the Education and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) allows states flexibility from NCLB in exchange for establishing rigorous and comprehensive plans to improve student achievement for all students and to close gaps in achievement.

Accountability and Achievement

Virginia was one of 33 states approved for ESEA flexibility in 2012 (Virginia Department of Education, 2012). The conditions of the waiver require Virginia to set annual measureable objectives (AMO) for raising reading and math achievement and the achievement of student subgroups. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will continue to use the Standards of Learning (SOL) as a main component of their accountability system. Under the flexibility waiver, information on schools and school divisions meeting and not meeting the new, annual federal benchmarks for raising achievement and narrowing achievement gaps is reported on the VDOE website. Schools and school divisions, however, no longer receive Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ratings. School and division report cards indicate whether subgroups and proficiency gap groups met AMOs in reading and mathematics. In addition, report cards for divisions and high schools show whether the annual ESEA objective for graduation – known as the Federal Graduation Indicator – was met. The graduation indicator is met if 80 percent or more students graduate in four, five or six years with a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies

Diploma. All public schools – including schools that do not receive Title I funds under the ESEA – must develop and implement improvement plans to raise the achievement of student subgroups not meeting the annual benchmarks. The following must use a web-based, school-improvement tool approved by VDOE for assessing, planning, implementing and monitoring progress:

- Title I schools (not identified as focus or priority schools) not meeting one or more AMO targets or participation rates
- All schools (including non-Title I schools) not earning full state accreditation

Title I high schools not meeting the Federal Graduation Indicator rate must use the Virginia Early Warning System (VEWS) to identify students at risk of dropping out or not graduating on time with a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma and to develop and implement a plan for improvement.

Achievement

Though Virginia public schools are measuring student achievement with new guidelines, factors associated with student achievement are well-established in the student achievement literature. Research supports that student demographics, including socioeconomic status (SES), race, gender, and self-efficacy are correlated to student achievement. Research further suggests teacher and school-related factors are highly associated with student achievement.

Research supporting SES as a significant factor associated with student achievement is well represented in the achievement literature (Coleman et al, 1966; Jencks, 1972; Sirin, 2005; White, 1982). Additionally, research has supported gender as a predictor of student achievement (Silver, Saunders, & Zarate, 2008). Race (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010) and student self-efficacy are two additional factors associated with student achievement (Pajares, 1997).

Research has provided several teacher-related factors associated with student achievement. Instructional quality (Dotterer & Lowe, 2010), teacher efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998), teacher empowerment (Marks & Louis, 1997; Smylie, 1994; Somech, 2005), and teacher affiliation (Hoy & Hannum, 1997) are factors associated with student achievement.

Several school-related factors are predictors of student achievement. Organizational health (Hoy & Hannum, 1997; Licata & Harper, 2001), school leadership (Cushing, Horning, & Barrier, 2003; Fullan, 2003), and collective teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1997; (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2004) have been identified as school-based factors linked with student achievement.

Hoy and Hannum's (1997) research on school climate and organizational health helped to synthesize the varied definitions of school climate which is often referred to as a school's personality, a school's culture, or a school's environment. Organizational health includes school factors, such as, teacher affiliation (Rosenholtz, 1989), collegial leadership (Firestone & Wilson, 1985), and academic emphasis (Hoy et al., 1991) with each factor working parsimoniously to buffer external antagonists (e.g. school division budget concerns and student home environment) and to develop a vision and strategies to support a school's goals (Hoy & Hannum, 1997). When a school inhabits the qualities of a healthy organization, student achievement is positively associated (Hoy & Hannum, 1997).

School leadership is not defined solely as principal or administrative leadership. Interestingly, research has been unable to support a direct link between principal leadership and student achievement (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy., 2006). Principal leadership, however, is a critical component of collegial leadership and strongly contributes to organizational health and

student achievement (Brown et al., 2004; Licata & Harper, 2001; Sweetland & Hoy, 2000). Collegial leadership is characterized as being open, supportive, and having a clear vision; it considers the development of teacher leadership a priority (Brown et al., 2004; Pas et al., 2010). Effective school leaders empower teachers by promoting shared decision making, delegation of authority, and teamwork (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000). Research has supported teacher empowerment via school leadership as critical to both collegial leadership and student achievement (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Smylie, 1994; Sweetland & Hoy, 2000).

Collective efficacy is another factor researchers have identified as a predictor of student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Collective efficacy is the judgment of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students (Bandura, 1997; Goddard et al., 2000; Hoy, Sweetland, & Smith, 2002; Goddard et al., 2004). Goddard et al., (2004) note that collective efficacy varies among schools. As teachers feel supported in their roles, are active participants in the decision-making process, and feel protected from external elements, the more optimistic they are about a school's ability to effectively teach students (Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Goddard et al., 2004). Intuitively, it is reasonable to infer that schools focused on collegial leadership, organizational health, and student development are likely to increase their sense of collective efficacy.

Researchers have demonstrated important correlations between student attendance and academic success (Sheldon, 2007). In fact, Gregory and Skiba (2008, p. 60) assert "one of the most consistent findings of modern education research is the strong positive relationship between time engaged in academic learning and student achievement" (Brophy, 1988; Fisher et al., 1981; Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002). Students with higher daily attendance compared to

students with lower daily attendance tend to have superior achievement results on standardized tests (Lamdin, 1996; Nicholes, 2003) while schools with higher rates of daily attendance tend to have better achievement results to compared to schools with lower rates of attendance (Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, & Ehrenberg, 1991; Roby, 2004). Conversely, researchers implicate poor student attendance as an indicator associated with increased risk of dropping out (Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000).

Research has promoted a relationship between collective efficacy and student achievement (Bandura, 1997; Goddard et al., 2000; Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Less established in the literature is the relationship between collective efficacy and decisions leading to students removal from school due to disciplinary factors.

Disciplinary outcomes, such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions, are often determined through discretionary decision-making (Skiba & Knesting, 2001; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace & Bachman, 2008). Additionally, consensus as to what constitutes effective discipline has been elusive (Duke & Jones, 1984, Noguera, 1995; Rafaelle Mendez, 2003). While decisions leading to disciplinary outcomes are often subjective and the effectiveness of certain discipline practices (e.g. out-of-school suspensions) is questionable, research provides stout evidence on the implications of student suspensions. Research bears out that out-of-school suspension leads to greater chances of students dropping out (Baker, 2005; Nichols et al., 1999), widening achievement gaps (Gregory et al, 2010; Skiba & Rausch, 2004), and contributes to students developing a dislike for school (Costenbader & Markson, 1998).

Statement of the Problem

The conceptual framework for this study promoted the belief that variance in collective teacher efficacy beliefs exists. Furthermore, variance in collective teacher efficacy beliefs may

explain variance among schools' use of out-of-school suspension as a consequence for discretionary offenses. Variance in student removal from the instructional environment as a result of out-of-school suspension may result in variability in student achievement.

To elucidate whether factors associated with collective teacher efficacy have an effect on student outcomes, a deeper analysis of teacher, school, and student behaviors was warranted. Teacher behaviors are strongly associated with student behavior (Gregory, Fan, & Cornell, 2011). Gregory et al. (2011) found that teachers with high expectations for students who are also caring and supportive reported fewer behavioral problems and increased student performance. Furthermore, a teacher's belief about his or her ability to manage student behavior, specifically, disruptive behavior, has an effect on the student-teacher relationship (Friedman & Farber, 1992). While research supports a correlation between teacher behavior and student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard et al., 2000), less established is the relationship between teacher behavior and student behavior relative to discipline outcomes.

Administrators and teachers tenaciously seek out and employ interventions they believe can positively influence student behavior. Negative student behaviors can disrupt student learning, instructional quality, and the school environment. Though schools are increasingly pursuing positive approaches to student behavior, student suspension prevails as the leading response to negative or disruptive student behavior (Skiba & Knesting, 2002; Gregory et al., 2011).

Studies have identified numerous reasons for high suspension rates. Inadequate teacher training (Skiba & Reece, 2000), policy decisions, such as Zero Tolerance policies (Skiba & Knesting, 2002), and school structure (C. Anderson, 1982) are factors associated with student behavior and suspension rates.

Studies have identified other factors associated to student suspension. Race and disability (Krezmien et al., 2006; Rafaelle Mendez, 2003), school level (Petras et al., 2011; Silver et al., 2008), and low SES (Rafaelle Mendez et al., 2002) are factors research has consistently suggested as associated with student suspension rates. Black students, particularly Black males, are suspended more frequently when comparing the percentage of suspended Black students to that of the student population (Rafaelle Mendez, 2003). Despite the frequency of suspension rates of Black males, research indicates the disparity is likely associated to teacher and school official bias than to any other factor (Skiba, 2000). Finally, out-of-school suspension rates for all student sub-groups increase when students reach 6th grade (Othner et al., 2010).

School discipline research consistently suggests that students with disabilities are suspended at a rate disproportionate to the school population. Research on school suspension rates show that students with disabilities make up nearly twenty percent of student suspensions though they represent roughly 10 percent of the student population (Skiba, 2002; Krezmien et al., 2006). Suspension rates increase even further for Black students with disabilities (Gregory et al., 2011).

School level is another factor identified with student suspension rates. Sixty percent of student removal via out-of-school suspension occurs at the middle school level (Petras et al., 2011; Rafaelle Mendez, 2003). Studies have identified the implications of high suspension rates during the middle school years (i.e. sixth and seventh) to include an increased likelihood of dropping out (Gregory et al., 2010; Silver et al., 2008), a greater risk of developing academic deficits (Costbander & Markson, 1998), lower performance on national achievement assessments (Rafaelle Mendez et al., 2002), and poor reading and math achievement (Petras et al., 2011).

While research has provided the implications of student suspensions on student achievement, there is limited research exploring the association between collective efficacy and student suspension rates. Research has substantiated collective efficacy as a factor associated with student achievement (Bandura, 1997; Goddard & Goddard, 2001; Goddard et al., 2004). Literature suggests collective efficacy is influenced by several intertwining factors, including teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1993), prior school success (Goddard & Goddard, 2001), and teacher tenure (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Most profoundly, however, collective efficacy is shaped by teachers' mastery experience, vicarious experience, affective state, and social persuasion (Bandura, 1997, Goddard et al., 2004).

Previous studies have researched collective efficacy and its impact on student achievement (Bandura, 1997). Researchers have also explored what accounts for variability in collective efficacy from one school to another (Goddard et al., 2004). Additionally, there is literature exploring factors relevant to student suspensions. Furthermore, researchers have investigated the implications of student suspension on student achievement (e.g. Rafaelle Mendez, 2003). Research studying school level factors relevant to student suspensions at the middle school level and a relationship with collective efficacy and its constructs is limited.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which collective efficacy and its constructs account for variability in student suspensions rates over and above that explained by school size, race, and socioeconomic status. Literature suggests several factors are associated with collective efficacy. Literature further suggests several variables contribute to variability in suspension rates, including school size, SES, race, and school level. Out-of school suspension necessitates a removal from the instructional environment which impacts student attendance.

Accordingly, limited access to the instructional environment via suspension may result in variability in student achievement. Additionally, research indicates suspension rates increase dramatically at the middle school level. Consequently, the implications of student removal from the instructional environment via out-of-school suspension may impact achievement of middle school students. As such, the following research questions were used to investigate the extent to which collective efficacy and its constructs are associated with variability in student suspension rates at the middle school level.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
2. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
3. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
4. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

5. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
6. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
7. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
8. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
9. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
10. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
11. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

12. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
13. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
14. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
15. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
16. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
17. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
18. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

19. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
20. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
21. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
22. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
23. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
24. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Rationale

This study hypothesized a relationship between collective teacher efficacy and the rate of variability of student suspension. Findings of this study sought to provide data to schools relevant to collective efficacy and variability in student suspensions among schools. Teachers'

sense of efficacy may contribute to the relationship between school organization and school achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Underscoring this study's hypothesis was the theory that variability in teacher efficacy contributes to variability in collective efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, by expanding the efficacy unit from teacher to the school, this study hypothesized that schools with high collective efficacy will have low suspension rates. Conversely, this study hypothesized that schools with low collective efficacy will have high suspension rates.

Building on previous research that teacher attitude, teacher behavior, and expectations for student success are linked to student outcomes and student academic self- concept (e.g. Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001), it is reasonable to associate school characteristics with student development. Bandura (1986, 1997) promoted collective teacher efficacy development on the four sources of efficacy expectations- mastery experience, physiological and affective (emotional) state, vicarious experience, and social persuasion. Implemented consistently and effectively, and in coordination with recurring interventions, these source of efficacy may promote awareness towards effective student discipline options that do not include suspension or expulsion.

This study intended to contribute to research regarding school factors that account for variability in suspension rates in middle schools. This study further intended to contribute to research regarding the school factor of collective efficacy and its constructs and the rate to which it accounts, if at all, for variability in suspension rates of middle school students. Investigating the relationship between variability in suspension rates of middle school students as it pertains to collective efficacy contributes to the literature associated with factors of student discipline and collective efficacy. Additionally, this study aimed to provide schools, including school division leaders, building level administrators, and teachers, with information to guide schools to consider

factors associated with student suspension rates and collective efficacy relative to student achievement.

Research has established that student suspension does not change student behavior nor does it deter future misbehaviors (e.g. Rafaelle-Mendez, 2003). Further, studies indicate students from certain subgroups- Black students, students with disabilities, and students in middle school- are suspended at a greater rate than other students (Skiba et al, 2002). Schools with high collective efficacy beliefs are known to have higher levels of student achievement (Bandura, 1993). Collective efficacy is in part influenced by teachers' contributions to relevant school-level decisions (Goddard et al., 2004). Accordingly, teachers are vital contributors to factors that contribute to variability of a school's collective efficacy. Thus, this study aimed to contribute to the discussion on the role teachers have in influencing collective efficacy. More specifically, data from this study could provide insight into factors that are associated with increasing a teacher's sense of collective efficacy. Building from Ashton and Webb's research (1986), such factors include: increasing expectations for students, setting clear and fair classroom rules, enforcing rules consistently and without anger, and developing friendly relationships with students.

Limitations

Limitations relevant to this study include the following:

- The study focused on middle schools within a specific region in central Virginia. Results may not be generalized to all schools.
- Variability may exist in how schools report discipline offenses. With some exception, for the most serious offenses (e.g. *Drug Offenses, Gun or Look-alike, Assault*) school-level administrators are allowed discretionary decision-making regarding the discipline

sanction reported to the state. Administrative discretion contributes to differences in the classification of an offense and the resulting disciplinary sanction.

- Several variables contribute to variability in collective efficacy and suspension rates. This study did not control for all possible variables.
- Findings of this study were limited by the operational definitions of all variables.
- Teacher response rate could not be controlled.

Definitions

This study will use the following operational definitions:

- **Collective Teacher Efficacy** (CE): a school's collective teacher efficacy is defined by the standardized score derived from Goddard's 12-item Collective Efficacy Scale (CES-APPENDIX A).
    - Group Competence [Factor I]: group competence is a construct defined as teacher judgments about the capability that a faculty has given to teacher situations.
    - Task Analysis [Factor II]: task analysis is a construct which consists of perceptions of constraints and opportunities inherent in tasks at hand.
- **Discipline outcomes:** For the purposes of this study, suspension does not include out-of-school suspensions given for actions that require mandatory removal from school under Virginia's state code of law.
    - Long-term Suspension: Defined as any disciplinary action whereby a student is not permitted to attend school for more than ten school days but less than 365 calendar days.
    - Short-term Suspension: Defined as any disciplinary action whereby a student is not permitted to attend school for a period not to exceed 10 school days.

- **Discretionary Suspension Offenses**: Defined for this study as the number and reasons for out-of-school suspensions for offenses (Appendix B and Appendix C).
- **Middle School**: Defined as a school consisting exclusively of grades 6 through 8.
- **Race**: Defined for this study as each school's percentage of students reported as non-white and includes the self-reported ethnicity of *Asian, Black, not of Hispanic origin, Hispanic, non-Hispanic, two or more races*
- **School Size**: Defined as the number of students enrolled in school by September 30th.
- **Socioeconomic Status** (**SES**): SES is defined by the school's percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- **Suspension Rates:** Defined as the number of out-of-school suspensions for discretionary suspension offenses reported for each school during the 2012-2013 school year.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A discipline gap exists. The disparity of suspension rates of black students and white students is documented in the research completed by the Children's Defense Fund (1975), in school divisions of all sizes (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002), and persists after removing the effects of socioeconomic status (Raffaele Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Skiba et al., 2002). The discipline gap between white students and black students evokes discussion on the implications of schools' response to student behaviors.

Research indicates that suspended students are at more risk to be truant, miss instructional time, and dropout (Arcia, 2006). Investigating the effect suspensions have on student achievement, Arcia (2006) studied two demographically comparable cohorts- one cohort consisting of students with no suspensions and one cohort consisting of students with at least one suspension. The suspended student cohort was 3 years behind in reading levels after one year and 5 years behind after 2 years (Arcia, 2006). Students' academic outcomes are not the only casualty of suspensions. Student motivation, school connectedness, and the potential for lawbreaking behaviors can all be impacted by school exclusion (Gregory et al, 2008).

The perception exists that students from certain racial and ethnic backgrounds misbehave disproportionally to white students and contribute to creating an unsafe school environment. Researchers have repeatedly failed to bear evidence supporting this premise (McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, and Hwang, 1992; Skiba et al, 2002; Wehlage &Rutter, 1986; Wu et al.,1982). Race does seem to be a factor when considering the type of discipline leading to suspension. Skiba et al (2002) examined disciplinary referrals of 19 middle schools in a large urban area. Their research found Black students were suspended more frequently in response to

behaviors (e.g. disrespect, threat, being loud) while White students were suspended for more observable behaviors (smoking, obscenity) (Skiba et al, 2002). However, scant empirical evidence exists to support a racial discipline gap based on differential rates of misbehavior (Gregory et al, 2010).

Suspending students in response to misbehavior is a common consequence in public schools (Skiba & Knesting, 2002). While suspensions pacify a teacher or school administrator's frustration with student misbehavior, limited evidence exists to support suspension as a purposeful approach to enhancing school safety or in changing student behavior (Raffaele Mendez, 2003). Indeed, school safety is often cited as a primary reason for suspensions. However, in many cases, minimal efforts are employed by schools to address the function of behaviors that lead to student suspension. Ironically, it is often school factors that contribute to variable rates of suspension (Skiba & Knesting, 2002). When comparing schools with high and low suspension rates, Skiba and Knesting (2002) found low-suspension schools were more effectively able to monitor school climate, attend to a high level of academic quality, promote teacher-student relationships, and spend less time on disciplinary issues than high suspension schools. They further noted school characteristics, including teacher attitude, teacher perception of student achievement, quality of school governance, and racial composition of the school are stronger predictors of school suspension than student attitudes and behavior (Skiba & Knesting, 2002). Gregory and Cornell (2011), through examination of school structure and suspension rates, endorsed school structure and school support as predictors of student outcomes.

Zero-tolerance policies have urged an increase in suspension and expulsion rates since its inception via the Guns-Free Schools Act of 1994. While the initial zero-tolerance policy was meant to address student possession of firearms, subsequently expanded to include

other weapons, its mandate has widened to include a host of infractions inconsistently enforced across schools and school divisions (Skiba & Knesting, 2002).

The threat of serious violence cannot be considered too cautiously. School administrators' primary focus is ensuring the safety of the learning environment. A zero-tolerance policy sends a powerful message of behavioral expectations and consequences. Furthermore, administrators with a zero-tolerance mindset may do so to deter emerging patterns of student misbehavior. The merit of a zero-tolerance policy, however, does not negate the efct student seclusion through suspension or expulsion has on student motivation and student achievement. The American Psychological Association Task Force, in their 2006 review of exclusionary and zero-tolerance disciplinary policies, found no evidence that the use of suspension, expulsion, or zero-tolerance policies has resulted in improvements in student behavior or increases in school safety (Skiba et al, 2006).

The dropout disparity among listed races, along with factors associated with low SES, was the impetus for a North Carolina-based program called CareerStart. Othner et al (2010) define CareerStart as a "whole school engagement program that responds to current education reform initiatives and supports more comprehensive efforts to promote school-based, professional collaborations that benefit at-risk students" (p.g.1). Using data collected from a 5-year longitudinal study, Orthner et al (2010) found that students in poverty had difficult transitions into middle school and experienced significant declines in standardized math and reading test scores between their fifth-grade elementary and sixth-grade middle school years and middle school academic performance and engagement were strong predictors of high school dropout (Randolph, Rose, Fraser, & Orthner, 2004;Randolph, Fraser, & Orthner, 2006). CareerStart recognized an emerging trend of innovative and dynamic programs designed to

engage students and limit dropping out occurring at the high school level. However, Orthner et al (2010) presented strong evidence that dropout indicators materialize in the middle school years before students have access to these programs.

There is research that investigates the role of student attendance on student achievement (Arcia, 2006; Wang, Blomberg, & Li, 2005). Unless other provisions apply (e.g. students with disabilities, religious exemption), public school attendance is defined as a student's presence in school for a set number of hours and days (Virginia Department of Education, 2008). A more practical, school-relevant definition of attendance is a student's presence in an instructional environment to engage in a learning activity. Disruptive student behaviors frequently impede instruction and alter the instructional environment frustrating teachers and otherwise engaged classmates. While minor classroom disruptions are often addressed by the teacher within the classroom, serious or persistent disruptions are typically addressed by a school administrator. The administrator has the discretion to render a disciplinary consequence along a spectrum of options. In-school suspension or detentions are common consequences for minor offenses. In these cases, a student is removed from the instructional environment for a day or portion of the day. More serious incidents, however, could result in a student's short or long-term suspension or possibly expulsion. Suspending or expelling a student, regardless of merit, results in a student loss of access to the instructional environment. Suspension or expulsion approaches that limit a student's access to school is referred to as exclusionary discipline (e.g. Fenning & Rose, 2007; Skiba & Reece, 2000).

Factors Associated with Student Achievement

Researchers have historically proposed the influence of school characteristics on student achievement nearly vanish after controlling for socioeconomic factors [SES] (Coleman, 1966;

Jencks, 1972). Research has also provided hefty evidence endorsing SES as a primary factor of student achievement (Bornstein & Bradley, 2003; Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Coleman, 1988; Hough & Sills-Briegel, 1997; McLoyd, 1998). Current literature on student achievement, however, promotes several school factors attributed to student achievement after controlling for SES (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006).

Hoy and Hannum (1997) explored school climate, more specifically, organizational health, as a factor of middle school student achievement. They built their investigation of organizational health and student achievement on prior research (Hoy, Totter, & Kottkamp, 1991) associating school health and high school student achievement. Defined by Hoy and Hannum, organizational health is the "the set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behavior of its members" (1997, p.291). The significance of their findings resonates soundly in today's middle school climate where the learning environment and teacher-student relationships are paramount to students' middle school success. Hoy and Hammum (1997) concluded that several factors- exclusive of SES- contribute to middle school student achievement. These factors - student attendance (Sheldon, 2007), teacher affiliation (Sweetland & Hoy, 2007), resource support (Mertens & Flowers, 2003), and academic emphasis (Licata & Harper, 2000) - make substantial contributions to student achievement independent of the wealth of the district (Hoy & Hannum, 1997). Furthermore, these factors, along with institutional integrity, have merit for providing value to the school climate regardless of student achievement (Licata & Harper, 2001).

School climate is a factor associated with student achievement (Gregory & Cornell, 2011) and teacher efficacy beliefs (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). Literature supports school climate as a factor associated with variability in teacher's efficacy beliefs (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk-Hoy,

2000). When accounting for teacher's collective efficacy beliefs, the effect of student characteristics, such as SES and home environment, are reduced (Bandura, 1993; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer, & Wisenbaker, 1979; Newmann et al., 1989). Bandura (1993) asserted that the stronger teachers' collective belief in their instructional efficacy belief, the greater a school performs academically. Goddard (2001) believes collective efficacy beliefs influence group performance by shaping the behavioral and normative environment of schools. Goddard speculated that the greater the faculty's belief in their capability to teach students, the increased likelihood those teachers will persist in their efforts so students achieve to high levels. As collective efficacy strengthens, then the "greater the normative press for teachers to persist in their education efforts" (Goddard, 2001, p.469).

Measuring Student Achievement

Methods for determining student achievement vary nationally and across states. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) assesses students in a variety of core content areas, including, mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. NAEP periodically assesses a random student sample in grades 4, 8, and 12. Supported though independent of the US Department of Education, NAEP provides results on subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., all fourth-graders) and groups within those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). While NAEP does not report individual student results, national, state, and district trends in student outcomes are reported.

States are allowed some flexibility in how they determine student achievement, though presently, all states must improve their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and have 100% student proficiency (including subgroups) in reading and mathematics by 2014 (Elementary and

Secondary Education Act, 2001). Virginia uses an annual benchmark known as the Standards of Learning assessment (SOL) to measure student achievement. Students in grades 3-8, and at the end of high school-level courses, are assessed in the content areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. SOL assessments are predominantly administered in a multiple-choice format and increasingly students are taking assessments on-line. For the 2010-2011 school year, Virginia fell short of AYP by failing to meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) of 85% in mathematics and 86% in reading/language arts. Since all subgroups factor in to reporting AYP, the following subgroups scored below the AMO in both mathematics and reading/language Arts: Blacks, Economically Disadvantaged, Hispanics, Limited English Proficient, and Students with Disabilities.

Student Characteristics and Student Achievement

Socioeconomic Status

Researchers have associated several student characteristics with student achievement. Primarily, SES leads the list of student factors attributed to student achievement (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Eccles, Lord, & Midgley, 1991; Lerner 1991). Sirin (2005) states "socioeconomic status is not only directly linked to academic achievement but also indirectly linked to it through multiple interacting systems, including students' racial and ethnic background, grade level, and school/neighborhood location" (p. 420). Sirin's meta-analytic review of research provides a narrow definition of "socioeconomic status" that limits confusion with other status-associated terms (e.g. social class). Borrowing from Mueller and Parcel (1981), Sirin describes SES as "an individual's or a family's ranking on a hierarchy according to access to or control over some combination of valued commodities such as wealth, power, and social status" (2005, p. 418).

Though SES is often touted as a primary factor associated with student achievement, research supports numerous factors to explain student achievement above and beyond SES. The National Education Association identifies several varying factors that contribute to student achievement. However, several studies have documented a strong link between perceived collective efficacy and differences in student achievement among schools (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, 2001; Goddard et al., 2000). Bandura (1993) demonstrated that the effect of perceived collective efficacy on student achievement was stronger than the direct link between SES and student achievement.

Race and Ethnicity

Racial and ethnic achievement disparities exist within schools (Vanneman, Hamilton, Baldwin Anderson, and Rahman, 2009). In 2009, 8th grade White and Asian/Pacific Islander students scored higher on average than Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students in both reading and mathematics. The score in 2009 for American Indian/ Alaska Native students was 5 points higher than Black students, and the score for Hispanic students was 3 points higher than Black students (Nation's Report Card-NCES, 2011). While gains were reported for all subgroups, when compared to 2007 and 1992 scores, the gap between White and Black students remained even.

Discipline and School Level

Increasingly, researchers are proposing a racial and ethnic discipline gap exists (Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Children's Defense Fund, 2004; Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Raffaele Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Skiba et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2008). Disproportionality in discipline of White and Black students may result in disparities in student achievement (Brophy, 1988; Fisher et al., 1981; Greenwood, Horton, &

Utley, 2002; KewelRamani et al., 2000). Disproportionate student discipline rates have been linked to varying factors. Research has identified students' location as an attributing factor (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2000). Low-income students from high-crime/high- poverty neighborhoods are at greater risk for behaviors resulting in disciplinary referrals and school suspension (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). In investigating the relationship of socioeconomic status on student suspension, researchers found that "being enrolled in a school with high rates of low-income students" increased the suspension rates of those schools (Raffaele Mendez et al., 2002; Wu et al., 1982). Furthermore, being from a low-income family also increased the probability that a student will be subjected to punitive forms of discipline and even appeared to contribute to disproportional suspension rates (McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Skiba et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2008).

Existing research hypothesizes that out-of-school suspension rates rise dramatically in middle school, starting with sixth grade (Gregory & Cornell, 2011; Skiba et al., 2002). The literature indicates out-of-school suspension of middle school students as a predictor of future suspensions and contributes to students' poor academic performance and failing to graduate on time (Rafaelle, 2003). The literature on factors of student suspension indicates black males are disproportionately suspended and suspension rates of black males rises sharply at the middle school level (Rafaelle, 2003). Balfanz and Boccanfuso (2007) found that students who received an out-of-school suspension in middle school were half as likely to graduate on time as students who did not. Vincent and Tobin (2010), while investigating the effect of positive-based supports on suspension rates, that middle school students were suspended at greater rates than elementary and high school students. Perhaps more distressing, their study indicated significant results of positive-based supports in elementary schools and high schools but not at middle schools

(Vincent & Tobin, 2010). Linda M. Raffaele Mendez's longitudinal investigation on school suspension and educational outcomes concluded "frequent use of suspension has no measurable positive deterrent or academic benefit to either the students who are suspended or to non-suspended students" (2003, p.25). However, focusing on predictors of suspensions during a student's sixth grade year, typically the first year of middle school, might deter negative outcomes (Rafaelle Mendez, 2003; Gregory et al, 2010; Skiba et al., 2011).

School Location

Research has supported school location as a factor of student achievement due to its close connection with students' social and economic conditions (Sirin, 2005). Students living in high-poverty areas are at greater risk for dropping out, having poor working memory, and being exposed to psychological stress (Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups- NCES, 2010). More Black students live in poverty when compared to White students by 34 percent to 10% respectively (NCES, 2010).

Student Attendance

Researchers have demonstrated a correlation between student attendance and student achievement (Sheldon, 2007). The implications of student attendance reach beyond student achievement. Researcher have found that students with better attendance than their classmates exhibit superior performance on standardized achievement tests (Lamdin, 1996; Nicholes, 2003) and that schools with higher rates of daily attendance tend to generate students who perform better on achievement tests than do schools with lower daily attendance rates (Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, & Ehrenberg, 1991; Roby, 2004). Further, high rates of student absenteeism are associated with increased risk of students dropping out of school (Rumberger, 1995; Rumberger & Thomas, 2000).

In many cases, attendance patterns as leading factors associated to increased rates of dropping out are detected as early as elementary school (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997; Barrington & Hendricks, 1989; Ensminger & Slusarcick, 1992). Researchers also found that when students attend school more often, they are less likely to engage in delinquent or destructive behaviors (Wang, Blomberg, & Li, 2005). Wang et al. (2005) did a comparative study on educational deficiencies of delinquent and non-delinquent students. They found that delinquent students had greater retention rates, delinquent students were suspended from school significantly more often than were non-delinquent students, and delinquent students' school attendance averaged 115 days compared to 176 days for non-delinquent students (Wang et al., 2005). Additionally, Wang et al. (2005) found that delinquent students, as a group, had a significantly lower GPA than did non-delinquent students and substantially underachieved compared to non-delinquent students. Finally, risky behaviors, including tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drug use have been associated with student attendance (Hallfors et al., 2002).

Roby (2004) investigated the relationship between student achievement and student attendance in Ohio public schools. He found that each percentage drop in student attendance amounted to 3600 hours of lost instructional time for the state school system. His findings determined a statistically significant relationship between student attendance and student achievement in Ohio at the fourth, sixth, ninth, and twelfth grade levels. He found the "correlation of student attendance and student achievement is moderate to strong, with the most significant relationship occurring at the ninth grade level, when comparing attendance and achievement rates" (Roby, 2004, p. 12).

Correlational and longitudinal research has shown that suspended students are more likely to be truant, miss instructional time, and drop out of high school (e.g., Arcia, 2006).

Hemphill et al. (2006) found that taking into account previous violent and aggressive behavior, as well as a variety of other risk factors (e.g., negative peer group, low grades), school suspension nevertheless was associated with an increased risk of antisocial behavior a year later. An analysis of the available evidence suggests that the racial discipline gap may contribute to the parallel gaps in achievement and graduation rates (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010).

Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is a context and subject-matter specific construct that includes the extent to which teachers believe in their capacity to influence student performance (Bandura, 1997; Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teacher efficacy developed from Rotter's social learning theory (1966). Social learning theory posits that environmental factors influence human behavior and that behavior is guided by either an internal or external locus of control (Rotter, 1966).

Building on Rotter's theory, researchers with the RAND organization narrowed Rotter's scope to focus on teacher efficacy and its relationship with reading achievement of minority students (Armor et al., 1976). The RAND researchers found that teacher efficacy was both correlated to and a predictor of reading achievement in students. Teachers' sense of efficacy had a strong positive effect on student performance and on the percentage of project goals achieved. Additionally, teachers' sense of efficacy predicted continued application of learned methods and resources after a project ended (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

To determine teacher efficacy, RAND researchers summed the scores from two items: RAND Item 1- "When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment" and RAND Item 2- "lf I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students"

(Armor et al., 1976, p. 23). Strong agreement with RAND Item 1 indicated a teacher believed themselves subordinate to environmental factors, such as, violence, conflict, or abuse in the home and SES realties of class, race, and gender. Moreover, strong agreement with Item 1 indicated a teacher believed that environmental factors had "real impact on student's motivation and performance" above and beyond a teacher's influence (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 204). Conversely, teachers' agreement with RAND Item-2 indicated confidence in a teacher's ability to help students overcome learning difficulties and promote student performance despite environmental factors (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Teachers' beliefs about the power of these external factors compared to the influence of teachers and schools have since been labeled general teaching efficacy (GTE) while teachers' beliefs that they have "adequate training or experience to develop strategies for overcoming obstacles to student learning" is referred to as personal teaching efficacy (PTE) (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 204). RAND researchers used the sum of these two scores to determine teacher efficacy (TE), a construct meant to determine the level to which the effects of teaching are within the teacher's control.

The RAND researchers used Rotter's social learning theory to advance the discussion on teacher efficacy and student achievement. Albert Bandura, however, believed a clearer interpretation of teacher efficacy was rooted in his social cognitive theory. Bandura (1977) developed the construct of self-efficacy his work on social cognitive theory. Bandura defined perceived self-efficacy as a "future-oriented belief about the level of competence a person expects he or she will display in a given situation" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 210; Hoy & Spero, 2005). Self-efficacy beliefs influence thought patterns and emotions that promote actions allowing people to sustain effort, persist through adversity, overcome setbacks, and exert

control over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1986, 1993, 1996, 1997). Bandura's self-efficacy construct differs from Rotter's work on internal-external locus of control in both meaning and application. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) note that self-efficacy has more to do with perceived level of confidence rather than actual level of competence. Further distinction is provided by Tschannen-Moran et al.'s interpretation of Bandura's self-efficacy construct: Beliefs about whether one can produce certain actions (perceived self-efficacy) are not the same as beliefs about whether actions affect outcomes (locus of control). In fact, the data show that perceived self-efficacy and locus of control bear little or no empirical relationship to one another, and, moreover, perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of behavior, whereas locus of control is typically a weak predictor. Rotter's scheme of internal - external locus of control is basically concerned with causal beliefs about the relationship between actions and outcomes, not with personal efficacy. An individual may believe that a particular outcome is internal and controllable-that is, caused by the actions of the individual - but still have little confidence that he or she can accomplish the necessary actions (1998, p. 211).

Ashton and Webb (1986) thoroughly investigated the teacher efficacy construct. Anchored by Bandura's work on social cognitive theory, Ashton and Webb further investigated teacher efficacy, the two dimensions of teacher efficacy - general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy, and the distinctions between these two dimensions (Hoy & Spero, 2005). Personal teaching efficacy, as defined by Ashton and Webb (1986), is directly formed through a teacher's beliefs about response-outcome contingencies and a teacher's "belief of (his or her) general sense of effectiveness as a person" (p. 5). Together, these factors influence a teacher's behavior in specific teaching situations creating their personal teaching efficacy. Belief about response-outcome contingencies refers to the extent a person believes desired outcomes are

derived from action. A teacher's belief in their sense of effectiveness is created from previous experience and dependent on their response-outcome beliefs (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

As previously noted, general teaching efficacy (referred to by Ashton and Webb as teaching efficacy), refers to "teachers' expectations that teaching can influence student learning" (1986, p. 5; Hoy & Spero, 2005). Teachers with a high sense of general teaching efficacy believe all students can learn. Conversely, teachers with a low sense of general teaching efficacy believe some students cannot or will not learn or students cannot overcome environmental factors that inhibit learning (Asthon & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

Gibson and Dembo (1984) provided evidence supporting a correlation between a teacher's sense of efficacy and a teacher's willingness to persevere through difficult tasks to motivate students towards achievement. Teachers with both high personal teaching efficacy and high general teaching efficacy "were less likely to criticize a student following an incorrect response and more likely to persist with a student in a failure situation" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

A clear understanding of teacher efficacy included discussion on several variables that help define the construct. Characteristics that inform a teacher's belief about response-outcome contingencies and a teacher's sense of effectiveness include specific situations, previous experiences, and student characteristics (Asthon & Webb, 1986). First, situational effects that influence teacher efficacy include content, student characteristics, class size, and lesson activity (Bossert, 1979; Brophy & Evertson, 1981; Glass & Smith, 1979; Good & Grouws, 1979; McDonald & Elias, 1976). In an investigation of the relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and specific teaching situations, Metz (1978) found teachers with a high sense of efficacy to accept responsibility for the order of the classroom, sought pragmatic solutions to

classroom or student misbehavior, and articulated an awareness of their attitude towards teaching and students. Teachers' sense of efficacy also influences their own behaviors within an environment and during specific situations (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Student characteristics, classroom environment, and teacher behavior interact with each other to form a complex social system and a reciprocal relationship (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1978; Cohen, (1972). Bandura (1978) described this social relationship as reciprocal determinism with components equally influencing the others. Consequently, Ashton and Webb (1986) determined teachers with a high sense of efficacy will positively influence student achievement, maintain a positive classroom environment, and assume responsibility for success or failure. Conversely, teachers with a low sense of efficacy will have low expectations for students resulting in low student achievement, and these teachers will hold students responsible for classroom behavior and poor classroom management.

The research on efficacy beliefs elucidates the significance it has on shaping student outcomes. Teacher efficacy can influence teachers' persistence when things do not go smoothly and their resilience in the face of setbacks, and efficacy enables teachers to be less critical of students when they make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986,), to work longer with a student who is struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and to be less inclined to refer a difficult student to special education (Meijer & Foster, 1988; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Soodak & Podell, 1993; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Furthermore, teachers with a higher sense of efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1984; Hall, Burley, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1992), have greater commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; Trentham, Silvern, & Brogdon,1985) and are more likely to stay in teaching (Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1991;Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982). Finally, teachers' sense of

efficacy has been related to positive student achievement outcomes and students' own sense of efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988; Armor et al., 1976; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992).

Research has suggested that teacher efficacy and student efficacy are positively related to student outcomes (Goddard, 2001). Research further suggests that teacher experience (Bandura, 1993, 1997) plays a powerful role in the development of teacher efficacy. Teachers' feelings regarding their efficacy are likely enhanced through colleague collaboration focused on identifying student problems and motivating students (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Bandura (1993) found that teachers' belief in the school's efficacy as a whole was just as predictive of school performance as teachers' beliefs in their own efficacy. Bandura (1993, 1997) asserted that the teachers' conjoint belief about their ability to effectively achieve a task is collective efficacy.

Collective Efficacy

Collective efficacy and self-efficacy are intuitively linked constructs and are derived from social cognitive theory. Distinctions of the two constructs exist in their "units of agency" but both work to serve the same function and purpose (Bandura, 1997, p. 478). Assuming a direct connection in self and collective efficacy, researchers have promoted four sources of efficacy-shaping experiences: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and affective states (Bandura, 1993; Goddard et al., 2004; Gorrell & Capron, 1988; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Schunk, 1981, 1983, 1987; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997).

The collective efficacy construct stems from Alfred Bandura's research of self-efficacy. Bandura (1982) explains self-efficacy by advising "it is not a fixed act or simply a matter of knowing what to do. Rather, it involves a generative capability in which component cognitive,

social, and behavioral skills must be organized into integrated courses of action to serve innumerable purposes" (p. 122). Goddard and Goddard (2001), in their theoretical analysis exploring the association of teacher and collective efficacy, defined collective efficacy as "the perceptions of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students" (p.809). Perceptions of efficacy promote influence on both the individual's behavior and the normative environment of a collective group to provide expectations on the probability of success towards various endeavors (Goddard & Goddard, 2001).

Collective efficacy is rooted in Bandura's research on social cognitive theory. As summarized by Bandura (2000), social cognitive theory is the "perspective in which individuals are producers of experience and shapers of events" (p.75). Social cognitive theory advances efficacy beliefs as future-oriented judgments about an individual or groups capabilities to effectively organize and execute what is needed to achieve attainment in specific situations (Bandura, 1997). Perceptions of efficacy have significant implications for individuals and groups because it reflects the belief in their abilities in task-specific scenarios.

Teachers' sense of efficacy is a significant predictor of productive teaching practices (Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk-Hoy, 2004). Banudra (1997) established that collective teacher efficacy is also a significant predictor of a school's organizational success. Researchers caution to interpret teachers' sense of efficacy as their perceived competence and not their actual competence (Bandura, 2000; Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy, 2004). However, when applied to teaching, social cognitive theory predicts that the decisions teachers make about their classroom practices are directly influenced by their sense of efficacy for teaching. The greater a school's

collective teacher belief the more likely they will persist when met with obstacles or when facing failure.

Mastery experiences provide the most profound collective efficacy-shaping information (Goddard et al., 2004). Mastery experiences assume Bandura's theory that outcomes shape beliefs about capabilities (Bandura, 2000). Consequently, success attributed to effort and perseverance will positively influence efficacy while failure will negatively influence efficacy. Success or failure of an experience could have implications on future endeavors.

Mastery experiences can influence a school's collective efficacy beliefs. Working from Huber's (1996) analysis on organizational learning, schools "tend to learn well what they do, and tend to do what they learn well" (p.152). Goddard (2001) provided evidence that mastery experiences influence collective efficacy beliefs. Using an urban elementary school's prior reading achievement success as a mastery experience, Goddard determined that "not only was past school achievement a significant predictor of differences among schools in teachers' perceptions of collective efficacy, but past school achievement was also a stronger predictor of perceived collective efficacy than aggregate measures of school race (i.e., proportion minority) and SES (operationalized as the proportion of students in a school who received a subsidized lunch)" (Goddard et al., 2004).

Vicarious experiences are those in which someone models a skill and the degree to which the observer identifies with the skills the greater the impact on efficacy (Woolfolk-Hoy & Spero, 2005). Schools using successful education programs as a model to achieve their own success may experience a greater collective efficacy. The practice of schools and school districts seeking out successful education programs as models has increased significance in today's high-stakes accountability system (Goddard et al., 2004). Though not as predictive as mastery experiences,

vicarious experiences have value as being accessible for individuals (e.g. teachers hearing about or observing successful skill-building models) and organizations (e.g. professional development on the successful integration of a reading program).

Social persuasion is often associated with encouragement or boosts an individual or group can derive through direct feedback from a colleague, supervisor, or student. Such feedback may be shared in a variety of venues, including during lunch discussions, faculty meetings, department meetings, or classroom meetings with students. Social persuasion may be less profound in shaping collective teacher efficacy when compared to mastery or vicarious experiences; however, social persuasion is readily heard or observed within schools and can help counter setbacks the school or an individual encounter (Goddard et al., 2004). By itself, social persuasion may have limited collective efficacy impact. As a function of an interacting system that includes mastery and vicarious experiences, social persuasion can bind the collectives' efficacy beliefs due to its pervasive and accessible nature. Woolfolk-Hoy and Spero (2000) found social persuasion to have profound resonance for new teachers who have not had opportunities for more direct experiences. Bandura (1986) cautioned that potency of social persuasion depends on the credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise of the persuader.

Limited research exists on affective state and its influence in shaping collective teacher efficacy. Affective state does have some relevance in influencing collective teacher efficacy as it addresses an individual or school's arousal though anxiety or excitement that contributes to perception of capability or incompetence (Goddard et al., 2004). As schools transition to increasingly transparent organizations where school performance data is shared in near real-time, parents and students can access grades instantly, and social media evaluates schools both internally (e.g. students and faculty texting, Tweeting, or instant messaging their thoughts) or

externally (news media, public meetings), schools confront numerous disruptions that can destabilize their affective state. Schools with strong collective efficacy may be able to endure these challenges and function with limited consequences while others may react dysfunctionally and increase the likelihood of failure (Goddard et al., 2004; Papandrea, 2012).

Collective Efficacy and Student Achievement

Research has supported teachers' sense of efficacy as a strong predictor of student achievement (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1993; Ross, 1992). Teachers' sense of efficacy directly influences teacher behaviors, and therefore, teacher efficacy is only indirectly linked to student achievement (Woolfolk-Hoy & Spero, 2000). However, teacher efficacy and its impact on a variety of systems cannot be undervalued. Researchers extend the impact of teacher efficacy to student motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989); students' own sense of efficacy (Anderson,Greene, & Loewen, 1988); teacher planning, organization, and enthusiasm (Allinder, 1994). Additionally, teachers with a high sense of efficacy aspire to high levels of their craft, maintain high expectations for themselves, including goal setting, and they are more willing to attempt new strategies or new methods to satisfy the needs of their students (Cousins & Walker, 2000; Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang, 1988; Woolfolk-Hoy & Spero, 2000).

Research suggests that collective teacher efficacy is strongly related to student achievement in schools (e.g., Bandura, 1993;Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Goddard et al. (2004) state "the link between collective efficacy beliefs and student achievement occurs, from a theoretical perspective, because a robust sense of group capability establishes expectations (cultural norms) for success that encourages organizational members to work

resiliently toward desired ends" (p.8). Researchers have increasingly demonstrated the relationship between a sense of collective efficacy and academic school performance.

Bandura (1993) showed a relationship existed in spite of low SES. Schools in which the faculty had a strong sense of collective efficacy flourished, whereas those in which faculty members had serious doubts about their collective efficacy declined in academic performance or showed little academic progress. Further research by Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk- Hoy (2000) supported the role of collective efficacy in promoting school achievement in urban elementary schools. They hypothesized a connection between perceived collective efficacy and student achievement in reading and math. Using hierarchal linear modeling and controlling for SES, they found a strong relationship between collectively efficacy and student achievement. Hoy, Sweetland, and Smith (2002), also found a strong association between collective efficacy and student achievement. Similar to the aforementioned researchers, collective efficacy was a greater predictor of student achievement in high school students than SES. Finally, Goddard, LoGerfo, and Hoy (2004) using a structural equation model to measure perceived collective efficacy and student achievement found that collective efficacy explained student achievement in reading, writing, and social studies regardless of minority student enrollment, urbanicity, SES, school size, or earlier achievement.

While collective efficacy is a strong indicator of student achievement, collective efficacy relies on an enmeshed relationship with other factors. The value a school places on academic excellence and setting high standards for students, maintaining an austere learning environment, and a strong commitment to academic achievement are elements of academic emphasis or academic press (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2006; Shouse, 1996). Academic emphasis is the intertwining of the factors of teacher commitment, and teachers' judgments on the effectiveness

of the school, and includes academic outcomes [e.g. test scores] (Hoy et al., 2006). Collective efficacy and academic emphasis associate effectively due to their complementary roles. Collective efficacy, as a cognitive construct, is the belief a school and its teachers have about their capabilities in specific situations while academic emphasis is the action or behavior a school and its teachers exhibit to represent their beliefs. The function of one supports the function of the other.

Out-of-School Suspension as a Disciplinary Response

Student suspension, both in-school [ISS] and out-of-school [OSS], is an oft-used disciplinary response to disruptive or disorderly student behaviors (Gregory et al., 2011; Skiba & Knesting, 2002). The VDOE defines OSS as the removal of a student from the school environment for a period not to exceed ten days (Mendez, Knopff, & Ferron, 2002; Virginia Department of Education, 2012). Research has shown suspension is most commonly used as a disciplinary response to non-serious student behaviors, including defiance of authority, frequent in-class disruptions, disobedience, poor conduct, and disrespect (Rosen, 1997; Skiba, 1997). Fighting, threat of physical harm, and drugs or look-alike drugs are behaviors that also result in suspension though these behaviors typically have mandatory sanctions due to their seriousness nature.

Suspension is not the exclusive response to negative student behavior (Petras, Masyn, Buckley, Ialongo, & Kellam, 2011; Gregory et al., 2008). Most schools at all levels integrate prevention methods, intervention practices, incentive plans, social and interpersonal skills development, and crisis management strategies to address students' needs and provide prosocial and appropriate responses to difficult situations (Petras et al., 2011; Raffaele Mendez et al., 2002). The aforesaid methods are often described as positive approaches to managing student

behaviors and their successful implementation depends on the training and willingness of the service providers.

Research has demonstrated that schools that use positive approaches to student behavior generally have a high sense of collective teacher efficacy. The efficacy of positive consequences for managing student behavior, for example, has been widely demonstrated (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993; C. Nelson & Rutherford, 1987). Skiba and Reece (2002) observed that the failure to balance positive and negative consequences may indeed promote a cycle of negative student behaviors (Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993). Moreover, in schools possessed by a high degree of perceived collective efficacy, new teachers learn that extra effort and educational success are the norm (Goddard et al., 2004). Goddard et al. (2004) proposed that "high expectations for action create a normative press that encourages all teachers to do what it takes to excel and discourages them from giving up when faced with difficult obstacles" (p. 6).

Suspension as a disciplinary response is usually rendered by a school administrator. Typically, an interaction occurs between a teacher and student within the classroom, the teacher provides an assessment of the interaction, and determines the necessity of a discipline referral. The administrator reviews and investigates the incident and renders a consequence based on their findings. Teachers also assign disciplinary outcomes though rarely suspension.

The teacher's role in student discipline outcomes is a primary one. The variability with which teachers manage their expectation of student behaviors is essential to the efficacy construct and crucial in understanding factors that lead to student removal from the instructional setting (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2006). Research has identified classroom context as a variable in determining a discipline consequence (Petras et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2006). Petras et al., (2011) hypothesized "students who begin school in classroom cohorts

where the majority of students are following the rules and not being disruptive, a student who is disruptive would most likely stand out to the teacher and perhaps be more likely than his/her classmates to be removed for disciplinary purposes" (p. 255) . Placing that same child in a setting with similarly disruptive students may have the effect of the child's behavior as being normal (Petras et al., 2011). Put another way, teachers and administrators may evaluate a child's behavior in relation to other students or in an absolute sense.

The literature bears out that discipline disparities can also be attributed to variability in teachers' perception of students - reasons included implicit teacher bias, societal stereotypes, and cultural mismatch (Gregory et al., 2010). Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson (2002) found students of color disproportionately received discipline referrals compared to White students based on objective reasons (e.g. violation of classroom rules) rather than subjective reasons indicating disparate referral rates are not necessarily intentional.

Skiba et al., (2002) proposed an association between student removal and student aggression due to the response of teachers to the behavioral context of the classroom as well as to the behavior of individual students. Empirical literature exists emphasizing that teacher behavior can set the stage for disciplinary problems as well as influence student–teacher interactions (Osher, Cartledge, Oswald, Artiles, & Coutinho, 2004; Osher, Van Aker, et al., 2004). Additionally, there is evidence for great variability in teacher use of disciplinary actions such as school removal (Petras et al., 2011). For example, Skiba et al. (1997) found that, in one middle school, 66% of all disciplinary referrals came from 25% of the teachers.

Variability in use of disciplinary actions is not limited to teachers. Raffaele Mendez et al., (2002) examined out-of-school suspensions in a large, ethnically diverse school district including interviews with administrators and student support personnel from 24 schools in the

district with the highest suspension rates and 24 demographically matched schools with significantly lower suspension rates. The majority of these schools served a high percentage of children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Their research found that five of the six middle schools with low OSS rates indicated that responding to students' needs and treating them with respect is effective in reducing problematic behavior. Their research also noted that the middle schools with low OSS rates promoted more varied ways to address student behaviors than those with high OSS rates (Raffaele Mendez et al., 2002).

The literature consistently affirms the practice of discipline response variability among teachers and administrators. Raffaele Mendez et al. (2002) found that even among states with clearly defined policy requiring OSS for serious offenses (e.g. fighting, bullying, physical aggression) there is likely to be a good deal of variability in how lower-level infractions such as disobedience and disrespect are treated by administrators. Gregory et al. (2010) found while researching a correlation between the achievement gap and the discipline gap a great deal of flexibility in the types of infractions that move forward from the classroom to the office and in the types of consequences issued by administrators. The Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 mandates a one-year expulsion for the possession of firearms at school, but such consequences can be modified based on the discretion of the district administration. Such discretion inherently promotes considerable flexibility in the type and length of sanction students receive for an infraction. Consequently, for the same offense, one administrator may decide to mandate a conference with parents or guardians; a different administrator may mandate a 5-day suspension (Noguera & Yonemura Wing, 2006).

Research has identified trends in which students are most consistently disciplined via out-of-school suspensions. Studies of school suspension have consistently documented the

overrepresentation of low-socioeconomic status (SES) students in disciplinary consequences (Skiba et al., 2002). Numerous studies have found that minority students are disproportionately suspended from school (e.g., Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Dupper & Bosch, 1996; The Civil Rights Project, 2000), and that Black students in particular are suspended on average two or three times more frequently than White students (Brooks et al., 1999). Males also appear to be over-represented in OSS. For example, McFadden et al. (1992) reported that male students comprised over three-quarters of all disciplinary referrals in their nine schools, and Imich (1994) found that males were suspended at a 4 to 1 ratio to females. Skiba (2000) has summarized research indicating that overrepresentation of Black students is not limited to suspensions. Such overrepresentation has been found in studies of corporal punishment as well (see Shaw and Braden, 1990). Notably, according to Skiba (2000), although such overrepresentation in disciplinary action may be related to greater misbehavior on the part of Black students, the available evidence suggests that referral bias is a more likely explanation.

Black students are 2-3 times as likely to be suspended as White students (Wallace et al., 2008). Gregory et al. (2011) use the term ‘‘racial discipline gap’’ to describe the suspension rate disparity between Black and White students. The racial discipline gap has been documented since the 1970s (Children’s Defense Fund, 1975) and found in discipline records and surveys from single schools (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002), multiple cities (Gordon, Della Piana, & Keleher, 2000), and nationally representative samples of parents (KewelRamani, Gilbertson, Fox, & Provasnik, 2007).

The disproportionality based on race remains after removing the effects of socioeconomic status (Raffaele Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Skiba et al., 2002. In one of the earliest explorations of evidence concerning school suspension, the Children’s Defense Fund (1975)

studied national data on school discipline provided by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and reported rates of school suspension for black students that exceeded those for white students on a variety of measures. The CDF reported that higher rates of black students were suspended, and that black students were more likely than white students to be suspended more than once, although no racial differences were found in the length of suspension administered (Skiba et al., 2002). Subsequent to that report, racial disproportionality in the use of school suspension has been a highly consistent finding (Costenbader and Markson, 1994, 1998; Glackman et al., 1978; Gregory, 1997; Kaeser, 1979; Lietz and Gregory, 1978; Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986; McCarthy and Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, and Hwang, 1992; Nichols, Ludwin, and Iadicola, 1999; Skiba et al., 1997; Streitmatter, 1986; Taylor and Foster, 1986; Thornton and Trent, 1988; Wu et al., 1982). Black students are also more frequently exposed to harsher disciplinary strategies, such as corporal punishment (Gregory, 1996; Shaw and Braden, 1990), and are less likely than other students to receive mild disciplinary alternatives when referred for an infraction (McFadden et al., 1992).

Black and minority students are not the only victims of discipline disproportionality. Research provides evidence indicating students with disabilities are also disciplined disproportionally (Rafaele Mendez et al., 2002). Relative to disability, behaviorally disordered students in Kansas were 11 times more likely to be suspended or expelled from school than non-disabled students (Mellard & Seybert, 1996), and emotionally handicapped (EH) students in Florida were suspended in numbers that were more than twice their numbers in the general student population (Florida State Department of Education, 1995). This trend also was found in Kansas for learning disabled (LD) students, who were almost 2.5 times more likely to be suspended or expelled when compared with non-disabled students (Mellard & Seybert, 1996).

Similarly, students with learning disabilities in Florida made up 42% of the state's total special education population but received 51% of the suspensions sustained by all special education students (Florida State Department of Education, 1995). Consistent with these findings, Morrison and D'Incau (1997) reported that children with identified special education needs in the district they studied were over-represented in expulsions. These findings all highlight the fact that children with academic problems are at greater risk than their peers for experiencing disciplinary problems in the school setting. Finally, when it has been investigated, it appears that students from lower socioeconomic (SES) home situations also have been disproportionately suspended from school, both historically (e.g., Wu, Pink, Crane, & Moles, 1982) and recently (Nichols et al., 1999; Skiba et al., 1997).

Significantly, Skiba et al. (1997) confirmed the inequities noted above for race, gender, disability, and SES; and Nichols et al. (1999) confirmed these same inequities for race, gender, and SES. However, in a multivariate analysis of variables contributing to suspension across a single state, Noltemeyer & McLoughlin reported poverty was a significant predictor of a school's rate of suspension but not of disproportionality in suspension (2010). Thus, while research has been unable to consistently support SES as a predictor of disproportionality, researchers have identified student groups, including those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, to be at greater risk of exclusionary discipline practices.

Fewer investigations have explored disciplinary disproportionality among students of other ethnic backgrounds, and those studies have yielded inconsistent results. While there appears to be overrepresentation of Latino students in some studies, the finding is not universal across locations or studies (see, e.g., Gordon et al., 2000). Studies have suggested that the rate of minority disproportionality is correlated with the overall rate of school suspension and minority

disproportionality, and that overrepresentation becomes more severe after school desegregation. Overrepresentation of Black students in school suspension and expulsion appears to increase as those punishments are used more frequently (Advancement Project/Civil Rights Project, 2000; Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986). Finally, while overrepresentation of Black students in school exclusion does not appear to be dependent on the proportion of Black students enrolled, racial disproportionality in school suspension appears to increase immediately after school desegregation, especially in high-socioeconomic- status schools (Larkin, 1979; Thornton and Trent, 1988).

Research consistently supports evidence of an overrepresentation of boys in school disciplinary sanctions (Skiba et al., 2002). Studies investigating gender discipline outcomes have persistently boys are referred to the office and receive a range of disciplinary consequences at a significantly higher rate than girls (Lietz and Gregory, 1978; McFadden et al., 1992; Shaw and Braden, 1990; Skiba et al., 1997; Taylor and Foster, 1986). Skiba et al., (2002) examined a a number of studies and found that boys are over four times as likely as girls to be referred to the office, suspended, or subjected to corporal punishment (Bain and MacPherson, 1990; Cooley, 1995; Gregory, 1996; Imich, 1994). There appears to be a gender-by-race interaction in the probability of being disciplined. Using U.S. Office for Civil Rights data from 1992, Gregory (1996) found that black males were 16 times as likely to be subjected to corporal punishment as white females. At both the junior and senior high school levels, Taylor and Foster (1986) reported a consistent ordering in the likelihood of suspension from most to least: black males, white males, black females, white females.

Research supports evidence that students most vulnerable to out-of-school suspensions- males, Black students, and students with disabilities- to be at considerable risk for numerous

negative outcomes (Skiba, Shure, & Williams, 2011). Primarily, researchers have demonstrated a positive correlation between the amount and quality of engaged time in academic learning and student achievement (Brophy, 1988; Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002). Conversely, school removal or school isolation disrupt the school bonding experience and contributes to school delinquency (Hawkins, Doueck, & Lishner, 1988). Consequently, interventions such as school removal via out-of-school suspension or expulsion are ineffective methods of motivating students, changing student behaviors, and improving learning outcomes (Skiba et al., 2011). Finally, by removing students from the beneficial aspects of academic engagement and schooling, suspension and expulsion may constitute a risk factor for further negative outcomes, including poor academic performance (Skiba & Rausch, 2008), school dropout (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986), and involvement in the juvenile justice system (Toldson, 2008; Wald & Losen, 2003).

Summary

Teacher's sense of efficacy is known to influence student motivation and students' sense of efficacy (Hoy & Spero, 2005). The greater the teacher's sense of efficacy, the more willing a teacher is to try new instructional methods (Cousins & Walker, 2000; Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang, 1988) and work longer with students who are struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers with elevated efficacy beliefs behave such that the students with whom they work had an increased sense of self and perceived the work they were doing as important (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Additionally, teachers with a high sense of teacher efficacy focus on building positive student relationships and persist when confronted with obstacles or constraints (Goddard et al., 2004).

Collective efficacy plays a role in shaping individual teacher efficacy beliefs and research has established a tight correlation between individual efficacy beliefs and collective teacher efficacy beliefs (Goddard, 2003). Further, research has established collective teacher efficacy as a factor associated with student achievement even after controlling for prior student achievement, race, school size, and SES (Bandura, 1993; Goddard et al., 2004). Thus, schools with high levels of collective teacher efficacy will execute courses of action in manner that promotes student development through teacher behaviors (Goddard & Goddard, 2001).

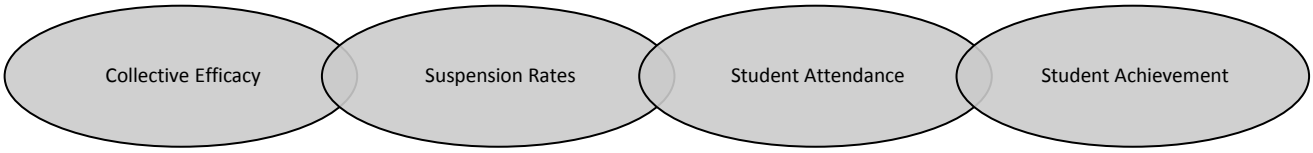
In executing their responsibilities, schools with high collective teacher efficacy carefully plan and organize instruction, coordinate efforts towards family buy-in, and expect behavior improvement (Goddard et al., 2004). Schools with decreased levels of collective teacher efficacy tend to focus on control and authority and perceive problems in terms of conflict which could result in the removal of students from the instructional environment (Asthon & Webb, 1986; Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Research has found that students' removal from the instructional environment has a negative impact on student achievement (Skiba, 2002; Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002; Wang, 1998) and is ineffective at reducing student suspension rates (Rafaelle Mendez, 2003).

Thus, the review of literature suggested further study was needed investigating the relationship between collective teacher efficacy and student suspension rates. The literature alluded to factors that contributed to variability in student suspensions, additional study is needed to understand what factors contribute to variance in collective teacher efficacy. Variance in collective teacher efficacy beliefs may explain variance among schools' use of out-of-school suspension as a consequence for discretionary offenses. Variance in student removal from the

instructional environment as a result of out-of-school suspension may result in variability in student achievement. The conceptual framework is represented in Figure 1.

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which collective efficacy, and its constructs of group competence and task analysis, contributed to out-of-school student suspension rates, over and above the school characteristics of school size, race, and SES.

Figure 1



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used to collect and analyze the data for this study and is arranged as follows: an explanation of the study's research design; the population and sample are described; the selection of and rationale for the instrumentation is detailed; and the process of data collection and analysis of the data is described.

Research Design

The design of this study was descriptive and correlational. To better understand the relationship between rates of student suspension and collective efficacy, and to achieve the study's purpose, this study used the independent measures of school size, race, and socioeconomic status as control variables. Furthermore, collective efficacy and its two constructs - group competence and task analysis - were the study's other independent variables. The dependent variables were suspension rates for the total number of discretionary offenses and for each discretionary offense in middle schools.

Survey research methodology was utilized to collect information on collective efficacy and gather quantitative data. A survey methodology provides quantitative and numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Dillman, 2007). The descriptive research method, including surveys, helps to gather information to investigate the hypothesis and to inform conclusions and recommendations.

Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between suspension rates of middle school students and collective efficacy. Regression analysis was used to determine variance in collective efficacy and its constructs associated with variability of suspension rates of middle school students over and above that explained by SES, race, and school size. Teachers

from middle schools in Region 5 were asked to complete the Collective Efficacy Scale (CE) Short Form (Goddard, 2002).

Research Population

The study's population was 30 Virginia public middle schools located in central Virginia. Schools proposed for this study are located in Region 5 - one of the Virginia Department of Education's 8 geographically-established regions. Region 5 schools were used for this study due to the region's relative student demographic similarities when compared to student demographics of all Virginia public schools. Due to the study's focus on middle school collective efficacy and middle school student suspension rate variability, only middle schools - defined as grades 6th through 8th – were included in this study. In considering schools for inclusion in this study, combined middle and high schools, alternative education settings, charter schools, or schools otherwise not comprised exclusively of grades 6th through 8th were excluded. One school was excluded due to the researcher's employment with the school division to avoid the perception of bias in the study's findings.

Instrumentation

The Collective Efficacy Scale (short form; Appendix A) was used to measure each middle school's collective efficacy. A Likert-type scale developed by Gibson and Dimbo (1984) is an instrument commonly used to assess teacher efficacy. Initially a 30-item scale, researchers often use the 16-item instrument due to its reliability and its factorial purity (Goddard et al., 2000). Goddard et al. (2000) used the Gibson and Dimbo instrument to develop their collective efficacy instrument. Noted distinctions between the two instruments include the Goddard instrument is group oriented rather than individual oriented. Similar to the Gibson and Dembo

instrument, the Goddard instrument used for this study was a 6-point Likert scale from 1-6 (strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, to strongly agree).

Once Goddard et al. (2004) selected items for inclusion they were submitted to a panel of experts to ensure the instrument appropriately represented the content of collective teacher efficacy. The panel provided feedback to include influences within the school (such as access to materials and resources) in the instrument. Additionally, the panel provided recommendations on the wording of the items. Next, the instrument was field-tested with six teachers to address clarity of instructions, length of time to complete the instrument, and appropriateness of the questions. The Collective Teacher Efficacy scale was then piloted to 70 teachers from different 70 schools. The schools were chosen because half of the schools had reputations with high conflict amongst staff while the other had low conflict within the faculty. The results of the pilot study affirmed validity and reliability of the collective efficacy measure. With some minor changes, the instrument was then applied in a more comprehensive capacity. Ultimately, a 21-item consisting of 8 task-analysis measures and 13 group- competency measures was determined valid and with an internal reliability of alpha = .96 (Goddard et al., 2000).

Teacher responses to the 21-item Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard et al., 2002) were reanalyzed to develop an improved measure of collective efficacy. The study was reanalyzed for several reasons. First, in the 21-item scale, the GC (group competency) and TA (task analysis) elements of collective efficacy were not weighted equally. In fact, review of the 21-item scale shows that 13 items reflected group competency, whereas only 8 (less than 40%) reflected task analysis. In order to create an equitable balance between GC and TA, Goddard sought a balance across the categories (Goddard, 2002).

Twelve items in the short form reflected all dimensions of the original Collective Efficacy Scale (Goddard et al., 2002) but in equal proportion (i.e., 3 GC+, 3 GC–, 3TA+, 3TA–). The 12 items selected for the short form were then submitted to a principal axis factor analysis. Most significantly, the 12-item scale yielded scores with high internal consistency (alpha = .94). Presently, this Short Form version of the Collective Efficacy Scale is used prevalently due to its balance, shorter length, and more parsimonious nature (Goddard, 2002).

The CE score was determined by totaling the responses of each teacher to the 12 questions. The possible range of scores for CE was 12 to 72. An average of the total scores for all teachers composed the final CE score.

Six of the 12 questions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9) of the CE instrument were designed to measure GC (group competency), and six questions (6, 7, 8. 10, 11, and 12) were designed to measure TA (task analysis). For both the GC and TA domains, a score was obtained for each teacher by totaling the responses to their respective six questions and then computing an average school GC and TA score with a possible range of 6 to 36.

Data Collection

The Institutional Review Board for the Social and Behavioral Sciences approved the research protocol on April 29, 2013 (Appendix E).

The three data sources utilized for this study were collective efficacy responses, descriptive/demographic school data, and school discipline data. School discipline data is available to the public via the *Virginia Safe Schools Information Resource* (SSIR), a database constructed and maintained by the Virginia Department of Education. Region 5 out-of-school suspension data, including suspension rate and offense, for the 2012-2013 school year was retrieved from the SSIR database. All school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia are

legally required to report all out-of-school suspensions and expulsions occurring in each Virginia public school each year. Given this study's purpose of exploring out-of-school suspensions, expulsion data was excluded from this study. Out-of-school suspension data for total discretionary suspension offenses and seven discretionary offenses (*Defiance, Classroom/Campus Disruption, Obscene Language/Gestures, Altercations, Disrespect, Other School Violations, and Disruptive Demonstrations*) were used for this study. Discretionary Offenses (Table 1) are seven of the top ten reported offenses for Region 5 for the 2012-2013 school year. These offenses comprised approximately 70% of all reported offenses. Each of these offenses was included due to the administrator discretion that is allowed to render a disciplinary sanction. Conversely, the three offenses that completed the top ten (*Bullying, Threats, and Tobacco Products)* were excluded due to the limited discretion necessary to render a sanction.

Descriptive data, including socioeconomic status, school size, and race, were collected through each school division's report of student information for the 2012-2013 school year. This data is available to the public through the Virginia Department of Education *Fall Membership Reports* on enrollment and demographics.

Collective Teacher Efficacy Scale (CE) Short Form (Goddard, 2002) data were collected through electronic survey method. In order to collect these data, permission to conduct research was sought from each school division in Region 5 that had a middle school. Of the 19 school divisions, 13 divisions have middle schools. The researcher contacted 13 of the 19 Region 5 division superintendents to obtain permission to conduct research with their school division. Permission was obtained from 7 of the 13 school divisions. The researcher contacted the principal of each middle school from which permission was obtained and requested their

assistance in distributing the collective efficacy survey to their instructional staff. Of a total of 30 middle schools in Region 5, permission to conduct research was obtained from 14 schools. With principal agreement, the electronic survey was sent to the principal of each school with directions to distribute to the instructional staff. A follow-up email was sent after a two-week period, requesting the survey be redistributed. For schools that had not responded, a phone call and a follow-up email were made requesting assistance in getting teacher responses. A fourth correspondence was made to all participating schools with a final request to respond to the survey. Of a total number of 30 applicable middle schools in Region 5, responses were yielded from 14 schools. This number represents 47% of Region 5 middle schools. Teacher responses for which all items were not answered were removed from the data set and, therefore, not factored into analysis.

Data Analysis

The control variables of school size, race, and SES, respectively, were entered into the regression analysis as a block in Step 1 prior to the entering of each of the three collective efficacy independent measures in Step 2. Dependent variable data was entered as the dependent measure for the control variables and for CE, for GC, and for TA. The alpha level for statistical significance was < 05.

Summary

This study used a non-experimental quantitative research methodology in order to address the purpose of the study and to answer the each research question. The population for this study was 14 middle school in Region 5 located in central Virginia from which a total of 273 teacher responses were used. The overall teacher response rate was 60%. Collective teacher

efficacy data were collected using the Goddard (CE) Short Form. Descriptive data and dependent variable data were collected from the VDOE website.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

Chapter 4 reports the data collected and the results of the data analysis. The data is presented in the following manner: 1) descriptive statistics for the independent measures of collective teacher efficacy (CE) and its constructs, group competence (GC) and task analysis (TA), the dependent measures of seven discretionary suspension offenses and the total discretionary out-of-school suspension offenses and independent control variables of school size, race, and socioeconomic status. 2) Data from the regression analysis are reported to answer each of the research questions and 3) correlations between all variable pairs are reported.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 displays the means and standard deviations for each Region 5 school that participated in this study (N=14).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Independent Variables: Collective Efficacy (CE), Task Analysis (TA), Group Competence (GC)

School	Mean			Standard Deviation		
	CE	**GC**	**TA**	**CE**	**GC**	**TA**
REGION 5	37.01	19.74	16.98	4.12	2.38	3.07
1	37.13	20.63	16.50	3.56	1.19	2.57
2	39.89	20.89	19.00	3.92	2.37	2.17
3	38.71	20.29	18.42	2.73	2.03	3.05
4	39.20	20.27	21.27	2.98	2.05	2.66
5	37.47	20.24	20.06	3.45	2.31	2.43
6	34.78	18.17	16.61	5.97	3.30	3.30
7	36.33	19.13	17.21	2.97	1.87	1.98
8	37.44	20.33	17.11	3.05	1.32	2.62
9	36.88	19.50	17.38	3.96	2.29	2.59
10	37.47	20.24	17.24	3.45	2.31	2.05
11	34.50	19.08	15.42	5.30	3.09	3.09
12	36.00	19.50	16.50	2.45	2.07	1.74
13	34.70	19.40	15.30	2.98	2.07	2.87
14	36.32	19.50	16.82	3.90	2.33	2.67

As can be observed in Table 1, the overall mean collective efficacy (CE) score for all schools in Region 5 is 37.01, slightly more than half of the maximum possible CE score of 72.0. Average CE scores by school ranged from a high of 39.89 (School 2) to a low of 35.50 (School 11).

Table 1 also reports the overall mean task analysis (TA) score was 16.98 out of a possible 36. The overall mean group competence (GC) score was 19.74 out of a possible 36. School 6 had the highest CE standard deviation at 5.97. Mean GC scores were greater than mean TA scores indicating teachers were more likely to agree with questions concerning their staff's ability to help students compared to questions related to students in the school. However, the limited number of participating schools (N=14) may deflate the significance of the mean scores.

Table 2 presents the mean and standard deviation for CE, GC, and TA for individual teacher responses.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation for Collective Efficacy (CE), Task Analysis (TA), Group Competence (GC) of Teacher Responses

School	Mean			Standard Deviation		
	CE	**GC**	**TA**	**CE**	**GC**	**TA**
REGION 5	3.08	3.29	2.88	.34	.40	.44
1	3.10	3.44	2.75	.30	.20	.43
2	3.32	3.48	3.17	.33	.40	.36
3	3.23	3.38	3.10	.23	.34	.51
4	3.23	3.40	3.13	.25	.33	.37
5	3.13	3.37	2.87	.29	.38	.34
6	2.90	3.03	2.68	.50	.55	.53
7	2.98	3.19	2.87	.30	.31	.33
8	3.12	3.39	2.85	.25	.22	.44
9	3.07	3.25	2.83	.33	.38	.47
10	3.12	3.37	2.87	.29	.38	.34
11	2.88	3.18	2.57	.44	.51	.51
12	3.00	3.25	2.75	.20	.34	.29
13	2.89	3.23	2.55	.25	.34	.48
14	3.03	3.25	2.80	.33	.39	.45

The results reported in Table 2 indicated higher mean scores among teacher responses for questions pertaining to GC (3.29). TA mean responses (2.88) seem to suggest teachers felt less efficacious about the constraints relative to a task. The standard deviation results presented in Table 2 provide further insight into individual teacher responses about collective efficacy and its constructs. Standard deviation of CE ranged from .20 to .50. GC standard deviation ranged from .20 to .55 and TA standard deviation ranged from .33 to .53. The variance in standard deviation suggested variability in teachers' perceptions of collective efficacy within their schools.

Table 3 reports the total number of discretionary suspension offenses for each Region 5 school.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables: Total Discretionary Out- of- School Suspension Offenses, Including, D1C- Disrespect, D2C-Defiance, D3C-Disruptive Demonstrations, D5C-Classroom Disruption, D6C-Obsence Language, F1T Minor Altercation, and S3V Other Offenses

School	D3C	D5C	D2C	D1C	D6C	F1T	S3V	Total	% of Total/School
1	0	15	0	0	14	12	0	**41**	**4.4**
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.0**
3	0	0	0	0	17	14	0	**31**	**3.3**
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.0**
5	0	0	13	0	0	22	0	**35**	**3.8**
6	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	**17**	**1.8**
7	0	18	0	14	0	11	0	**43**	**4.6**
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.0**
9	17	47	131	47	12	53	0	**307**	**32.8**
10	0	38	26	0	14	29	41	**148**	**15.8**
11	0	61	70	36	19	87	14	**287**	**30.6**
12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.0**
13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**	**0.0**
14	0	10	18	0	0	0	0	**28**	**3.0**
Total	**17**	**189**	**258**	**97**	**76**	**245**	**55**	**937**	
% of Total/Offense	**1.8**	**20.1**	**27.5**	**10.4**	**8.1**	**26.1**	**5.9**		

As can be observed in Table 3, the range of suspension rates was 0-307. The highest number of offenses reported was 307 (School 9). School 9 also reported suspensions in every category except *S3V-Other Offenses*. Five schools did not report offenses in any discretionary suspension offense category. Additionally, while at least one school reported suspensions for each category, for the offense categories of D3C, D2C, D1C, and S3V, four or fewer schools reported suspensions. Due to the limited variability with which schools reported suspension,

these offenses were omitted from the regression analysis as their inclusion limits the ability to determine correlations between the other dependent variables and the independent variables. More schools reported out-of-school suspensions for *Altercations* (n=8) than any other category. *Altercations* had the second highest offense total with 245 out-of-school suspensions reported.

Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics for the independent control variables of school size, race, and SES.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Independent Control Variables of Size (Number of Student Population), Race (Percent of Asian, Black, Hispanic,Non-Hispanic-Two or more Races, and SES (Percent of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch) by Sampled Schools (N=14)

School	Size	Race (% of Non-White Students)		SES (% of Economically Disadvantaged Students)	
		%	Total Number	%	Total Number
REGION 5	7520	32	2430	40	3029
1	579	48	275	40	234
2	609	25	153	13	79
3	402	26	105	40	160
4	773	15	116	11	87
5	569	42	237	37	213
6	661	19	127	45	294
7	685	20	135	32	216
8	188	15	29	15	29
9	593	52	311	53	314
10	639	66	422	72	461
11	581	63	364	69	403
12	345	11	39	49	169
13	201	7	14	50	100
14	695	15	103	39	270

As can be observed in Table 4, school size ranged from a total student population of 188 to 773. The lowest percentage of non-white students reported was 7% (School 13). School 10 had 66% of non-white students. Only three schools had 50% or more non-white students. The

greatest percentage of economically-disadvantaged students reported was 72% (School 10) while one school reported a student population with 11% economically-disadvantaged (School 4).

Regression Analysis

Regression Results for Total Discretionary Out-of-School Suspension Offenses

The results of the regression analyses for total collective efficacy which sought to answer research questions 1, 2, and 3 is presented as follows:

Question 1: To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Question 2: To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Question 3: To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Table 5 presents the results of the regression.

Table 5

Hierarchical Regression Concerning CE, GC, and TA as Predictors of Total Discretionary Suspension Offenses (N=937)

	Variable (N=937)	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	R^2 Change	F Value	F Change	Significance of F Value
Control	School Size	.227	.052	-.027	.052	.653	.653	.435
Control	Race	.788	.621	.552	.569	9.015	16.531	.002*
Control	SES	.814	.663	.562	.042	6.549	1.234	.294
	CE	.820	.672	.526	.009	4.602	.245	.635
	GC	.826	.683	.485	.011	3.439	.273	.608
	TA	.828	.685	.415	.002	2.535	.052	.823

*$p < .05$

As can be observed in Table 5, 66.3% ($p < .01$) of the variance in *total discretionary suspension offenses* was attributed to school size (5.2%), race (56.9%), and SES (4.2%).

Collective efficacy (R-square change = .9%, p = .635) did not contribute significantly to the variance in *total discretionary suspension offenses*, over and above the contributions of the three control variables. Group competence (R-square change = 1.1%, $p = .608$) and task analysis (R-square change =.2%, p = .823) did not contribute significantly to the variance in *total discretionary suspension offenses*.

Regression Results for Select Discretionary Suspension Offenses

The results of the regression analyses which sought to answer research questions 7-9, 10-12, and 13-15 are presented in Table 6. The offense categories of *Defiance, Disrespect, Other Violations,* and *Disruptive Demonstration* had little or no variability across the 14 schools and were omitted from the regression analysis.

Table 6 reports the results of the regression for the offense categories of *Classroom/Campus Disruptions, Obscene Language/Gestures,* and *Altercations*.

Table 6

Hierarchical Regression Concerning CE, GC, and TA as Predictors of the Dependent Measures of Classroom/ Campus Disruption, Obscene Language/Gestures, and Altercations

Research Question	Variable	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	R^2 Change	F Value	F Change	Significance of F Value
Classroom/Campus Disruption (D5C) (n=189)	School Size	.289	.084	.007	.084	1.094	1.094	.316
	Race	.813	.660	.598	.577	10.686	18.668	.001**
	SES	.850	.722	.638	.062	8.652	2.217	.167
Research Questions 7-9	CE	.850	.722	.599	.000	5.851	.012	.915
	GC	.852	.726	.555	.004	4.241	.111	.747
	TA	.863	.744	.525	.018	3.390	.490	.507
Obscene Language (D6C) (n=76)	School Size	.067	.004	-.079	.004	.054	.054	.821
	Race	.806	.649	.586	.645	10.189	20.239	.001**
	SES	.813	.661	.559	.011	6.492	.333	.577
Research Questions 10-12	CE	.821	.675	.530	.014	4.665	.385	.550
	GC	.845	.714	.535	.039	3.988	1.091	.327
	TA	.845	.714	.470	.001	2.919	.018	.896
Altercations (F1T) (n=245)	School Size	.215	.046	-.033	.046	.583	.583	.460
	Race	.795	.632	.565	.586	9.449	17.512	.002*
	SES	.823	.677	.580	.045	6.979	1.382	.267
Research Questions 13-15	CE	.842	.708	.579	.032	5.466	.976	.349
	GC	.842	.709	.527	.000	3.892	.008	.933
	TA	.857	.734	.506	.026	3.222	.672	.439

**p<.001, *p<.05

As can be observed in Table 6, school size (8.4%), race (57.7%), and SES (6.2%) explained 72.2% (p <.01) of the variability in the offense of *Classroom/Campus Disruptions*. CE did not contribute to the variance in suspension rates. The contributions of GC (R-square change = 4%, p =.747) and TA (R-square change = 1.8%, p =.507) were not statistically significant and did not contribute to the variance in *Classroom/Campus Disruptions*.

For the offense category of *Obscene Language/Gestures,* school size (.4%), race (64.9%), and SES (1.1%) contributed 66.1% ($p < .01$) to the variance in suspension rates. Neither GC (R-square change = 3.9%, $p = 0.327$) nor TA (R-square change = 0.1%, $p = 0.896$) contributed significantly to the variance in *Obscene Language/Gesture* behavior within schools.

School size (4.6%), race (58.6%), and SES (4.5%) explained 67.7% ($p < .01$) of the variance in suspension rates for the offense category of *Altercations*. CE (R-square change = 3.2%, $p = .349$) did not contribute statistically to the variance in *Altercations,* over and above the variance explained by the control variables. GC did not contribute to the variance in *Altercations*. The contribution of TA (R-square change = 2.6%, $p = .439$) to the variance in *Altercations* was not statistically significant.

Additional Analysis

The literature indicated relationships among the independent control variables and suspension rates. Table 6 presents the correlation relationships between pairs of dependent measures (total discretionary suspension offenses) and the independent control variables of school size, race, and SES.

Table 6

Pearson's Correlation Matrix Between Control Variables (School Size, Race, SES), and Total Discretionary Suspension Offenses

	School Size	Percent Race	Percent SES	Total Offenses
School Size	1	.329	-.016	.227
Percent Race	-	1	.612*	.787**
Percent SES	-	-	1	.644**
Total Offenses	-	-		1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Race and SES were significantly correlated ($r = .612$, $p < .01$). Total offenses correlated significantly with race and SES. Total offenses significantly correlated to race ($r = .787$, $p<.01$). Similarly, SES significantly correlated to total offenses ($r = .644$, $p < .01$) indicating a positive correlation between socioeconomic status and suspension rates.

Summary

Chapter four presented regression analyses to help answer the research questions regarding variability in suspension rates as those rates relate to collective efficacy and its constructs of group competence and task analysis. A correlation matrix followed the analyses concerning the relationship between the dependent measure (total discretionary suspension offenses) and the control variables (school size, race, and SES).

Regression Analysis

The regression analyses suggested that collective efficacy and its constructs (group competence and task analysis) did not explain the variance in suspension rates for Region 5 middle schools over and above the school characteristics of school size, race, and SES. Analysis did suggest that race was a statistically significant contributing factor end explained 56.9% of the suspension rate variance for total offenses. Analysis further suggested race explained 57.5% of the suspension rate variance for *Classroom/Campus Disruption*, 64.5% of the variance in *Obscene Language/Gestures*, and 58.6% of the variance in *Altercations*.

Correlation

The correlation data suggested statistically significant relationships between race and total discretionary suspension offenses. Similarly, the data indicated SES and total discretionary suspension offenses had a statistically significant correlation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter five is organized into four sections: section one presents the study's purpose, problem, and summary of the relevant research that informed the study. The second section presents a review of the methodology used in the study. The third section presents the study's findings and discussion of the results. The fourth section provides recommendations for further research.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between collective efficacy, and its constructs, and overall student suspensions rates. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions were asked:

1. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
2. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
3. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

4. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
5. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
6. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Defiance, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
7. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
8. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
9. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Classroom/Campus Disruption, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
10. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

11. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
12. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Obscene Language/Gestures, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
13. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
14. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
15. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Altercations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
16. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
17. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

18. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disrespect, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
19. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
20. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
21. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Other School Violations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
22. To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
23. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?
24. To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for Disruptive Demonstrations, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Problem

The problem from which this study's purpose stemmed was a concern for identifying factors associated with student achievement. Research indicated a strong relationship between achievement and student time engaged in learning (Brophy, 1988; Fisher et al., 1981; Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002; Gregory et al., 2010). Student suspension research further supports the effect of suspensions on student achievement (Davis & Jordan, 1994; Arcia, 2006; Gregory et al., 2010). Student suspension rates rise dramatically at the middle school level (Rafaelle Mendez, 2003; Skiba et al., 2011).

Summary of the Relevant Literature

The conceptual framework that informed this study included principles of Ashton and Webb's (1986) seminal research on teacher's sense of efficacy and student achievement. Ashton and Webb (1986) theorized that low sense-of-efficacy teachers put classroom discipline at the center of their thinking and teaching practices. Low sense-of-efficacy teachers consistently "defined the classroom situation in terms of conflict" (Ashton & Webb, 1986, p. 74). Conversely, high sense-of-efficacy teachers believed the classroom should be defined by friendly relationships, consistent and fair classroom rules, and promoting reciprocal respect (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Further, low sense-of-efficacy teachers manage their classrooms and use instructional strategies from a "control and containment" perspective (Asthon & Webb, 1986, p. 81). As such, it is reasonable to assume teachers with a low sense-of-efficacy, those defined as control-oriented, may endorse punitive or restrictive approaches to student discipline (i.e. student discipline referrals and removal from the instructional setting). High sense-of-efficacy teachers, on the other hand, "encouraged students frequently, monitored student behavior and progress consistently, and praised them often and appropriately" (Asthon & Webb, 1986). Naturally, it is

reasonable to assume teachers with a high sense-of-efficacy may opt to address student behaviors within the classroom by focusing on relationship-building and emotionally-even discourse.

The literature on teacher efficacy emphasized that "teachers have not only self-referent efficacy perceptions but also beliefs about the conjoint capability of a school faculty" and that these "group-referent" perceptions are referred to as perceived collective efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2012, p. 4). Similar to teacher efficacy beliefs, perceived collective efficacy involves a teacher's perception about their staff's ability to make decisions that can positively impact students. Perceived collective efficacy is associated with variability in student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000) and with variability in teacher's sense of personal efficacy (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2012).

Literature was reviewed examining the intertwining relationship between teacher behaviors and student behaviors. The literature indicated a reciprocal relationship between student behaviors and teacher behaviors (Bandura, 1978). A teacher's belief about their ability to manage student behavior, specifically, disruptive behavior, has an effect on the student-teacher relationship (Friedman & Farber, 1992). Research supports a correlation between teacher behavior and student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Research has suggested that the student-teacher relationship is a significant factor related to student achievement (Bossert, 1988; Brookover et al., 1978; Hoy & Sabo, 1998; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Stedman, 1987).

The literature detailed the negative effect suspension had on student achievement, drop-out rates, student motivation, and school connectedness (Arcia, 2006; Gregory et al., 2008). Research indicates that suspended students are at greater risk to be truant, miss instructional time, and dropout (Arcia, 2006). Research has also shown a strong positive relationship between

time engaged in academic learning and student achievement (Brophy, 1988; Fisher et al., 1981; Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002). Investigating the effect suspensions have on student achievement, Arcia (2006) studied two demographically comparable cohorts- one cohort consisting of students with no suspensions and one cohort consisting of students with at least one suspension. The suspended student cohort was 3 years behind in reading levels after one year and 5 years behind after 2 years (Arcia, 2006).

Suspending students in response to misbehavior is a common consequence in public schools (Skiba & Knesting, 2002). While suspensions pacify a teacher or school administrator's frustration with student misbehavior, the literature provided limited evidence to support suspension as a purposeful approach to enhancing school safety or in changing student behavior (Raffaele Mendez, 2003). Indeed, school safety is often cited as a primary reason for suspensions. However, in many cases, minimal efforts are employed by schools to address the function of behaviors that lead to student suspension. Ironically, it is often school factors that contribute to variable rates of suspension (Skiba & Knesting, 2002).

The literature identified student groups who were disproportionally impacted by student suspensions. Suspension disparities exist when accounting for student characteristics of race, ethnicity, students with disabilities, and school level. The perception exists that students from certain racial and ethnic backgrounds misbehave disproportionally to White students and contribute to creating an unsafe school environment; researchers have repeatedly failed to bear evidence supporting this premise (McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, and Hwang, 1992; Skiba et al, 2002; Wehlage &Rutter, 1986; Wu et al.,1982). Race does seem to be a factor when considering the type of behaviors leading to suspension. Skiba et al (2002) examined disciplinary referrals of 19 middle schools in a large urban area. Their research found

Black students were suspended more frequently in response to behaviors (e.g. disrespect, threat, being loud) while White students were suspended for more observable behaviors (smoking, obscenity) (Skiba et al, 2002. Additionally, research supported that suspension rates were highest among middle school students (e.g. Arcia, 2006; Gregory et al., 2010; Krezmien et al., 2006).

The literature referenced school factors that mitigate the impact of negative student behaviors. When comparing schools with high and low suspension rates, Skiba and Knesting (2002) found low-suspension schools were more effectively able to monitor school climate, attend to a high level of academic quality, promote teacher-student relationships, and spend less time on disciplinary issues than high suspension schools. Research further noted school characteristics, including teacher attitude, teacher perception of student achievement, quality of school governance, and racial composition of the school as stronger predictors of school suspension rates when compared with student attitudes and student behavior (Skiba & Knesting, 2002). Gregory and Cornell (2011), through examination of school structure and suspension rates, endorsed school structure and school support as predictors of student outcomes.

There was limited literature specifically linking collective efficacy and suspension rates. However, research investigating collective efficacy and discipline in middle and high schools conducted in secondary public schools in Fairfax County Public School found that as collective efficacy decreases the occurrence of serious offenses resulting in out-of-school suspensions increased (Berry, 2010). Additionally, Berry (2010) found a statistically significant negative correlation "of race to collective efficacy constructs and to serious offenses resulting in out-of-school suspensions" (p.87).

In summary, the literature supported this study's conceptual framework which suggested that suspension as a school discipline response may be related to collective efficacy beliefs of a school faculty. The literature further supported the possibility that variability between collective efficacy beliefs may explain variability among suspension rates.

Review of the Methodology

Survey research methodology was utilized to collect collective efficacy data from 14 participating Region 5 middle schools. Survey Monkey, a web-based survey program, was used to facilitate the distribution of survey questions and in the collection of survey responses.

The researcher contacted the Region 5 superintendents whose school divisions had middle schools to request permission to conduct research within their school division. Permission to conduct research was obtained from 7 school divisions. The researcher contacted the principal of each participating division's middle school and requested their assistance in sending the electronic collective efficacy survey to their instructional staff. A total of 269 teachers within the 14 schools responded to the survey. Survey results were sent directly to the researcher via Survey Monkey.

Out-of-school suspension data for each participating school was retrieved from the Virginia Safe School Information Resource (SSIR), a publicly available database maintained online by the Virginia Department of Education. 2012-2013 discipline data for Virginia middle schools was made publicly available in October 2013. The study focused on the highest reported offense categories for Region 5 schools. Out-of-school suspension data for total discretionary suspension offenses and seven discretionary offenses (*Defiance, Classroom/Campus Disruption, Obscene Language/Gestures, Altercations, Disrespect, Other School Violations, and Disruptive Demonstrations*) were used for this study. Discretionary Offenses (Appendix 1) are seven of the

top ten reported offenses for Region 5 for the 2012-2013 school year. These offenses comprised approximately 70% of all reported offenses. Each of these offenses was included due to the administrator discretion that is allowed in rendering a disciplinary sanction. Conversely, the three offenses that complete the top ten (*Bullying, Threats, and Tobacco Products)* were excluded due to the limited discretion necessary to render a sanction.

Descriptive data, including school socioeconomic status, school size, and racial composition, was collected through each school division's report of student information for the 2012-2013 school year. This data was available to the public through the Virginia Department of Education *Fall Membership Reports* on enrollment and demographics.

Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and correlations were reported. In order to answer the research questions, hierarchical regression analysis was used to analyze the data using SPSS statistical software.

Findings

The findings of the study are presented in terms of the research questions. Research questions 1-3 and their findings are presented as follows:

Question 1: To what extent does total collective efficacy account for variability in of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Question 2: To what extent does collective efficacy Factor I- Group Competence- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

Question 3: To what extent does collective efficacy Factor II- Task Analysis- account for variability of out-of-school suspension rates for total discretionary suspension offenses, over and above school characteristics of school size, race, and socioeconomic status?

The contribution of CE (R-square change = .9%, p = .635) to the variance in *total discretionary suspension offenses* was not statistically significant. Group competence (R-square change = 1.1%, p = .608) and task analysis (R-square change = .2%, p = .823) did not contribute significantly to the variance in *total discretionary suspension offenses*.

The contributions of total collective efficacy, group competence, and task analysis did not contribute at a significant level to the variability in suspension rates for the specific discretionary offenses of *Classroom/Campus Disruption, Obscene Language/Gestures,* and *Altercations,* over and above the contributions of school size, race, and SES.

CE did not contribute to the variance in suspension rates for *Classroom/Campus Disruptions*. The contributions of GC (R-square change = 4%, p = .747) and TA (R-square change = 1.8%, p = .507) were not statistically significant and did not contribute to the variance in *Classroom/Campus Disruptions*.

For the offense category of *Obscene Language/Gesture,* CE contributed 1.4% to the variance in *Obscene Language/Gestures* and was not statistically significant. Neither GC (R-square change = 3.9%, p = 0.327) nor TA (R-square change = 0.1%, p = 0.896) contributed significantly to the variance in Obscene Language/Gesture behavior within schools

CE (R-square change = 3.2%, p = .349) did not contribute statistically to the variance in *Altercations,* over and above the variance explained by the control variables. GC did not contribute to the variance in *Altercations*. The contribution of TA (R-square change = 2.6%, p = .439) to the variance in *Altercations* was not statistically significant.

The remaining discretionary offenses of *Defiance, Disrespect, Other School Violations,* and *Disruptive Demonstrations* were excluded from analysis due to the limited or no variability with which schools reported suspensions for these offenses (see Table 6).

Discussion

The conceptual framework of this study suggested a relationship between collective efficacy and suspension rates. The data analysis yielded information that did not support this study's framework.

Total collective efficacy, group competence, and task analysis did not explain statistically significant variance in out-of-school suspensions for total discretionary suspension offenses or select discretionary offenses. Analysis results indicated the control variables of school size, race, and SES (66.2%) were strong contributors to suspension rate variance for *Total discretionary suspension offenses*. Race (56.9%, $p < .05$) contributed significantly to *Total Discretionary Offense* suspensions. Additionally, correlation analysis indicated statistically significant correlations between race ($r = .787$, $p < .01$) and *Total discretionary suspension offenses.*

The regression analysis results suggested SES modestly contributed to the variability in suspension rates for Region 5 schools. Similar to the research on suspension rate variability based on racial composition, the data supported the literature on suspension rates that indicated socioeconomic status as a significant factor in suspension rates. However, the literature also cautioned about a complex, correlated relationship between race and SES. Interestingly, when regression analysis was conducted inputting SES as a control variable in Step 1 prior to race, the contributions of each changed from .04 to .19, and from .56 to .41, respectively. Correlation analysis indicated a statistical correlation between SES ($r = .644$, $p < .01$) and Total discretionary suspension offenses.

Correlation analysis between school size and *Total discretionary suspension offenses* did not yield statistically significant results.

A number of speculations can be made as to what may have contributed to the lack of statistically significant findings concerning the contributions of collective efficacy on suspension rates. The lack of meaningful findings may have been a result of methodological limitations, including, the limited number of schools used in the study, the method by which collective efficacy and descriptive data was collected, and the variability in how schools reported discipline offenses. Further methodological factors that limited this study's findings included that this study did not control for all the variables that contribute to collective efficacy and suspension rates, and this study did not control for teacher response rates.

The limited number of schools (N=14) used in this study was a primary factor why collective efficacy and its constructs were not predictors of suspension rates. Though several efforts and attempts were made to secure permission to conduct this study with all Region 5 middle schools, only 14 out of 30 schools gave permission to participate in the study. The limited number of schools inhibited the ability to make generalizations to other schools.

Another possible explanation for the lack of statistically significant findings may also have been attributed to how schools reported offenses. School discipline data was collected through a public-accessible database (SSIR) which was developed and maintained by the Virginia Department of Education. As schools are mandated to report out-of-school suspension data, this study relied on the discipline data in this database as accurate and did not take measures to control or question the data's reliability. While schools are mandated to report suspensions for certain offenses, schools have discretion in how they define student behaviors that result in out-of-schools suspensions and in how they report these offenses. Furthermore,

schools have discretion in determining sanctions for offenses. Accordingly, one school may render a consequence of out-of-school suspension for a defiant behavior while another may opt for multiple days of in-school suspension. In-school suspensions are not required to be reported to the VDOE, and therefore, in-school suspension data is not directly accessible to the public.

The dependent variables selected for this study were purposely chosen for their prevalence as reported offenses resulting in out-of-school suspension for all Region 5 schools. Further, these offenses were selected for inclusion in this study due to the discretion that is inherent in rendering a consequence. The dependent variables comprised roughly 70% of all reported offenses resulting in disciplinary sanctions for Region 5 schools for the 2012-2013 school year (VDOE, 2013). Additionally, Region 5 school's discipline offenses and discipline response for the 2012-2013 school year were nearly identical to Virginia's discipline data profile.

Given the frequency with which the specific discretionary suspension offenses were reported for all Virginia schools, the variability in how Region 5 middle schools reported offenses was confounding. While some variability in how schools reported offenses was expected, less expected was the extent to which some schools did not report suspensions for the most common offenses. Five middle schools did not report any suspensions in any of the selected offense categories. The remaining schools reported offenses in at least one category out of seven. The implications of this data are speculative but seem to suggest that the variability in how schools reported offenses was another critical factor in contributing to this study's limited findings.

Of the 14 schools, wide variability existed in terms of principal support in promoting teacher response rates. Teacher response rates ranged from 20% to 99%. In some instances, a school's collective efficacy was measured by a response rate of eight teachers out of thirty-five

(Appendix C). Intuitively, a limited teacher response rate may not accurately reflect a school's sense of collective efficacy. Feedback from one participating school's principal indicated schools may have had "survey fatigue." The same principal further stated she was not open to sending out a survey more than once. Another school's principal stated the spring timing of the survey was not optimal for teacher feedback as they were preparing for spring assessments.

Implications of Practice

The variability with which schools reported suspension data for this study begged more questions that the data answered. Schools within the same school division that were both geographically and demographically comparable reported suspension data with great variability. School division administrators may want to examine the consistency of discipline practices within their middle schools to ensure their policies around student behavior are consistently addressed.

Educational practioners, including teachers, school administrators, and school division administrators, might consider professional development that helps to align behaviors that promote variability in response to student behaviors. Variability in staff behavior might be mitigated by the collective understanding of experiences that inform efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1997) promoted that mastery experiences and vicarious experiences are the most significant efficacy sources. Professional development that helps to promote these efficacy sources might aid in explicating the decision-making process and factors that lead to variability in decision-making relative to student behaviors.

Furthermore, professional development that includes discourse on collective teacher efficacy and its impact on student achievement might be worthy. A staff's awareness of their collective teacher beliefs, along with literature that explains the impact collective teacher

efficacy has on student achievement, may help a staff to make decisions about how to organize their resources to influence their collective teacher efficacy. Additionally, school and division level administrators responsible for hiring might consider incorporating teacher efficacy scales when interviewing new employees. This information may contribute to developing consistency relative to the collective teacher efficacy beliefs amongst schools.

Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which collective efficacy accounted for variability in suspension rates of select Virginia middle schools. The literature on collective efficacy and its impact on suspension rates at any school level was limited. This study focused on middle schools (N=14) in a specific region in central Virginia. This is a small sample size for regression analysis that included six variables. A larger sample size would be of value in rendering reliable data for inferences. While research indicated suspension rates are highest at the middle school level, studies may want to consider broadening the sample to include a greater number of middle schools across a broader cross-sections of school divisions.

This study controlled for the variables of school size, race, and SES. These variables were selected for this study based on research indicating their contribution to suspension rate variability. This study's findings indicated race significantly contributed to the variability in suspension rates but, comparatively, school size had relatively minor contributions. Literature promoted school size as a factor in suspension rates though the school size range and type of schools used in this study limited the ability to generalize the results. Future studies may want to consider sampling schools of all sizes that are representative of urban, suburban, and rural school divisions to study the prevalence of out-of-school suspensions.

Teacher response rate to the collective efficacy instrument was not controlled. The percent of teacher responses ranged from 20% to 99% of the school's teaching population. Additionally, the collective efficacy instrument was provided electronically to the school principal who in turn distributed the survey to instructional staff. While this method is convenient for collecting and synthesizing survey results, future research may attempt to control teacher responses by providing the survey directly to teachers. Future studies might also consider the use of a paper survey provided directly to teachers. A paper survey provided directly to teachers might promote an element of personalization which in turn could lead to higher response rates (Dillman, 2007). Consideration to token financial incentives might also be considered to increase response rates.

Future studies may want to access school discipline reports directly from the schools rather than relying on what is reported to the VDOE. This study analyzed the most prevalent offenses resulting in out-of-school suspensions, as reported in the *VDOE Discipline, Crime, and Violenc*e *Report,* and was inclusive of reported offenses in both Region 5 totals and statewide totals. These offenses were defined in comparable terms and selected based on discipline literature that indicated out-of-school suspension was most variable for the types of offenses included in this study. Studies focusing on these same offenses might consider interviews that ask administrators how their schools locally define and report suspensions for specific offenses. Interviews with administrators and instructional staff might also be considered to better understand which structures and protocols schools have in place to address student behavior that might explain a school's reporting process.

Further still, studies that focus on suspension rates should consider the entire process in which a suspension is rendered. To this point, future studies that focus on collective teacher

efficacy and suspension rates might include data on the number of referrals generated at a school regardless of suspension; data on which teachers write referrals might also be investigated. Though this study assumed a connection between teacher behaviors and suspension rates, as previously stated, the decision to suspend is often an administrator's. In analyzing referral data, a researcher could elucidate patterns of teacher and student behaviors that lead to an administrator rendering a suspension consequence. Moreover, referral data may also provide insight into the behaviors of teachers who do not write referrals. This data, along with interviews of instructional staff, may further highlight behaviors that lead to variability in teacher efficacy beliefs.

An additional consideration for researchers investigating factors that contribute to suspension rate variability is the efficacy of the administrator rendering consequences. This study only included collective teacher efficacy scores from schools' non-administrative, instructional staff. As the administrator's role in rendering consequence is significant, an understanding of his or her efficacy beliefs relative to a staff's could be informative.

Finally, while there was limited research on collective efficacy and suspension rates, there was some research that found a statistically significant relationship between collective efficacy and suspension rates for more serious offenses (Berry, 2011). Future research might consider a focus on collective efficacy as predictors of suspension rates for serious offenses, such as, fighting, sexual harassment, and threatening behavior. These offenses, while serious, do not have mandated sanctions and still require administrative discretion to render a consequence.

Summary

Though the findings of this study did not support the conceptual framework, the limitations were primarily methodological. More specifically, the discovery of reliable results

was largely hindered by the dramatic variability with which suspension data from the study's sample were reported. This study's discovery of the variability of Region V suspension data provides a platform from which other studies can focus their investigative efforts.

References

Allinder, R. M. (1995). An examination of the relationship between teacher efficacy and An analysis of factors predicting Indiana State Test of Educational Progress (ISTEP) passing percentages. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University.

Arcia, E. (2006). Achievement and enrollment status of suspended students: Outcomes in a large, multicultural school district. *Education and Urban Society*, 38, 359–369.

Ashton, P. T., & Webb, R. B. (1986). Making a difference: Teachers' sense of efficacy and student achievement. New York: Longman.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84, 191–215.

Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28(2), 117–148.

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company

Berry, Denny M. (2011). Collective efficacy and middle and high school discipline.

Bracey, G. W. (1988). Teacher efficacy and student outcomes. Phi Delta Kappan, 69(7),526.

Bradshaw, C. P., Koth, C. W., Bevans, K. B., Ialongo, N., & Leaf, P. J. (2008). The impact of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) on the organizational health of elementary schools. School Psychology Quarterly, 23, 462–473

Brouwers, A., & Tomic, W. (2003). A test of the factorial validity of the Teacher

Brown, M. (2002). Get a life. Times Educational Supplement, 4478, 30.

Bryk, A., Lee, V., & Holland, P. (1993). Catholic schools and the common good. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butcher, J., Groundwater Smith, S., Howard, P., Labone, E., McFadden, M., McMeniman, M., Malone, K., Martinez, K., & Bailey, M. (2003) Teacher education, community service learning and student efficacy for community engagement. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education.*31, 109-124.

Children's Defense Fund. (1975). School suspensions: Are they helping children? Cambridge, MA: Washington Research Project.

Christle, C., Nelson, C. M., & Jolivette, K. (2004). School characteristics related to the use of suspension. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 27, 509–526. Clearing House, 75(4), 195.

Coladarci, T., & Breton, W. (1997). Teacher efficacy, supervision, and the special education resource-room teacher. *Journal of Educational Research,* 90, 230-239.

Coleman, J. S., Campbell, E. Q., Hobson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A., Weinfeld, F. D., et al. (1966). E*quality of Educational Opportunity*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Costenbader, V., & Markson, S. (1998). School suspension: A study with secondary students. *Journal of School Psychology*, 36(1), 59-82. CT: JAI Press.

Deemer**,** S. A., & Minke**,** K**.** M**. (**1999**).** An investigation of the factor structure of the teacher efficacy scale. *Journal of Educational Research,* 93(1), 3-10.

Dembo, M. & Gibson, S. (1985). Teachers' sense of efficacy: An important factor in school achievement. *The Elementary School Journal,* 86(2), 173-184.

Desimone, L. (2002). How Can Comprehensive School Reform Models Be Successfully Implemented? Review of Educational Research, 72(3): 433-479.

Duke, D. L., & Jones, V. F. (1984). Two decades of discipline-assessing the development of an educational specialization. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 17, 25-35.

Duncan, G., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Klebanov, E (1994). Economic deprivation and early childhood development. *Child Development, 65,* 296-318.

Dussault, M., & Deaudelin, C., (2001). Loneliness and self-efficacy in education majors.

Ebmeier, H. (2003). How supervision influences teacher efficacy and commitment: An education resource-room teacher. Journal of Educational Research, 90(4), 230.

Emmer, E.T., & Hickman, J. (1991). Teacher efficacy in classroom management and

Enderlin-Lampe, S. (1997). Shared decision making in schools: Effect on teacher engagement. Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 31(2), 109.

Eshach H. (2003). Inquiry-events as a tool for changing science teaching efficacy belief of kindergarten and elementary school teachers. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 12: 495-501.

Flores, B. B., & Clark, E. R. (2004). A critical examination of foreign-trained teachers' self-conceptualization and self-efficacy. Paper presented at NABE Conference, February 2003, New Orleans, LA.

Gertsen, R., Chard, D., & Baker, S. (2000). Factors enhancing sustained use of research-based instructional practices. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33(5), pp. 445-457.

Goddard, R. D. (2001). Collective efficacy: A neglected construct in the study of schools and student achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(3), 467–476.

Goddard, R. D. (2002a). Collective efficacy and school organization: A multilevel analysis of teacher influence in schools. *Theory and Research in Educational Administration*, 1, 169–184.

Goddard, R. D. (2003). The impact of schools on teacher beliefs, influence, and student achievement: The role of collective efficacy. In J. Raths & A. McAninch (Eds.), Advances in teacher education (Vol.6), pp.183–204. Westport, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Goddard, R. D., & Goddard, Y. L. (2001). A multilevel analysis of teacher and collective efficacy. Teaching and Teacher Education, 17, 807–818.

Goddard, R. D., Hoy, W. K., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2000). Collective teacher efficacy: Its meaning, measure, and effect on student achievement. *American Education Research Journal*, 37(2), 479–507.

Graham, S., Harris, K. R., Fink, B., & MacArthur, C. A. (2001). Teacher efficacy in writing: A construct validation with primary grade teachers. Scientific Studies of Reading, 5(2), 177.

Greenspan, E. (1998). Better teachers faster. National Journal, 30(33), 1932.

Guskey, T. R. (1987). Context variables that affect measures of teacher efficacy. *Journal of Educational Research*, 88 (1), 41-47

Henson, R. K. (2002). From adolescent angst to adulthood: Substantive implications and measurement dilemmas in the development of teacher efficacy research. Educational Psychologist, 37(3), 137.

Henson, R. K., Kogan, L. R., & Vacha-Haase, T., (2001). A reliability generalization study of the teacher efficacy scale and related instruments. Educational & Psychological Measurement, 61(3), 404.

Horner, R., Sugai, G., Smolkowski, K., Todd, A., Nakasato, J., & Esperanza, J. (2009). A randomized control trial of school-wide positive behavior support in elementary schools. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 11, 133–145.

Hoy, W. K., & Hannum, J. (1997). Middle school climate: An empirical assessment of organizational health and student achievement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 33, 290–311.

Hoy, W. K., & Woolfolk, A. E. (1993). Teachers' sense of efficacy and the organizational health of schools. Elementary School Journal, 93(4), 355.

Hoy, W. K., Sweetland, S. R., & Smith, P. A. (2002). Toward an organizational model of achievement in high schools: The significance of collective efficacy. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(1), 77–93.

Hughes, G. B. (1999). Facilitating the development of preservice teachers in a climate of reform. Lessons learned from mathematics and assessment reform. Journal of Negro Education, 68(3), 352.

Jennett, H., Harris, S. L., & Mesibov, G. B. (2003). Commitment to philosophy, teacher efficacy, and burnout among teachers of children with autism. *Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, 33(6), 583.

Johnson, S.T., Wallace, M.B., & Thompson, S.D. (1999). Broadening the scope of assessment in the schools: Building teacher efficacy in student assessment. *Journal of Negro Education* 68(3), 397.

Kim, Y., & Corn, A. L. (1998). The effects of teachers' characteristics on placement Recommendations for Students with Visual Impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 92(7), 491.

King, K. A., Price, J.H., Tellijohann, S.K., & Wahl, J. (1999). High school health teachers' perceived self-efficacy in identifying students at risk for suicide. *Journal of School Health*, 69(5), 202.

Krezmien, M. P., Leone, P. E., & Achilles, G. M. (2006). Suspension, race, and disability: Analysis of statewide practices and reporting. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 14, 217–226.

Labone, E. (2004). Teacher efficacy: Maturing the construct through research in alternative paradigms. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 20(4), 341.

Lee, V. E., Dedrick, R. F., & Smith, J. B. (1991). The effect of the social organization of schools on teachers' efficacy and satisfaction. Sociology of Education, 64(3), 190.

Legets, N., Adams, D., & Williams, P. (2010). Common planning: A linchpin practice in transforming secondary schools. *Academy for Educational Development*

Martin, J. J., & Kulinna, P. H. (2003). The development of a physical education teachers' physical activity self-efficacy instrument. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 22(2), 219.

Martinek, T., & Bain, L. (1995). Pedagogy. *Research Quarterly for Exercise & Sport*, 66(1), 61.

McLoyd, V. C. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *American Psychologist, 53*, 185–204.

Meijer, C. & Foster, S. (1988). The effect of teacher self-efficacy on referral chance. The Journal of Special Education, 20(3).

Miller, P. S. (1991). Increasing teacher efficacy with at-risk students. Equity & Excellence, 25(1), 30.

Minner, S. (2001). Our own worst enemy. Education Week, 20(38), 33.

Mji, A., & Kiviet, A. M. (2003). Psychometric characteristics of the science teaching efficacy belief inventory in South Africa. Psychological Reports, 92(1), 325.

National Education Association. (2003). Status of the American Public School Teacher 2000–2001: Highlights. Washington, DC: NEA.

Nichols, J., Ludwin W., & Iadicola, P. (1999). A darker shade of gray: A year-end analysis of of kindergarten and elementary school teachers. Journal of Science Education &

Osher, D., Sandler, S., & Nelson, C. L. (2001). The best approach to safety is to fix school and support children and staff. In R. J. Skiba & G. G. Noam (Eds.), *Zero tolerance: Can suspension and expulsion keep schools safe?* (pp.127–153). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Pajares, F. (1997). Current directions in self-efficacy research. In M. L. Maehr & P. R. Pintrich (Eds.), Advances in motivation and achievement (pp. 1–49). Greenwich,

Podell, D.M., & Soodak, L. C. (1993). Teacher efficacy and bias in special education Psychological Reports, 89(2), 285.

Qualter, A. (1999). How did you get to be a good primary science teacher? Westminster. Studies *in Education,* (22), 75-86.

Raffaele Mendez, L. M. (2003). Predictors of suspension and negative school outcomes: A longitudinal investigation. In J. Wald & D. J. Losen (Eds.), New directions for youth development: No. 99. Deconstructing the school-to-prison pipeline (pp. 17–34). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Raffaele Mendez, L. M., Knoff, H. M., & Ferron, J. M. (2002). School demographic variables and out-of-school suspension rates: A quantitative and qualitative analysis of large ethnically diverse school district. *Psychology in the Schools*, 39, 259–276.

Rich, Y., & Lev, S. (1996). Extending the concept and assessment of teacher efficacy. *Educational Science: Theory & Practice*, 12(3), 1761-1767

Ross, J. A., Hogaboam-Gray, A., & Gray, P. (2004). Prior student achievement, collaborative school processes, and collective teacher efficacy. Leadership & Policy in Schools, 3(3),163.

Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. *Psychological Monographs,* 80, 1-28.

Shaughnessy, M. F. (2004). An interview with Anita Woolfolk: The educational psychology of teacher efficacy. *Educational Psychology Review*, 16(2), 153.

Shore, Jane R. (2004). Teacher education and multiple intelligences: A case study of multiple intelligences and teacher efficacy in two teacher preparation courses. *Teachers College Record*, 106(1), 112.

Sirin, S., (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*. Vol. 75, No. 3, pp. 417–453

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review.* Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 317-342.

Skiba, R., Peterson, R., & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension: Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education and Treatment of Children, 20(3),* 295-315.

Skiba, R. J., Simmons, A. B., Ritter, S., Gibb, A. C., Rausch, M. K., & Cuadrado, J. (2008). Achieving equity in special education: History, status, and current challenges. *Exceptional Children,* 74, 264–288.

Skiba, R., & Rausch, M. (2006). Zero Tolerance, suspension, and expulsion: Questions of equity and effectiveness. In C. Evertson & C. Weinstein (Eds.), Handbook of classroom management: *Research, Practice, and Contemporary Issues*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Erlbaum.

Skiba, R., & Rausch, M., (2004). The relationship between achievement, discipline, and race: An analysis of factors predicting ISTEP scores. *Children Left Behind Policy Briefs*. Supplementary Analysis 2-D

Skiba, R., Reynolds, C. R., Graham, S., Sheras, P., Conoley, J. C., & Garcia-Vazquez, E. (2006). Are zero tolerance policies effective in the schools?: An evidentiary review and recommendations. *A Report by the American Psychological Associate Zero Tolerance Task Force.*

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C.-G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review, 40* (1), 85-107.

Smith, S. D. (1986). Relationships of computer attitudes to sex, grade-level, and teacher influence. Education, 106(3), 338.

Soodak, L.C., & Podell, D.M. (1993). Teacher efficacy and student problem as factors in special education referral. Journal of Special Education, 27(1), 66.

Skiba, R., Michael, R., Nardo, A., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: sources of racial and gender dispropotionality in school punishment. *Urban Review*, 54,317-342.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2009). Defining and describing school-wide positive behavior support. In W. Sailor, G. Dunlap, G. Sugai, & R. Horner (Eds.), *Handbook of positive behavior support* (pp.307-326). New York: Spring Science and Business Media.

Sugai, G., Horner, R., & McIntosh, K. (2008). Best practices in developing a broad-scale system of school-wide positive behavior support. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology V* (Vol. 3, pp. 765-780). Bethesda, MD: The National Association of School Psychologists

Tallent-Runnels, M. K., Olivárez, A., & Candler-Lotven, A. C. (1993, January). *Reliability and validity of the reflective teaching instrument.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Austin.

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Barr, M. (2004). Fostering student learning: The relationship of collective teacher efficacy and student achievement. Leadership & Policy in Schools, 3(3), 189.

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. (2004). Principals' sense of efficacy: Assessing a promising construct. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*, 573-585.

Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 68, 202-248.

Warren, L. L. & Payne, B. D. (1997). Impact of middle grades' organization on teacher efficacy and environmental perceptions. Journal of Educational Research, 90(5), 301.

Yost, R. (2002). "I think I can": Mentoring as a means of enhancing teacher efficacy. Zero-tolerance policies effective in schools?: An evidentiary review and recommendations. *A report by the American Psychological Association Zero-Tolerance Task Force*.

APPENDIX A

Collective Teacher Efficacy
CE Scale- Short Form

Directions: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about your school from **strongly disagree** to **strongly agree**. Your answers are confidential.

Strongly Disagree 1	**Disagree 2**	**Somewhat Disagree 3**	**Somewhat Agree 4**	**Agree 5**	**Strongly Agree 6**

1.	Teachers in the school are able to get through to the most difficult students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2.	Teachers here are confident they will be able to motivate their students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3.	If a child doesn't want to learn teachers here give up.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4.	Teachers here don't have the skills needed to produce meaningful student learning.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5.	Teachers in this school believe every child can learn.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6.	These students come to school ready to learn.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7.	Home life provides so many advantages that students here are bound to learn.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8.	Students here just aren't motivated to learn.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9.	Teachers in this school do not have the skills to deal with student disciplinary problems.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10.	The opportunities in this community help ensure that these students will learn.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11.	Learning is more difficult at this school because students are worried about their safety.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12.	Drug and alcohol abuse in the community make learning difficult for students here.	1 2 3 4 5 6

APPENDIX B

Discretionary Offenses and Definitions

Region V Incidents of Discipline, Crime, and Violence 2012-2013
Top 7 Offenses in Region V, 2012-2013

Rank Offenses	Offense Code	Code	Definition
1	Defiance	D2C	Unwillingness to submit to authority or refusal to respond to a reasonable request. Any act that intentionally disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function. Any behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
2	Classroom/Campus Disruption	D5C	Unwillingness to submit to authority or refusal to respond to a reasonable request. Any act that intentionally disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function. Any behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
3	Obscene Language/Gestures	D6C	Unwillingness to submit to authority or refusal to respond to a reasonable request. Any act that intentionally disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function. Any behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
4	Altercations	F1T	Confrontation, tussle, or verbal/physical aggression that does not result in injury.
5	Disrespect	D1C	Unwillingness to submit to authority or refusal to respond to a reasonable request. Any act that intentionally disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function. Any behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.
6	Other School Violations	S3V Other School Code of Conduct Violation Not Otherwise Included	Violations that are inappropriate for school behavior.
7	Disruptive Demonstrations	D3C	Unwillingness to submit to authority or refusal to respond to a reasonable request. Any act that intentionally disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function. Any behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment.

APPENDIX C

Percent of Teacher Response by School

School	# of Teachers=FTE	Survey Response	% response
1	35	8	20%
2	33	21	64%
3	28	24	86%
4	41	10	22%
5	28	17	61%
6	36	24	67%
7	38	19	50%
8	11	9	82%
9	43	43	100%
10	42	17	41%
11	38	13	34%
12	25	14	56%
13	18	11	61%
14	42	39	93%
Region 5	**458**	**269**	**60%**