

Behavioral Dissonance and Contested Classroom Spaces:  
Teachers' and Students' Negotiations of Classroom Disciplinary Moments

by

Rebecca Neal

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved April 2014 by the  
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Alfredo J. Artiles, Chair  
Tyrone Howard  
Sarup R. Mathur  
Elizabeth B. Swadener

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2014

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to answer the following question, *How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom misbehavior is constructed, interpreted, and negotiated between teachers and students?* The literature on school disciplinary inequities from 2000 to 2010 was systematically reviewed. Utilizing qualitative research methods, this study drew insights from sociocultural theory and symbolic interactionism to investigate discipline inequities in moment-to-moment interactions between students and teachers during classroom conflicts. Fieldwork lasted approximately one school year and involved five male students and their two respective teachers. Data collection procedures included surveys, face to face and stimulated recall interviews, and direct and video observations. Findings revealed misbehavior is a ubiquitous notion in classroom everyday life; it is also malleable and dependent on contextual factors. In addition, classroom disciplinary moments between teachers and students are greatly influenced by intra and interpersonal factors. The situated intricacies and sophistication of teachers' and students' interpretations of negotiated classroom disciplinary moments are also reported. This study also sheds new insights into the situated nature of misbehavior as it arises from teachers' and students' sense making of classroom disciplinary moments and the findings have implications for teachers, school administrators, policy makers, students, and parents/guardians.

## DEDICATION

To my grandparent, aunts, and uncles who have departed this earth, I dedicate my dissertation in honor and in loving memory of you: Rebecca Turner, Hamp Neal, Mathew Williams, Momma Ducie, Bishop, Reuben, Cecil, Earsel, Mattie, Odessa, and Rutha.

To those I have known and God also took home, I also dedicate my dissertation to you: Leroy Thomas, Howard Porter, Reverend Sligh, Stanley Sandifer, and Hugh and Phyliss Schuck. Most importantly, to my father, Roger W. Neal, Sr., whose spirit visits me in my dreams and while I am awake; I dedicate the sweat and tears of all my joys and sadness of completing this dissertation to you, Dad. This lifetime achievement is for you.

Mom, I love you and the labor of my dissertation is dedicated to you. To my brother Aaron, I love you and also dedicate this dissertation to you. I also dedicate this dissertation to Dianne Binns, Mary Neal, Mary Sandifer, Penny, Rev. Thomas, my aunts, uncles (especially Larry), cousins, nieces, nephews, brothers, and sister.

To my blessed cousin, Maria, I dedicate this dissertation to you. During this process while I felt overwhelmed and as if I were drowning in the process, it was you who became my self-contained underwater breathing apparatus. Without you, I would not have made it. To Clifford Ray whom I love, I also dedicate this dissertation to you.

To my second set of parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cheryl and John Allen, I dedicate this dissertation to you. To my Godchildren, Kamar, Kobey, Miccala, and Tristen, I love each of you and also dedicate this dissertation to you. To Xavier, baby Stephanie, and her sister Maddie, I love you very much and this dissertation is also dedicated to you.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to people who had the desire to attend school, but for whatever reasons did not or were denied the opportunity.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank my family and friends for your support. I would also like to thank my dissertation chair, Alfredo Artiles, for your unending support and dedication. Of course, I have to thank my committee members, Tyrone Howard, Sarup Mather, and Elizabeth “Beth” Blue Swadener for your guidance along the way. Elizabeth Kozleski, I thank you for the life lessons learned and appreciate your encouragement. Each of you has made the work that I do better.

A special thank you to Dr. Dean and Ms. Nelson. You both paved the way for me. Dan Battey, Karlyn, and Luis, we make a great team. I especially thank you, Dan, for all of the wonderful opportunities over the years. I would also like to thank Caroline Tuner for shared insights and mentoring. I would also like to thank Aydin, the Equity Alliance team members, old and new, with special thanks to David, Taucia, Kathleen, Seena, Amanda, and Federico. In addition, I would like to thank the Sociocultural Research Group and my “graduation-or-bust” friends and colleagues. Cean, I am moved by your commitment to the pursuit of excellence. In the words of my friend, Kim, “We Rock.” A big thanks to you Lacey for leading the way and being a champion to us all. Adama and Carol S., I too am inspired by you. To Nick, Joy, Haesung, Mohamed, Daniel, Stuart, Adai, and Melanie thank you for helping to develop my ideas and sharing your intellectual insights with me. To my Bryn Mawr family: Barb, Carol Q., Donna, Thitya, Fran, and Jessica, we started out as colleagues, became friends, and are now sisters.

Matt and Madison, you are both awesome and special to me. Thank you to my friends, Wyetta and Linda; You both saw me through. Jodi, were an expected blessing and Godsend. To Jane Fesler, you inspire me and I thank you for being you.

Mike and Jeanne, thank you for the support, love, guidance, and patience. Thank you for visiting me and reminding me along the way, I can do it. I will forever cherish our friendship. Thank you, Dr. Ewbank, for your kind ways and support. Thank you to all of the departmental and Hayden Library staff who helped to answer my questions and always willing to lend a helping hand. Thank you to Sarah for staying on top of things and keeping everyone organized.

Dr. Patton, thank you for believing in me and creating opportunities for me. You have truly been a friend and mentor. Dr. Waegerle, whom I affectionately call Dr. Mom, this is for you. Dr. Haysbert, your voice still rings true in my head, and I rely on life and educational lessons taught by you.

Thank you to my cousins, Cathy and Ross, for your love and prayers. Fountain of Life Church and the Women's Tuesday Night Bible Study, you have truly been my lifeline during this process. Thank you, Camphor Church, for your prayers and cards sent to me. To Rev. Campbell and Dr. Crutchfield, I thank you reminding me that all things are possible. To the entire Papacek family, I say thank you for your love. Keenan, thank you for all of the kindness you extended toward me.

To my friend Buff, knowing you and relying on your inspirational words got me through. To my friend who I affectionately call King, our long conversations served me well, and I thank you for looking after me. It was your caring ways, knowledge, and insights that helped me to understand that I can do this. I now run with stallions because of you. To my friend, Amy (and Pat), who has been one of my strongest cheerleaders and closest friends, thank you. To my friend Jeni, thank you for sharing your insights and taking time to help me talk through my ideas. To my friend Susan, thank you.

Luke and Idara, I love you both and thank you for the support and consistent phone calls. Knowing both of you makes me a better person. Jason, your assistance and support along the way was appreciated and for that I say thank you. Jeffrey and Asher, I thank you for the good times shared. Cousin Mike, you helped me when I did not know what to do; and for that I say thank you. To the Arizona Neal family, thank you for your support and great family gatherings.

To all of my fellow Hamptonians, the 36 Woodland crew (Deanna, Tremane, and Nikki), Kira, Ronnie, Carolyn, Courtney, Chris, Jerry, Shawn, and Leon: I love you and thank you for your friendship. To Mike and Michelle, I miss you, and thank you for the years of friendship. Sherrie (and Tony), I finally finished.

To my cousins, Wilma, Anita, and Joyce, we did it! I love you all so much and thank you for your unselfish love. To my cousin Rob, I thank you for taking care of my cousins, so they could take care of me. Maria, again, you have been my rock, and without you, I would not have made it. Thank you for everything. Scott, we finally got it together – In God’s time, not ours. Thank you for your support, commitment, and love.

Katrina, Percy, and Xavier, we did it. Thank you for opening your home and hearts to me. I am truly blessed to have you in my life and thank God for you.

Clifford, I thank God for you. I appreciate your guidance and for being my surrogate father. I love you much.

To my grandmother Maryann, mother, Fern and brother, Aaron, I share this accomplishment with you. You have stood by me and supported me my entire life. Thank you for the sacrifices that you have made unending support and loving me as I am.

To all of my unsung heroes and names who I have not mentioned, *Thank You!*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
Defining School Discipline.....	4
Consequences of Discipline Inequities.....	7
Explanations of Discipline Inequities .....	10
Cultural Differences: Spaces for Misunderstandings .....	11
Cultural Deficit Perspectives: Spaces as Negative Judgment .....	15
Institutional Factors: Spaces for Delimitations of Power .....	17
Purpose of the Study and Research Question.....	18
2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	22
Literature Review Search Methods .....	22
Results of Review.....	24
Foci and Features of Research Studies.....	25
Foci of Discipline Inequities Research .....	27
Design Methodology .....	31
Data Analysis Procedures .....	33
Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures and Data Sources....	34
Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures .....	34
Mixed Methodologies Data Analysis Procedures .....	36

CHAPTER	Page
Geographic Locations of Studies .....	37
Analytic Level of Study .....	38
Target Grade .....	40
Summary of Research on School Discipline Inequities .....	42
Explanations for Discipline Inequities.....	43
Cultural Deficit Perspective .....	43
Race and Gender .....	44
Socio-demographic Status .....	47
Cultural Differences .....	49
Institutional Factors .....	52
Summary of Explanations for Disciplinary Inequities .....	58
Conceptual Framework .....	59
Research Question.....	67
3 METHODOLOGY .....	68
Research Design .....	68
Study Context: Intelligently Designed Academy .....	70
Site Access .....	74
Participants.....	75
Recruitment of Teachers and Students .....	75
Participant Profiles .....	77
B.G. ....	77
Byron.....	79



CHAPTER	Page
Cookie .....	81
Jonathan .....	83
Lil P .....	84
Teachers .....	86
Data Collection Procedures and Sources .....	86
Study Question (Part A): What are students' and teachers' conceptualizations of misbehavior?.....	88
Study Question (Part B): How do teachers and students account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted, and negotiated? .....	90
Data Analysis Procedures .....	93
Trustworthiness .....	98
Credibility .....	98
Confirmability.....	99
Triangulation.....	100
Dependability.....	100
4 CONCEPTUALIZATIONS, INTERPRETATIONS, CO- CONSTRUCTIONS, AND NEGOTIATIONS OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY MOMENTS.....	102

CHAPTER	Page
Overview of the Situated Nature of Misbehavior and the Development of Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	103
Deriving Meaning: An Outline of Interpretative Process .....	107
Teachers' and Students' Conceptualizations of Misbehavior.....	109
Teachers' and Students' Negotiations of Classrooms	
Disciplinary Moments .....	113
Externalized Student Behavior .....	121
Student Intentionality .....	127
Teacher versus Student Fault .....	131
Trouble, Intervention, and Confrontation.....	136
Student Punishments and Teacher Consequences.....	148
Immediate Reactions .....	155
The Progression of Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	158
Classroom Disciplinary Moments: Exchanges, Episodes, and Events.....	161
Exchange .....	161
Episode .....	163
Event .....	166
Phases .....	175
Phases 1-2: Launching and Interpretations of Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	177
Phase 3: Coding of Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	178

CHAPTER	Page
Phase 4: Public Recognition of Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	178
Phase 5: Sanctions during Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	179
Phase 6: Closure of Classroom Disciplinary Moments ....	180
Summary of Teachers' and Students' Understandings of Misbehavior and Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	180
5 DISCUSSION.....	182
The Situated Nature of Misbehavior.....	182
How do Teachers and Students Conceptualize Misbehavior? .....	185
How do Teachers and Students Negotiate Classroom Disciplinary Moments? .....	189
Recommendations for Future Research.....	200
Limitations of the Study.....	204
Implications for Studying Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	205
REFERENCES .....	209
APPENDIX	
A COMPLETE LIST OF THE ARTICLES INCLUDED IN LITERATURE REVIEW.....	227
B COMPLETE LIST OF JOURNALS BY TYPE .....	229
C COMPLETE LIST OF ARTICLES CATEGORIZED BY THEMATIC FOCI.....	231

APPENDIX	Page
D FIGURE: THE COMPLEXITIES OF CULTURE.....	233
E ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	235
F INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	237

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Review of School Discipline Literature by Journal Field.....	26
2. Focus of Discipline Inequity Research Studies by Year.....	28
3. Research Studies on Discipline Inequities by Methodology .....	32
4. Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures by Year and Author.....	35
5. Discipline Studies by Geographic Region and Research Method .....	37
6. Discipline Studies by Analytical Level and Research Method.....	39
7. Target Population.....	41
8. Inquiry-guided Data Collection .....	87
9. Data Analysis Procedures .....	94
10. Teachers' and Students' Mental Organization of Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	116
11. Externalized Student Behavior (Launching): Symbols and Significations .....	122
12. Student Intentionality (Interpretation): Symbols and Significations .....	130
13. Fault (Coding): Symbols and Significations.....	132
14. Trouble, Interventions, and Confrontations (Public Recognition): Symbols and Significations.....	137
15. Punishments and Consequences (Sanction): Symbols and Significations .....	151
16. Student Immediate Reactions (Closure): Symbols and Significations ....	156
17. Teacher Immediate Reactions (Closure): Symbols and Significations....	157

Table	Page
18. Byron and Jonathan Event with Ms. Esther.....	170
19. Progression of Negotiated Classroom Disciplinary Moments, by Person.....	177
20. Phases 1-2: Launching and Interpretation.....	178
21. Phase 3: Coding .....	178
22. Phase 4: Public Recognition .....	179
23. Phase 5: Sanction .....	179
24. Phase 6: Closure.....	180

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Frequency of Discipline Inequity Studies by Year and Research Methods.....	33
2. Conceptual Framework.....	60
3. Diagram of Intelligently Designed Academy .....	72
4. Logic Model for Understanding Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	106
5. Internal Interpretative Meaning-making Process.....	109
6. Cookie's Internal Interpretative Process of Symbol.....	114
7. Mr. Abrahm's Internal Interpretative Process of Byron .....	147
8. Formations of Classroom Disciplinary Moments .....	160
9. Jonathan and Ms. Esther Exchange .....	163
10. Byron and Mr. Abrahm Episode.....	164
11. Lil P and Ms. Esther Episode.....	166
12. Progression of Negotiated Classroom Disciplinary Moments.....	176

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

There is evidence to suggest that schools do not equally or consistently enforce discipline rules among students. Researchers confirm that students from racially diverse backgrounds are disciplined more often and more harshly when compared to White students (Cantor et al., 2002; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Richart, Brooks, & Soler, 2003; Toldson, 2008). Nationwide, records of school discipline referrals showed that Native American Indian, Hispanic,<sup>1</sup> and African American<sup>2</sup> males were most likely to be suspended, expelled, or removed from the classroom setting (Noguera, 2003; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008).

Skiba et al. (2011) recently reported that students of all races can exhibit similar behaviors, but African American and Hispanic students were more often suspended or expelled. Even when looking at district and state level discipline records, Skiba et al. (2011) reported that students of color have over a 25-year history of being suspended more often than their peers. The aforementioned trends suggest that African American and Hispanic students are at an increased risk for unfair treatment.

In 2003, Mendez and Knoff, reported that a disproportionate percentage of African American males, as early as elementary school, experienced school suspensions at three times the rate of their White male counterparts. African American females were

---

<sup>1</sup> The terms Hispanic and Latino/a are used to describe people of Latin-American descent in North America. Both terms are used interchangeably throughout this paper.

<sup>2</sup> The terms African American or Black are used to describe people of African descent in North America.



eight times more likely as White females to be suspended in elementary school. Mendez and Knoff (2003) also commented that students of color were overrepresented in suspensions and that “at the middle school level, almost one-half of all [African American] males and almost one-third of all [African American] females experienced at least one suspension” (p. 38).

Strongly articulated within the literature on school discipline is a deficit perspective suggesting that students struggle at school because of personal factors related to their individual characteristics, having nothing to do with structural or institutional forces (Artiles, 2003; Gay, 2002, 2010; Lee, 2003, 2010). Deficit perspectives situate problems and difficulties that students experience as something that is produced within, by, or due to individual circumstances (Valencia, 2010). This viewpoint does not account for institutional factors, human resilience, perseverance, or within group differences; and only illuminates negative and simplistic thinking. Urgently needed in this research domain are studies that broaden the unit of analysis beyond individual student deficits and that account for contextual and institutional forces.

There is no doubt that discipline inequities within U.S. public schools exist and that current discipline studies report *trends* in infractions, but ignore students’ *interpretations* of events during teacher-student conflict *incidents* that trigger discipline referrals and sanctions. Indeed, current studies fail to account for an emic perspective that would enrich analyses of discipline inequities. With that said, and given the complexities embedded within school discipline and the fact that some student groups are repeatedly being excluded from school through school disciplinary practices (e.g., office referrals, dismissals, suspensions, expulsions), there is a need to examine school discipline

problems through different lenses. Addressing these limitations, this study examined students' and teachers' perspectives and thought processes during instances of teacher-student conflict within the classroom.

Why do we need to learn about students' thought processes during instances of teacher-student conflict within the classroom? It is necessary for scholars, practitioners, and society at large to understand how current school disciplinary practices significantly marginalize certain student groups (e.g., African American or Latino), by creating barriers that exclude and deny them access to educational opportunities. When students are suspended or expelled from school, they are not learning and simultaneously being denied their educational rights. Currently, much attention is given to documenting infractions in decontextualized way. It is important that researchers consider students' perspectives as a way to understand how students come to negotiate decisions made during teacher-student conflicts that can lead to their involvement in classroom disruptions. Given the consistent disproportionate representation of students of color in school disciplinary sanctions, we must now alter existing disciplinary practices with new approaches that consider the sociocultural contexts in which children live, learn, feel, and behave.

The representation of students of color in school discipline is indeed a complex problem, but before I begin to unpack it, it is necessary to define explicitly the terms and constructs used in this study. For this purpose, I define in the next section school discipline. While research trends suggest there are discipline inequities, and there is consensus that discipline inequities exist with applications of behavioral sanctions and referrals, there is considerable disagreement on how researchers interpret these data and

how inequities are explained. For these reasons, I also discuss the consequences of discipline inequities and then move into the main explanations of discipline inequities represented in the literature. I end the chapter by introducing the research question for this study.

### **Defining School Discipline**

School discipline policies are necessary to ensure the physical wellbeing of students. A consistent finding in school discipline research is that schools are expected to maintain safe environments while maximizing learning opportunities for all students. In this vein, school discipline serves to advance a dual agenda, an organizational goal (order) and an equity goal (enhance learning opportunities) for some students while denying the educational rights of others (Losen, 2011; Morrison, Redding, Fisher, & Peterson, 2009; Sprague & Horner, 2009).

There is no one definition for school discipline. Generally, school discipline is defined as:

school policies and actions taken by school personnel with students to prevent or intervene with unwanted behaviors, primarily focusing on school conduct codes and security methods, suspension from school, corporal punishment, and teachers' methods of managing students' actions in class. (Cameron, 2006, p. 219)

Although multiple interpretations regarding school discipline exists, the Office of Civil Rights has provided explicit definitions of disciplinary infractions that schools are expected to refer to when completing surveys and reporting students' involvement in disciplinary infractions (see e.g., Losen, 2011); however, "because there are no federal

requirements regarding schools and districts to use a standard set of definitions in their daily operations”, great variability exists among schools, within districts, and between states (D. Losen, personal communication, December 20, 2011). Nonetheless, generally

disciplinary exclusion from school falls into the following categories: short-term out of school suspensions, long-term suspensions, placement in a disciplinary alternative program or school, and expulsion; but for serious offenses schools are increasingly referring students to law enforcement agents or asking police to arrest students. Other common less severe responses include in-school suspension, detention, after-school-detention and Saturday school-detention. (D. Losen, personal communication, May 26, 2012)

The literature on discipline inequities also covers the prevalence of harsh disciplinary sanctions. Cantor et al. (2002) reported most U.S. public K (kindergarten) - 12 schools had policies in place that require teachers to address misbehaviors and discipline problems within the classroom. If, however, the incident was serious enough to require additional assistance, as mentioned previously, school policies often direct teachers to seek further recourse in the form of school administrative intervention, security or police action, or some other unspecified type of intermediation. Regardless of the different types of disciplinary sanctions (e.g., warning, office referral, dismissal, in school suspension, restitution), out of school suspensions were also the most widely used form of discipline by schools. Despite the popularity for schools to use suspensions as a form of disciplinary correction, Toldson, (2011), Dupper (1994), and Dupper, Theriot and

Craun, (2009) determined that suspensions were ineffective, destructive to personal self-esteem, and often an antecedent to students dropping out of school.

The U.S. Department of Education defines suspension as “an out-of school suspension, during which a student is excluded from school for disciplinary reasons for 1 school day or longer; it does not include students who served their suspension in school” (Planty et al., 2009, p. 70). This means that a teacher’s choice to issue a behavioral referral coupled with an administrative decision to suspend or expel a student can function as an act of exclusion. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), about 7% of students were suspended from public elementary and secondary schools at least once in 2006; however, the percentage of African American students suspended was more than double that, reaching 15 percent. The suspension percentages for other student groups during the same year were: 8% of American Indian/Alaska Native students, 7% of Hispanic students, 5% of White students, and 3% of Asian/Pacific Islander students (NCES, 2006). Expulsion rates were a bit lower, of which percentages included 0.5% African American, 0.3% American Indian/Alaska Native, 0.2% Hispanic, 0.1% White, and 0.1% Asian/Pacific Islander students (NCES, 2006).

A focused analysis of school discipline indicates there is great variability in how schools, districts, and states define, interpret, and implement disciplinary procedures. Such great irregularity can contribute to the perpetuation of behavioral misunderstandings and discipline inequities between teachers and students, especially when certain student groups are repeatedly represented in school discipline. It is for these reasons, plus others

later discussed in this chapter, that we must take a closer examination of school discipline inequities beginning with the consequences of inequitable disciplinary practices.

### **Consequences of Discipline Inequities**

There is no doubt that the consequences of exclusionary discipline practices are widespread and can have serious lifelong implications for students. Suspensions and expulsions are among the most central practice that limits educational opportunities resulting in the “denial of access to learning opportunities that occurs when students are not in school” (Townsend, 2000, p. 382). Routinely argued is that inequitable access to educational opportunities contributes to lower academic achievement (Artiles, Trent, & Palmer, 2004; Blanchett, 2006).

Discipline referrals are often indicators of future school difficulties, dropping out of school, or are considered precursors for placement into special education classes for students identified with a learning disability (LD) or an emotional-behavioral disorder (E/BD; Mendez et al., 2002; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002). When students are not in school or exposed to the school curriculum, their learning is inhibited both academically and socially. In this way, the removal or separation of students from the classroom serves as a primer for significant academic and social difficulties. It can also inhibit positive peer relationships which are crucial for students developing adaptive social skills (Mathur & Rutherford, 1991). This situation compounds the already inequitable conditions in which students of color are educated, since these groups tend to attend schools that are fraught with deep structural inequities (e.g., lower levels of funding, lower quality teachers, limited curricular and infrastructural resources; Anyon, 2005).

In general, students being issued school discipline sanctions seem to have futures full with obstacles that become impediments to academic and social success. Besides quitting school, several scholars have noted students' involvement in school suspensions are connected to several other undesirable educational and negative life outcomes. For instance, when students are repeatedly issued school disciplinary sanctions, consequences can be serious and have long lasting effects. Common among students receiving high disciplinary referrals are lower grades, lower levels of school engagement, increased truancy, and higher dropout rates (Toldson, 2011). Besides experiencing academic shortcomings, consequences of exclusionary discipline practices can also include students developing a more negative attitude (Toldson, 2011) and deleterious feelings toward oneself and school, as well as feelings of rejection (Nichols, 2004; Rocque, 2010; Sprague & Walker, 2000).

We know that misbehavior can eclipse positive classroom participation and generally result in behavioral referrals and other type of disciplinary actions that can lead to classroom exclusion, school denial, or any number of negative life consequences. As previously stated, it has been shown that not only are exclusionary school discipline practices, such as suspension and expulsion, associated with a higher likelihood of dropping out of school (Mendez, 2003), but also, according to the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University (2005), the greatest predictor of incarceration is a history of school disciplinary referrals. With so many children becoming involved in the juvenile justice system who have a history of school disciplinary referrals, this cycle of getting into trouble at school, being referred to the school administrative offices, receiving some type of behavioral sanction such as being dismissed, suspended or

expelled, and dropping out of school has been described as the school-to prison pipeline (Wald & Losen, 2003). Topping the list are African American males who are considered the most likely group of any other ethnic or gender group to drop out of high school (Stearns & Glennie, 2006).

The consequences of lost schooling opportunities are of great magnitude. In addition to being involved with the courts and juvenile justice system, becoming incarcerated, or dropping out of school, many students represented in school disciplinary measures are ultimately placed in special education classes for students with E/BD. With that said, it can easily be concluded that a cycle of behavioral referrals, combined with special education identification and placement, adds to the permanency of students being removed from the general education environment by distancing students' exposure to the general education curriculum (Skiba et al., 2002; Townsend, 2002).

Similar to school disciplinary practices, when compared to White students, African American students are 1.13 times more likely to be labeled LD, 2.41 times more likely to be identified as having intellectual disabilities, and 1.68 times more likely to be found eligible to receive E/BD services (Klinger et al., 2005). In addition to being more likely identified with special educational needs, African American students are also overrepresented in special education referrals and placement (Donovan & Cross, 2002). For example, African American males in particular comprise approximately 17% of student in public schools but represent 41% of special education, of which 85% are male (Sen, 2006). These findings suggest that need for research to be done that can show linkages between culture, behavior and institutional practices (Mathur, 2007).



Special education identification involves access to an alternative curriculum and academic instruction often outside of the general education setting that can be in an isolated special education classroom with other special need students receiving similar services; this is particularly the case for students labeled E/BD. In many cases, when students are removed from the general classroom setting and denied access to the same educational opportunities as their peers, both short- and long-term learning opportunities are compromised. It is for this reason that inappropriate special education identification can be considered to adversely affect the educational outcomes for students, and also be viewed as a mechanism that can result in the students being distanced from exposure to the general education curriculum.

Whether the act of removing students from the general education setting is for minor behavioral issues, major disciplinary reasons, or to receive special education services, placement outside of the general education setting becomes a type of school sanctioned exclusion for students. In this way, the removal of students from the general education classroom, regardless of reason, potentially compromises students' learning and contributes to the ongoing loss and denial of direct access to learning opportunities within the general education environment.

With that said, having discussed consequences of school discipline inequities, in the next section, I detail explanations represented in the literature surrounding school discipline inequities for African American and Hispanic students.

### **Explanations of Discipline Inequities**

There are at least three traditional explanations in the literature regarding students of color being so highly represented in school discipline: (a) cultural

difference, (b) cultural deficit perspectives, and (c) institutional factors. The main points of each explanation are briefly discussed.

### **Cultural Differences: Spaces for Misunderstandings**

A possible reason for discipline inequities and students of color being issued behavioral referrals more often is because of cultural differences. Specifically, it is argued that teachers' and school administrators' backgrounds and experiences are substantially different from students of color's ways of being, in that way, dissimilarities are seen as obstacles. This discontinuity can negatively shape educators' perceptions of students and their cultural assets. The result often is a cultural divide manifested in a number of ways in which schools do not recognize students' cultural backgrounds, behavioral codes, and community values as being important; or, find ways to build on students' cultural assets. Cultural divides can produce a lens for teachers and school personnel to interpret students' behavior, physical gestures and manner of speech as misconduct or behavior in need of correction and discipline. Consequently, students may also interpret teachers and school personnel's communication styles as one-sided, inflammatory or negatively judgmental.

When cultural differences act as a divide, they can adversely mediate teachers' judgments of students' use of language, movement style, and self-expression. In a study involving Latino students, Morris (2005) reported they were viewed as threatening and issued severe disciplinary consequences by teachers and school personnel. Along with this study, commonly expressed in the literature was the misjudgment and ill characterization of students of color. Other studies involving students of color also

showed that teachers considered African American and Hispanic students to be deviant, deceptive and challenging to authority (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008). The argument could be made that these cultural differences mediate in some way the inequitable application of discipline sanctions.

The existence of cultural difference between students and teachers for the most part is inescapable, but these differences do not have to be insurmountable barriers. Instead, cultural differences that exist in the classroom should be considered opportunities for teachers and students to work together in ways that teachers can be successful at teaching and students can be successful at academic and social learning.

A limitation of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis is that it tends to homogenize communities and populations, at the expense of not accounting for within group difference. Lacking in this explanation is that some student groups whose culture is different from a school's culture (e.g., some Southeast Asian groups), are still successful and manage to do well at school.

Although cultural discontinuities between school and home expectations of students can inhibit social and academic success, that is not always the case. Teachers who strive to understand the cultural richness students of color embody acknowledge the importance of a students' background. In making connections with students in ways that are culturally relevant to them, teachers can have a positive effect on student engagement and classroom participation (Howard, 2001).

Culture and cultural differences are multifaceted and complex. Culture and learning vary greatly from student to student and the existence of cultural differences is indisputable which at times complicates classroom learning, productivity and

participation for students. Perhaps a greater limitation to cultural difference explanation is how culture is defined. Nieto (1999) considers culture to be a number of interrelated characteristics consisting of more than artifacts, traditions, and rituals. It is erroneous to assume that culture is static, fixed, and deterministic. A difficulty then in applying notions of cultural difference to explain students' success or failure is that culture is dynamic, multifaceted, deeply embedded in context, and influenced by social factors (Nieto, 1999). With that said, an important aspect in students experiencing success at school is not cultural congruence or difference, but instead how culture is embraced - as a barrier, limitation, or opportunity for school attainment.

Another argument that questions the cultural difference hypothesis is that the notion of cultural difference is not as straightforward as some proponents of this explanation might suggest. For instance, Erickson (1996) referred to cultural differences as a *border* or a *boundary* and explained his analysis using Barth's (1969) work on the reconceptualization of ethnicity. Following Barth, Erickson (1996) argued that individuals have the capacity to treat cultural differences as more or less problematic and that when differences are recognized, but not politicized, the advantage of one person over another does not occur. This way, cultural differences function as a mechanism that is treated as a boundary because it is not related to the exercise of power. On the other hand, cultural differences are treated as a border when differences are politicized, and thus power is used to identify such differences (Barth, 2000; Erickson, 1996). This is done when people considered to possess cultural traits (i.e., differences) are brought into question, and "relegated to a position of disadvantage in power relative to those who do not possess those [traits]" (Erickson, 1996, p. 294). Barth (2000) implied that the

conditions under which cultural differences are treated as a border or boundary are dependent upon the interactions of people, and that affordances are created by social processes not by cognitive ability. Regarding discipline inequities, when the manner in which a student moves, (i.e., walks), speaks, hair style, physical dress is brought into question to the point that a school's code of conduct rule is considered violated, differences in behavioral expressions are then treated as a border because school personnel exercised their power to construe cultural traits or practices of "the other" as problems or deficits that need to be controlled. On the contrary, if students did not receive a reprimand for these types of cultural expressions or consequences were not applied to control such cultural differences, then in that way, students' cultural assets (or traits) were not politicized, and therefore, so called cultural differences were treated as a boundary because power was not exercised to position students as problematic.

McDermott and Gospodinoff (1981) also utilized Barth's boundary-border distinction within school classrooms. They studied classroom interactions between first grade students and their teacher and concluded that the difficulties students sometimes experienced were caused by how students' use of language and cultural assets were utilized and framed within certain situations (McDermott & Gospodinoff, 1981). It was concluded that although cultural differences existed between teachers and students, it was the interpretation of culture and how it was framed (as a border or boundary) that made the difference. Erickson and Shultz (1982) specified how cultural differences were treated in the classroom was dependent upon the presence or absence of a teacher-student relationship. This means that the crucial issue in classrooms is not the presence or absence of so called cultural differences, but rather in how culture is framed and how

cultural assets are utilized, and to what degree cultural differences are viewed as a border or boundary (Erickson, 1996). For example, if two students are joking with one another or playing the dozens (see Abrahams, 1962), if treated as a border students' actions could be interpreted as a verbal altercation or another type of disciplinary infraction. If, however, one understands certain cultural codes that are personally relevant to students, it would be understood that these students were engaging in acts of "signifying" (see e.g., Lee, 2007).

Nieto (2004) also explained that school policies and practices can contribute to inequities because policies can be grounded on certain cultural assumptions and thus, discriminate against particular groups of students. For example, African American students using a pick to style their hair is not an act of rebellion, but simply an expression of flair. The same is true for Hispanic students refraining from making eye contact at times; these students are not always engaging in unruliness, but rather looking downward as an act of respect. These types of cultural misinterpretations can lead to inequitable disciplinary action and it is for these reasons that school policies and practices can both inhibit or advance the educational success of students, thus being seen as unjust.

### **Cultural Deficit Perspectives: Spaces as Negative Judgment**

An alternative explanation of school discipline inequities is grounded in deficit thinking (Valencia, 2010). In this explanation, students of color are often viewed as inadequate, problematic, deficient, or possessing subordinate ways of knowing that contribute to their representation in school discipline. This is often translated into teacher and administrator biases and prejudices.

Deficit perspectives entail negative viewpoints and often consider students as damaged, insufficient, or lacking essential qualities and resources considered necessary to be successful at school academically and socially. A central tenet of deficit thinking is that cultures and environments different from what is considered mainstream (i.e., White and middle class) are inferior. This perspective attributes educational challenges and low school success or failure to genetics, linguistic deficits, and inabilities that reside within the student or his/her community.

Pertaining to school discipline, a deficit perspective considers being raised in poverty as a qualifier for students' proclivity to transgress (Sampson & Lauristen, 1994) and be disruptive in classrooms. Giving weight to this argument is the sheer number of students of color (i.e., African American) living in poverty and the suggestion that low socioeconomic conditions can be linked to student misbehavior and other deficits. As such, Wu, Pink, Crain, and Moles (1982) reported 30 years ago that socioeconomic status was considered a factor for students being at an increased risk to receive more disciplinary referrals.

Aspects of this type of deficit thinking still hold true today. The NCES indicated in 2006 that more than one in three African American children lived in poverty. It also reported that significant proportions of African American children are heavily concentrated in the highest poverty schools and specified that 31% of youth living in large metropolitan areas also live in poverty (NCES, 2006).

Other researchers have also suggested socioeconomic status as a cause for certain groups of students receiving increased discipline referrals (Baker, 2005; Jones, Caravaca, Cizek, Horner, & Vincent, 2006; Richart, Brooks, & Soler, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002;

Zhang & Katsiyannis, 2002); however, even after controlling for socioeconomic status, researchers determined that significant racial disproportionality still existed in school discipline referrals, concluding that “systematic and racial discrimination” does occur and originates at the classroom level (Skiba et al., 2000, p. 16). Kelly (2010) also found that when factors of poverty and low achievement were taken into account that African American students in fact were no more disruptive than any other student. The National Education Policy Center (2010) also addressed the poverty-discipline link and indicated that disparities in school discipline referrals were not due to poverty or inherently bad behavior, and showed that students of color were more likely to be suspended for non-violent and very minor acts of misbehavior (e.g., disruption); however, “according to the 2000 US census, children growing up in homes near or below the poverty level were more likely to be expelled” (Losen, 2011).

### **Institutional Factors: Spaces for Delimitations of Power**

The institutional context is the third traditional explanation regarding students of color representation in school discipline inequities. It is suggested that certain school characteristics such as building level policies, ethnicity and gender of the majority of teachers, the composition of the student population (percentage of minority students), number of students receiving free and reduced lunch, or the location of the school influence how students are viewed and treated while they are at school (Payne & Welch, 2010). To that end, several scholars determined that schools having a higher minority student population often utilized stricter discipline sanctions than schools with fewer students of color.



Other structural factors can also produce inequitable school practices that result in biased treatment of students. Examples of these forces include tracking, testing, curriculum selection, physical design of the building, and pedagogical practices that can individually or collectively reinforce inequities (Nieto, 2004; Reagle, 2006). Because schools are governed by policies that may not align with the values of students and those living in their communities, the impact of school policies can negatively impact the educational opportunities for some students (Nieto, 2004). As an alternative view to the traditional explanations outlined above, I re-frame in the next chapter the problem of discipline inequities by considering oppressive ideologies, deviance and labeling in the production of such racial inequities.

### **Purpose of the Study and Research Question**

To conclude, there is a need to understand classroom behavior through different vantage points so that students' interpretive and meaning-making processes during instances of teacher-student classroom conflict can be understood. Otherwise, students of color will remain excluded from educational environments and continue to experience reduced learning opportunities at school. With that said, and because acts of deviance and misbehavior are caused by a wide variety of factors, it is imperative to consider sociocultural aspects.

As previously explained in this chapter, current studies on school discipline do not account for culture or student perspective. It is necessary to create an alternative framework that is attentive to interactions between teachers and students, and that considers cultural aspects during episodes of potential classroom conflict. One way to do so is by documenting students' perspectives and examining what happens between

teachers and students during classroom conflicts; this will enable researchers to obtain insights into why students make certain behavioral choices. It is also necessary to take into account students' points of view rather than relying solely on teachers' perspectives when enforcing school discipline policies. By asking questions that seek clarification and "considerations of why" and explanations of "what does that mean?" creates new pathways of understanding student misbehavior in the classroom. This new understanding can only be achieved by investigating the *interactional* spaces that teachers and students independently occupy and share together in the classroom.

The education system, those within it, and policy makers have responsibilities to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to reach their best ability and succeed in and at school. At the macro-level, public policies should allow for equitable access to education as a means to creating better futures for all students, including African American males. On the micro-level, teachers must establish a classroom culture where all students regardless of their cultural and linguistic background are welcomed and supported, and provided with the best opportunity to learn (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006). By accounting for and giving attention to interactional processes between teachers and students, and considering student perspectives; learning environments that preserve the cultural integrity of every child while enhancing their educational success can be established and maintained (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995).

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore sociocultural factors that shape how students and teachers conceptualize misbehavior as a way to understand how these perceptions mediate classroom interactional processes that ultimately constitute the precursors of discipline infractions. This work is vital and takes into consideration the

importance of teacher and student relationships within K-12 classrooms. Specifically, I investigate student misconduct and study the explanations provided by students that lead to school disciplinary infractions. I approach the study of discipline inequities differently in that I examine a specific time scale, namely the moment-to-moment interactions between students and teachers while a conflict arises. Doing so allows for the study of such notions that have not yet been addressed conceptually or methodologically within school discipline studies. The guiding question addressed in this study is: How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom misbehavior is constructed, interpreted and negotiated between teachers and students?

This line of research could improve students' classroom experiences and aid teachers in understanding alternative ways to interact with students that could deescalate or minimize classroom disruptions. Working toward school success involves teachers and school administrators developing a raised awareness and sensitivity regarding students' interpretations of their school experiences. This level of consciousness can be pivotal in promoting a form of educational justice for students, especially those highly represented in school disciplinary sanctions. Thus, teachers must go beyond promoting awareness of the ways schools perpetuate social inequalities and reconstruct practices that provides all students opportunities to learn in academically rigorous ways (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In attempting to understand and advocate for the rights of students, material and social circumstances "must be understood in the context of concrete daily realities, across various environments" that "emphasize human and ecological values rather than commercial [ideals]" (Swadener & O'Brien, 2009, p. 121).

In this way, we can begin reconceptualizing the field of education with respect to school discipline. Through conscientious minds as “a teacher, researcher, teacher educator, professor, [we must] remind [ourselves] that [our] work goes beyond [ourselves] and that [our] decisions today will affect [students’] lives tomorrow” (Mathur, 2007, p. 23). In the next chapter, I present a review of the research literature on discipline inequities and the study’s conceptual framework.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

In this chapter, I review and critique extant literature on discipline in U.S. public schools. In doing so, I synthesized and critiqued empirical literature germane to inequities in school discipline policy implementation with a particular focus on Latino and African American male students. Both student groups are overrepresented in school discipline referrals and in exclusionary school disciplinary practices. Nationally, African American males are disproportionately represented and Latino students tend to be regionally overrepresented in school discipline.

I begin the chapter with a presentation of the methods used to conduct the literature review. Then I discuss the results of the review, including the features of selected studies, publication trends, methodological and data analysis procedures, and geographic location and grade levels targeted in these studies. The next section describes the explanations of discipline inequities represented in this research. Next, I point out consequences of school discipline sanctions. The chapter concludes with the study's conceptual framework and the study questions.

#### **Literature Review Search Methods**

An exhaustive literature review was conducted as a way to understand and explain inequities and disparities in U.S. public schools' exclusionary discipline practices involving Latino and African American male students. Using electronic databases and selective citations (Cooper, 1988) as a coverage approach, scholarly peer-reviewed articles published from 2000 to 2010 were examined.

A comprehensive and systematic search of electronic databases was performed using five educational and social science search engines: EBSCO HOST (Academic Search Premier SocINDEX with Full Text, Criminal Justice Abstract with Full Text), JSTOR, ProQuest, Wilson Web Social Sciences Full Text, and Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Google Scholar was used as a sixth search engine. During the searches, I combined the following key words and descriptive terms in multiple combinations until a saturation point was achieved: African American males *or* boys, *or* Black males *or* boys, *or* Hispanic males *or* boys, *or* Latino males *or* boys *and* school discipline, *or* school suspension, *or* school expulsion. Boolean operators were utilized for all searches.

The initial search on EBSCO HOST Academic Search Premier yielded 1713 results. Data based studies with quantitative, qualitative, or mixed designs were only selected. After removing duplicates, excluding studies that only included a female population, selecting studies only conducted within the United States, and those studies relevant to school discipline, the number of articles was narrowed down to 625. These remaining articles were examined to determine if the studies reported racial data on African American or Hispanic students, to which 168 articles were identified. The final review checked if studies met all six criteria. A study was selected if it

- a) was conducted within the United States;
- b) used quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods study designs;
- c) focused on explanations of school discipline problems or school discipline referrals, or on school discipline inequity trends;

- d) reported disaggregated data for African American and/or Hispanic students;
- e) was published in a peer reviewed journal; and
- f) was published between 2000 and 2010.

The final number of articles that satisfied the inclusion criteria for this literature review retrieved from EBSCO HOST Academic Search Premier yielded 14 articles.

The search was then replicated using Journal Storage Project (JSTOR), ProQuest, Wilson Web Education Full Text, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Google Scholar which yielded 59 more publications. From those publications, each article was examined to determine if it met all six selection criteria, of which 12 more articles were identified. The total number of published studies included in this literature review was 26 (see Appendix A for a complete list of the articles found eligible).

The most common reasons articles were excluded were because they were conceptual (e.g., Monroe, 2005; Noguera, 2003) or because data on African American or Hispanic student were not reported (e.g., Gregory et al., 2010). Given the specific focus of this literature review, some of the works by established scholars in this domain were not heavily represented (e.g., Losen, Skiba, Sprague, Sugai). Although the works of these scholars were not significantly visible in this review, the merit and contribution of their work still warrants mention. In the next section, I describe the results of the review of studies on school discipline inequities.

### **Results of Review**

How are racial disparity trends in school discipline among Latino and African American male students studied? This analysis of empirical research on racial disparity

trends in school discipline will aid in the understanding of who is empirically studying school discipline, where are these articles being published and how is discipline among specific minority groups (Latino and African American male students) being investigated. Specifically, I discuss publication outlets and trends, explanations of student behaviors within the literature, and methodological features of studies.

### **Foci and Features of Research Studies**

Publication trends were examined between 2000 and 2010. Described in Table 1 are the journal publication frequencies by year and organized by journal field. The number of studies published in one year was counted and then categorized as follows: journals with sociological perspectives included *Sociological Spectrum*, *Social Problems*, *Sociological Perspectives*, *Sociological Perspectives*, and *Youth & Society*; journals focusing on the education of African Americans included the *Journal of Negro Education*, *Negro Educational Review*, and the *Journal of African American Males in Education*.



Table 1

*Review of School Discipline Literature by Journal Field*

Journal Focus	Publication Year and Frequency						Total
	2000- 2001	2002- 2003	2004- 2005	2006- 2007	2008- 2009	2010	
Education of African Americans	-	-	1	1	1	1	4
General Education	-	1	1	-	-	1	3
Psychological	-	2	-	-	2	2	6
Special Education	-	2	-	1	-	-	3
Sociological	-	-	2	-	2	1	5
Urban Education	-	2	-	1	-	-	3
Other	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Total	0	7	5	3	5	6	26

Three journals were categorized as general education journals and included *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *Peabody Journal of Education*, and *American Journal of Education*. Journals focused on urban issues included *The Urban Review* and *Urban Education*. Five journals were categorized as psychological, which focused on mental functions or social behavior: *Journal of School Psychology*, *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *Journal of Community Psychology*, *Psychology in the Schools*, and *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Three journals were categorized as focusing on issues specifically relevant to special education: *Journal of Special Education*, *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, and *Education & Treatment of Children*. Two journals were categorized as other: *Criminology* and *Children & Schools* (see Appendix B for a complete list of journals by type).

There were only a handful of journals between 2000 and 2010 that published more than one empirical article on discipline that also included racially disaggregated data for African American or Hispanic students. These journals were: *Sociological Perspectives* ( $n = 2$ ), *Journal of Negro Education* ( $n = 2$ ), *Urban Review* ( $n = 2$ ), and *Psychology in the Schools* ( $n = 2$ ). Across journal categories, when comparing publications by focus area, the majority of studies ( $n = 6$ ) were published in psychology journals such as *Journal of School Psychology*, *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *Journal of Community Psychology*, *Psychology in the Schools*, and *Journal of Educational Psychology*. The average number of publications across the 11 years for articles published in psychology outlets was 0.5 publications a year. This also represents 23% of the total numbers of discipline articles published during 2000 to 2010 included within this review. Overall, during the 11-year period an average of 2.3 studies a year was published that focused on discipline and included racially disaggregated data for African American or Hispanic students.

### **Foci of Discipline Inequities Research**

Categories in which the discipline studies were organized included: (a) *perceptions* (what people think about school discipline and impressions of students, teachers, or school administrators); (b) *profiles*, institutional and individual demographics or characteristics (what students are involved in school discipline and which schools are more likely to have stricter discipline); and (c) *school disciplinary sanction patterns* (when infractions occur, types of infractions, and which student are being issued referrals; see Table 2).

Table 2

*Focus of Discipline Inequity Research Studies by Year*

Publication Year	Category of Study Foci			Total
	<i>Perceptions</i>	<i>Profiles</i>	<i>Patterns</i>	
2000-2001	-	-	-	0
2002-2003	3	2	2	7
2004-2005	2	2	1	5
2006-2007	-	-	3	3
2008-2009	4	-	1	5
2010	1	4	1	6
Totals	10	8	8	26

Articles that focused on perceptions included studies that obtained, analyzed, or documented the insights of administrators, teachers and students regarding various aspects of school discipline such as zero tolerance implementation, student perception of fairness, or teachers' perceptions of students' movement, style of speech and behavior. These were placed in a category called *perceptions*. Results of studies in this category revealed that school staff tended to view students from a deficit perspective and over emphasize the execution of discipline policies by issuing harsh punishments to students. A small number of studies investigated student perception of fairness of which students felt teachers unfairly issued school disciplinary sanctions to them. This category is discussed in greater detail within the explanations section of the chapter.

Studies focused on teacher or student characteristics were placed in the category called *profiles* (i.e., demographics - age, race, socioeconomic status, educational history, behavioral history, and gender). Studies that reported institutional demographics (e.g., percentage of student population receiving free and reduced lunch, percentage of student population that was minority, or location of school in a high crime neighborhood) were

also included in this category. This grouping included studies that examined the influence of personal characteristics and life experiences on behavior and individual decision-making. An example of a study represented in this category included studies that investigated whether or not students from certain backgrounds (e.g., low income or racial minority) were more inclined to demonstrate disruptive behaviors. Another example of a study included in this category was Payne and Welch's (2010) investigation of a school's use of exclusionary disciplinary measures. Results of this category suggested that schools with a higher minority student population or a higher percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch, tended to respond more punitively to student behaviors. The results of this category are also discussed later in greater detail within the explanations section of the chapter.

The *school disciplinary sanction patterns* category included studies that examined possible causes of discipline referrals, suspension and expulsion rates, conveyed patterns of discipline referrals, or percentages of specific student groups represented in behavioral offenses. Studies in this group aimed to answer questions such as (a) what grade level are office referrals most likely to occur; (b) what are the most common offenses for office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions; or (c) which students are being issued office referral and being suspended or expelled from school? Results of this category revealed that there are different types of disciplinary sanctions such as corporal punishment, expulsion (expulsion under zero-tolerance, expulsion with educational services, expulsion without educational services), in-school suspension, out of school suspension, seclusion or restraint, referral to law enforcement, and school-related arrest (Losen, 2011). Other forms of school discipline included sending students to an administrator's office,

detention such as staying after school, or Saturday school. In a few cases, restitutive disciplinary responses (student being required to restore or repay the school or another student damages) or community service were noted (Payne & Welch, 2010). It was shown that greater attention was given to studying disciplinary sanctions that occur in grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Additional results of this category are discussed in detail later in greater within the explanations section of the chapter.

The study foci were proportionally distributed; however, most of the articles focused on perceptions that comprised 38% ( $n = 10$ ) of the studies. Studies that focused on school disciplinary sanction patterns made up 31% ( $n = 8$ ), and studies that focused on individual and institutional profiles included 31% of discipline studies published between 2000 and 2010 that reported racially disaggregated data (see Appendix C for a complete list of articles categorized by thematic foci).

The study foci varied some throughout the 11- year period covered in this literature review. Twelve studies were published between 2000 and 2005 that met the criteria for this review of which a significant portion of studies (75% or  $n = 9$ ) examined the profiles (i.e., individual characteristics of teachers, students and schools) and the perceptions of teachers, students, and school administrators. Studies in these two categories also tended to be deficit oriented and often attributed the problem of misbehavior to individuals or to a factor of some personal circumstance. During this time period, the least amount of attention (25%) was given to school discipline sanction patterns ( $n = 3$ ).

For the second half of the time period covered in this literature review (i.e., 2006-2010), scholars studying discipline focused their attention more evenly on investigating

perceptions, disciplinary sanction patterns (e.g., disciplinary sanction trends) and profiles (e.g., characteristics and demographics) of schools, students, and teachers. The focus of studies shifted and over two-thirds of the articles examined perceptions ( $n = 5$ , 36%) and disciplinary patterns ( $n = 5$ , 36%). Still very close in number, four studies (29%) studied institutional and individual demographics. The largest growth across foci over the years was the disciplinary sanction patterns category increasing from 25% to 36% between the first and second half of the decade. This change and increase in attention to who is being issued behavioral referrals could be attributed to the disproportionate representation of students of color in school disciplinary sanctions increasing over the years.

**Design methodology.** The majority of empirical studies that focused on school discipline inequities employed quantitative research methodologies. Less than 20% of studies were qualitative in nature. Of the empirical articles included in this review ( $N = 26$ ), 81% ( $n = 21$ ) of the studies employed quantitative methodologies, 15% ( $n = 4$ ) were of a qualitative design, and one study (4%) incorporated a mixed methodology design. Table 3 shows the selected studies by design methodology and year of publication.

Table 3

*Research Studies on Discipline Inequities by Methodology*

Publication Year	Research Design Methods			Total
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods <sup>a</sup>	
2000-2001	-	-	-	0
2002-2003	4	2	1	7
2004-2005	3	2	-	5
2006-2007	3	-	-	3
2008-2009	5	-	-	5
2010	6	-	-	6
Total	21	4	1	26

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Authors reported quantitative and qualitative procedures were used to code the study research methods.

The frequency of publication by research design was fairly consistent over the 11 years with the fewest publications ( $n = 0$ ) occurring during 2000-2001. The average publication in the past 11 years on the topic of discipline inequities with a particular focus on Latino and African American male students was 2.3 publications a year. Also, only studies with a quantitative design methodology were published after 2005. In other words, no empirical qualitative or mixed methodologies studies that examined discipline inequities and reported racially disaggregated data that included African American or Hispanic students has been published since 2006 (see Figure 1).

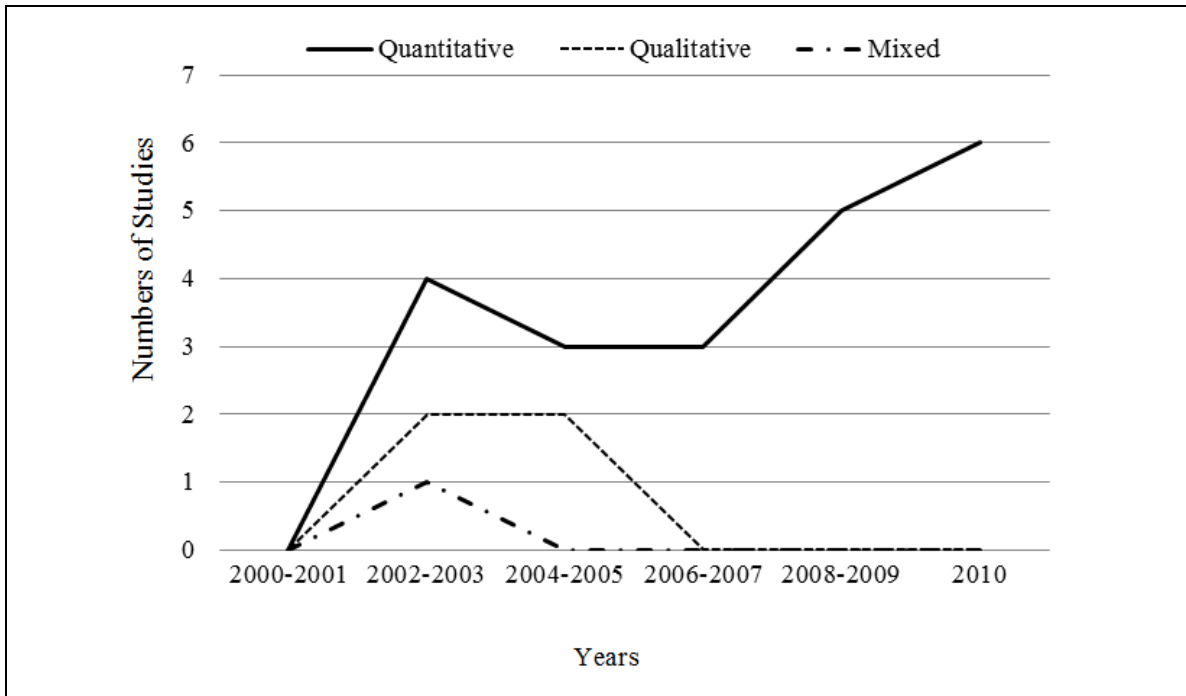


Figure 1. Frequency of discipline inequity studies by year and research methods.

In general, a few more articles ( $n = 14$ ) were published during the second half of the time period (i.e., 2006 to 2010). Nearly just as many article ( $n = 12$ ) were published during the first half of the time period (i.e., 2000 to 2005). There was a spike in publications from zero to seven between 2000 to 2001 and 2002 to 2003, then a slight dip ( $n = 5$ ) during 2004 to 2005 and again another dip during 2006 to 2007, where only three studies were published that reported discipline data disaggregated by ethnicity; however, since 2006 there has been a gradual increase of publications that focused on discipline with six articles being published in the year 2010 alone.

**Data analysis procedures.** The data analysis procedures were based on the research methods used. Three types of analysis were utilized by scholars when studying school discipline inequities: qualitative data analysis procedures, quantitative data



analysis procedures, and studies that incorporated both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures were identified as mixed methodologies analysis.

**Qualitative data analysis procedures and data sources.** A very small percentage of studies (15%) were qualitative ( $n = 4$ ). Data sources for qualitative studies included various combinations of interviews (i.e., structured interviews, semi structured, individual or small group), observations (i.e., participant or randomized), videos, and field notes. The authors in one study (Vavrus & Cole, 2002) did not clearly report their analysis procedures and another study (Morris, 2005) did not report any method of analysis. The remaining two qualitative studies used various forms of analysis such as cross case analyses and thematic analyses.

**Quantitative data analysis procedures.** The majority of quantitative studies used multiple data analysis procedures with the most common being descriptive statistical analyses (see Table 4) Regression was also widely utilized and included bivariate, ordinary, logistic, and hierarchical regression research methods. Analysis of variance (e.g., one-way ANOVA, factorial ANOVA, and MANCOVA), correlation, and chi-square were also highly employed.

Table 4

*Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures by Year and Author*

Study	Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures
Atkins et al.(2002)	Factor analysis, independent T-test, MANCOVA, orthogonal (varimax) rotation, post hoc with Bonferroni, univariate analysis
Skiba et al. (2002)	Calculated effect sizes, chi square, descriptive statistics, discriminant function analysis, factorial ANOVA
Mendez & Knoff (2003)	Descriptive statistics
Neal et al. (2003)	Coefficient alphas, descriptive statistics, factorial ANOVA
Nichols (2004)	Correlation, descriptive statistics, risk ratio
Eamon & Altshuler (2004)	Descriptive statistics, hierarchical regression
Eitle & Eitle (2004)	Multiple regression, risk ratio
Krezmien et al. (2006)	Chi-square, descriptive statistics, logistic regression
Arcia (2007a)	Chi-square, descriptive statistics
Arcia (2007b)	Correlation, descriptive statistics, simple regression
Hinojosa (2008)	Descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, reliability analysis, logistic regression
Gregory & Weinstein (2008)	Chi-square, coefficient alpha, correlation, descriptive statistics, hierarchical linear modeling, t-test
Kupchik & Ellis (2008)	Analysis of variance, multiple regression, ordinary least square regression, post hoc with Bonferroni
Wallace et al. (2008)	Logistic regression
Thomas et al (2009)	Correlation, descriptive statistics, hierarchical regression
Bradshaw et al. (2010)	Bivariate regression, hierarchical linear modeling, logistical regression
Gregory & Thompson (2010)	Coefficient alpha, descriptive statistics, hierarchical linear modeling
Lewis et al. (2010)	Descriptive statistics
Payne & Welch (2010)	Chi-square, descriptive statistics, factor analysis (varimax method), SEM (structural equations modeling), reliability
Rocque (2010)	Descriptive statistics, logistic regression, point-biserial correlation
Welch & Payne (2010)	Descriptive statistics, ordinary least square regression

**Mixed methodologies data analysis procedures.** One study (Mendez et al., 2002) employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies; however, Mendez et al. (2002) were unclear regarding their qualitative data analysis procedures. The quantitative data analysis procedures were better described and included Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, semi partial correlations, and multiple regression.

Thus far I have covered a breadth of information relating to school discipline inequities. In doing so, I discussed types of school discipline and provided specific examples, highlighted the methods utilized to conduct this literature review and addressed publication trends, design methodology, and data analysis procedures. The main findings indicate that more attention was devoted to studying discipline inequities using quantitative measures and that in general the educational field is slanted in its negative depiction of African American and Hispanic students' representation in school discipline. In addition, many studies inferred that a person's racial or cultural background was an active ingredient for bias and the maintained tone in the literature was that students of color representation in school discipline stemmed from individual choice and circumstance. As a whole, lack of attention was given to understanding students' meaning-making processes during episodes of conflict. Even less consideration was given to studying how discipline infractions that occur in the classroom are constructed during teacher-student interactions. In the upcoming sub-sections, I discuss geographic locations of studies included in this literature review, the analytical level at which studies were conducted (e.g., state, district, school), age of students included in the studies and identified explanations of student behaviors.

**Geographic locations of studies.** The geographic locations of the studies spanned the country (see Table 5). The majority of studies ( $n = 7$ ) were conducted in the Midwest region of the United States of which one author specifically identified Michigan. Six studies took place in the Southeastern part of the United States of which four authors specifically identified Florida.

Table 5

*Discipline Studies by Geographic Region and Research Method*

Geographic Region	Study Type			Total
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods <sup>a</sup>	
Southeast	5	-	1	6
Southern	1	1	-	2
Southwest	1	-	-	1
Mid Atlantic	1	-	-	1
Midwest	5	2	-	7
Northeast	1	-	-	1
National	5	-	-	5
Not Given	2	1	-	3
Totals	21	4	1	26

*Note.* Locations reported by authors of studies. <sup>a</sup>Authors reported quantitative and qualitative procedures were utilized.

Five studies examined discipline issues utilizing national data sets, and three studies did not report a location. A single study was conducted in the Southwest (no specific state identified by authors), Mid-Atlantic (i.e., Maryland) and Northeast (no specific state identified by authors). Two studies took place in the Southern region of the country (i.e., Texas and Virginia). Most studies reported geographic location by region and did not identify a specific state unless mentioned above. No study locations were described as primarily rural areas; and when authors reported using district data that

included rural areas or populations, 99% were excluded from the sample population. One study included data from rural schools (i.e., Mendez et al., 2002).

**Analytic level of study.** All studies used national, state, county, district, or school level data. Five studies, of which were all quantitative utilized national data sets, but the greatest number of studies ( $n = 10$ ) utilized district level data. Of the studies that examined district level data, eight employed quantitative methodologies, one qualitative, and one study utilized both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures. Eight studies utilized school level data, of which three were qualitative and five quantitative. One study examined discipline issues at the county level and two studies examined discipline issues utilizing state level data. The various levels for the studies are shown in Table 6. One study (Mendez et al., 2002) described district characteristics as Inner City, Suburban, and Rural. District wide ethnic percentages of the student population for this particular study was reported of which the authors indicated that 56% of students were identified by their parent as White, 23% as Black, 18% as Hispanic, and 3% as other. Although Mendez et al. (2002) stated only general education schools were included in the study, they did indicate that both suspensions rates of special education and regular education students were part of their data analysis. In addition, they did not report the ethnic composition of students receiving special education services. Also missing in this study was the percentage of the students attending suburban or rural schools in the district.

Table 6

*Discipline Studies by Analytical Level and Research Method*

Level	Study Type			Total
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed Methods <sup>a</sup>	
National	5	-	-	5
State	2	-	-	2
County	1	-	-	1
District	1	-	-	1
Urban	5	1	-	6
Suburban	1	-	-	1
Inner City, Suburban and Rural	-	-	1	1
Urban School Corporation	1	-	-	1
School	3	-	-	3
Urban	2	3	-	5
Total	21	4	1	26

*Note.* Level reported by authors of studies. <sup>a</sup>Authors reported quantitative and qualitative procedures were utilized.

The Mendez et al. (2002) study generated new knowledge relevant to the long-standing problem of school disciplinary policy and practices. Their work specifically improved upon previous research in the field in four ways: (a) they looked at suspensions at the elementary, middle, and high school level; (b) they investigated suspension rates by school level, ethnicity, and gender combined; (c) they identified the specific types of behaviors that were most frequently associated with suspension; and (d) they identified students who were most frequently suspended in each infraction category by ethnicity and gender. The benefits of such a study shed a new perspective on a problem that has existed for decades. Showing a distribution of reasons for each suspension by race and gender allows for different trends in discipline to be identified.

Another team of researchers conducted a study in what the authors identified as a suburban school district in a southwestern state with a diverse student population (Neal et

al., 2003). Here again the authors did not report any additional ethnic or socioeconomic demographic information regarding the characteristics of the school district or sample.

**Target grade.** The grade levels targeted across studies had great variability. Illustrated in Table 7 is the concentrated research area for each publication listed by author. The bulk of research conducted on discipline that has disaggregated data by race (e.g., African American and Hispanic) focused on middle (6th through 8th) and upper (9<sup>th</sup> through 12th) grades. When reporting target grades by school level, the fewest number of studies ( $n = 2$ ) focused exclusively on disciplinary sanctions at the elementary school level (i.e., kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade). Three studies (i.e., two quantitative, one qualitative) focused exclusively on discipline issues occurring on the middle school level. Five studies (all quantitative) focused exclusively on sixth through twelfth grades, four studies (i.e., three quantitative and one qualitative), reported results exclusively relevant to disciplinary issues during high school (i.e., ninth through twelfth grade). Six studies (i.e., four quantitative, one qualitative, and one mixed methodologies) focused on discipline issues from K-12<sup>th</sup> grade and six studies had a random grade level focus (i.e., third through eighth, fourth through sixth, sixth through ninth, seventh, ninth, and tenth grades). A few studies (e.g., Mendez et al., 2002; Rocque, 2010; Skiba, et al., 2002) explicitly stated including discipline data of students receiving special education services.

Table 7

*Target Population*

Study	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Atkins et. al (2002)				X	X	X	X	X	X				
Dunbar & Villarruel (2002)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mendez et al. (2002)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Skiba et al. (2002)							X	X	X	X			
Vavrus & Cole (2002)										X			
Mendez & Knoff (2003)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Neal et al. (2003)							X	X	X				
Eamon & Altshuler (2004)					X	X	X						
Eitle & Eitle (2004)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gregory & Mosely (2004)										X	X	X	X
Nichols (2004)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Morris (2005)							X	X	X				
Krezmien et al. (2006)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Arcia (2007a)								X					
Arcia (2007b)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gregory & Weinstein (2008)										X	X	X	X
Hinojosa (2008)							X	X	X				
Kupchik & Ellis (2008)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wallace et al. (2008)											X		
Thomas et al. (2009)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bradshaw et al. (2010)	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Gregory & Thompson (2010)										X	X	X	X
Lewis et al. (2010)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Payne & Welch (2010)										X	X	X	X
Rocque (2010)	X	X	X	X	X	X							
Welch & Payne (2010)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X

When looking at patterns within target populations among publications between 2000 and 2010, changes over time were oddly most visible during even numbered years. During the odd numbered years, only six studies were published whereas 20 studies were published during even number ending years. As previously mentioned, no studies were



published between 2000 and 2001 on discipline that reported racially disaggregated data for African American or Hispanic students. Beginning in 2002, five studies were published of which four studies primarily focused on grades six, seven and eight. Jumping to 2010, six studies were published, of which high school age students (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) were the primary focus. During the middle of the time period (2004 to 2007) eight studies were published of which the five studies identified grades six, seven, and eight as their target population. Elementary grades (K – 5) as a level were the most ignored, of which 16 studies (61%), did not focus on younger age students.

### **Summary of Research on School Discipline Inequities**

The majority of studies was conducted within urban areas and utilized quantitative methodologies. Many urban areas were described as having a high minority population and often authors reported the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch. Not surprising, qualitative studies tended to use a smaller sample size of which three out of the four qualitative studies examined school level data. District level data was the largest sample size within the qualitative studies and included 36 administrators from different schools within one school district. Qualitative studies tended to report findings related to perception and offered insight into a person's decision making and reasoning surrounding fairness, rules, and implementation of policies. The quantitative studies examined discipline issues on a larger scale and provided little insight regarding the perspective of individual students, teachers and administrators.

Thirty-eight percent of the studies focused on investigating individual perspectives. Exactly half of the studies within this category examined students'

perspectives. These studies also only implemented quantitative methodologies. No studies reported or described observable face-to-face interactions at the micro-level between students and teachers while in the classroom. Furthermore, no studies investigated students' interpretation of classroom events that could be of significance with regard to a student's involvement in disciplinary related events.

Across studies, no study exclusively examined discipline disparities among Latino students. The examination of Latino students in school exclusionary disciplinary practices appeared to be an overlooked and understudied area within the field. Several studies did however exclusively investigate discipline disparities among African American male students. Additionally, no study exclusively investigated discipline measures among Latino and African American male students receiving special educational services. In the next section, I discuss explanations presented in the literature for school disciplinary measures and inequities.

### **Explanations for Discipline Inequities**

When examining the literature on school discipline, scholars theorized three main arguments or explanations for discipline inequities and disparities among students of color within K-12 public schools. These explanations developed into the following categories: (a) cultural deficit perspectives, (b) cultural differences, and (c) institutional factors.

#### **Cultural Deficit Perspective**

Over the last 11 years schools are taking a harsh stand on school discipline; in part because of high profile cases of school violence. Some theorize that harsh school disciplinary practices are a way of controlling or regulating students; specifically African

American students who are also the group most likely to be overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions (Monroe, 2005); however, Welch and Payne (2010) suggested that no clear explanation exists for the “pattern of expanding school punitiveness” (p. 26), and that the harsh discipline and punishment toward students mirrors incidents within the criminal justice system.

In general, research shows that students of color are referred for school discipline at a higher rate than their White counterparts (Arcia, 2007b; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). Inequities in school disciplinary actions between 2000-2010 show students of color, specifically African Americans were referred most often for subjective offenses like defiance or disrespect of authority, threatening, and disobedience, as well as suspension and expulsions when compared to other student groups (Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Lewis, Butler, Bonner, & Joubert, 2010; Skiba et al., 2002; Townsend, 2000). It was widely recognized throughout the literature that teachers placed a strong emphasis on controlling behaviors of African American students (Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Richart et al., 2003; Skiba et al., 2002) and were more likely to demonstrate reactions that appear to be more severe than required (Monroe, 2005).

**Race and gender.** Discipline policies often are not race and gender neutral. Students at greatest risk for being suspended are male and African American (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O’Brennan, & Leaf, 2010; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, 2002). They also often receive harsher and more punitive discipline sanctions than White students (Skiba, 2002, Welch & Payne, 2010). Day-Vines and Terriquez (2008) found that in one urban

high school, Latino and African American male students were eight times more likely than their peers to be issued a behavioral referral.

According to NCES (2010), in 2007, 49.5% of African American male students in grades 6 through 12 have been suspended and 29.6% of Latino students in grades 6 through 12 have been suspended. The average percentage for White males was 21.3% and the overall percentage of male students suspended in grades 6th through 12th was 27.9%. Given the complexity of Latino and African American male students being overrepresented in school discipline, it is necessary to determine indicators of suspension and disciplinary referrals. Doing so, helps to answer the question “who gets suspended from school and why” (Mendez & Knoff, 2003, p. 30).

Interested in understanding some of the potential personal factors that may influence a student being suspended or expelled, Toldson (2011) examined likely causes. This study was quantitative in nature and included multiple states, involving 6,795 students (1,235 African American; 4,640 White; and 920 Hispanic) and secondary data from the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research which included a nationally representative sample of eighth and tenth graders in U.S. schools. Results indicated that students of color being suspended or expelled from school often involved poor grades, drugs and delinquency at school, negative attitudes and feelings toward school, classroom disengagement or interruptions, feelings of hopelessness or positive self-worth, thrill seeking, aggressive or delinquent behaviors, and parents’ low level of involvement with school (Toldson, 2011).

Twenty-six percent of the total sample within this study indicated being suspended at least once. More than double, 59% of African American male students

reported being suspended or expelled from school, compared to 26 percent of White male students and 42% of Hispanic male students (Toldson, 2011). Forty-three percent of African American females reported being suspended, almost double when compared to 26% of Latina student suspensions, and nearly four times the percent of White females who reported being suspended; however, despite this trend, there is a lack of documentation that substantiates African American males displaying higher levels of disruptive behavior (Wallace et al., 2008).

Rates of suspension across gender, race and school level indicated that males were more likely than females to experience at least one suspension and that African American students were more likely than White or Hispanic students to be suspended (Mendez & Knoff, 2003). Again, among all student groups African American males were among all student groups to be the most likely to be suspended. Skiba et al. (2002) also substantiated this circumstance and reported that African American males were most likely to be referred for disciplinary measures and received the most severe behavioral sanctions. African American males are also overrepresented in suspensions across almost all infraction types. Their overrepresentation in school discipline begins during elementary school and continues throughout their school career.

The literature showed that Latino and African American male students were among the highest student groups to receive disciplinary referrals. Absent however, was a discussion regarding school disciplinary measures for minority students in special education. No study disaggregated its data by ethnicity and students receiving special educational services or had a discussion exclusively regarding Latino and African

American male students in special education being dismissed, suspended or expelled from school.

Wallace et al. (2008) also examined discipline referrals that included race and gender differences of school disciplinary practices from a large nationally representative sample of African American, American Indian, Hispanic, and White students that spanned 14 years. They reported a small decline in the percentage of students of color sent to the administrative office occurred during 1991 to 2005, but conversely, during that same time period the expulsion rates of African American students increased. This examination like others (Roque, 2010; Vavrus & Cole, 2010), demonstrated that African Americans were disciplined the most at school (Wallace et al., 2008; Welch & Payne, 2010) and brings into question if African American students are judged unfairly by school personnel.

**Socio-demographic status.** Cited in the literature was the association between a low socioeconomic status and office discipline referrals (Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Payne & Welch, 2010; Skiba et al., 2002). Commonly noted was that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds were at an increased risk for school suspensions (Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Richart et al., 2003) and disproportionately represented in school disciplinary measures (Skiba et al., 2002). Although this literature review spans eleven years, from 2000 to 2010, Skiba et al., (2002) indicated there is more than two and a half decades worth of evidence documenting the socioeconomic and racial disproportionality in the administration of school discipline (e.g., Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997; Thornton & Trent, 1988). Skiba et al. (2002) also noted that ethnicity and socioeconomic status influenced school suspensions. Agreeing with Skiba

et al. (2002), Nichols (2004) reported disparities of discipline consequences to also exist among students of color receiving free or reduced lunch.

Indicators of neighborhood poverty or low socioeconomic status were measured by the amount of students receiving free or reduced lunch. It was also shown that significant proportions of African American children attend schools in the highest poverty areas (NCES, 2006) and Arcia (2007) found that schools with a higher concentration of African American students have higher dismissal, suspension and expulsion rates.

Monroe (2005) showed that teachers frequently approach classrooms of low-income African Americans with a strong emphasis on controlling behaviors; and when disciplining African American students, teachers were more likely to demonstrate reactions that appeared more severe than required. Even when controlling for economic status, Gregory and Weinstein, (2008) found that African American students were disciplined more harshly and more often than their peers.

Although students of color are capable and have the ability to do well at school, there is evidence to suggest they unfairly receive discipline referrals and as a result an overwhelming percentage of students involved in school suspensions and expulsions struggle to stay positively engaged and involved in school. If the lens that teachers and school administrators use to view students of color is negative or limited in perception, it can perpetuate the ongoing representation of Latino and African American males being among the highest student group to be issued behavioral referrals. In most cases race, gender and a low socio-demographic background were seen as cause for teachers to issue behavioral referrals; and interpreted as an inhibitor to doing well at school. However with

close examination of discipline inequities, it was determined that overall many claims regarding Latino and African American male students misbehaving was unfounded and often a biased decision.

**Cultural differences.** The process of singling out minority students through the use of discipline policies was seen as a principal dynamic leading to students of color being overrepresented in discipline (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Often noted was that students of color were perceived by teachers and administrators to be more rule-breaking, disruptive, defiant and disrespectful than other student groups (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Newcomb et al., 2002; Skiba et al., 2002). In one study, school officials viewed the behaviors of Hispanic boys as threatening (Morris, 2005) and indicated they more often issued strict and punitive disciplinary sanction to Hispanic students. On the contrary, school officials tended to view the behaviors of White and Asian American students as non-threatening, which resulted in fewer and less strict behavioral sanctions (Morris, 2005). Agreeing with Morris that some students of color were perceived more aggressive than their peers, Payne and Welch (2010) indicated that African American students were more likely to receive stricter or harsher behavioral controls than White students.

It was evident throughout the literature that teachers and school administrators believed certain student groups misbehave more than other students (Kupchik & Ellis, 2008; Morris, 2005; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). A prevalent explanation for the disproportionate representation of African American and Hispanic students in school discipline was that they engaged in more disruptive and offensive behaviors (Payne & Welch, 2010). A central argument for their overrepresentation in exclusionary discipline



and the group's overall struggles to achieve and maintain academic success, is that African American and Hispanic students are to blame for their own behavior.

It is unclear if it is due to cultural difference, but Watts and Everelles (2004) found that African American students may be act out because of their resistance toward oppressive social conditions that force students to feel vulnerable and angry. If this were true, then the premise is that due to one's cultural background they are more prone toward acting out and noncompliance. Another potential claim to the culture difference argument is that African American students have a greater involvement in school discipline because of their "urban pedagogies", which make students less competitive and subjected "to an education that emphasizes discipline and control" (Duncan, 2000, p. 30). Although these claims can be disputed, it is clear that the results of some studies imply that students are the cause of their own educational demise due to their personal cultural background.

Such is the case with African American and Hispanic students. The scantiness of these studies and others is the examination of teacher-student relationships and adjustments students make at school. With that said, earlier investigations documenting the quality of classroom interactions between teachers and students have not been very robust (Meehan, Hughes, & Cravell, 2003), but rather limiting in scope.

Using one year of a high school's suspension referrals, Gregory and Weinstein (2008) examined patterns of suspension referrals. They determined that nearly 70% of referrals issued to African American students were for defiance compared to 55% of referrals issued to White students. Due to the subjective nature and variability of how defiance is conceptualized by teachers, Gregory and Weinstein (2010) cautioned there is

still little known about why African American students are excluded from school or if their (perceived) misconduct occurs across classroom contexts. An important notation within their study was that most behavioral referrals were issued by “one or a few teachers, but not by the majority of teachers” (p. 496). Given that, the continued examination of teacher-student relationships can serve as a point for disciplinary encounter prevention and potentially change the social and academic trajectory for students being suspended and expelled.

It has been documented that the perception, treatment and educational outcomes for African American students, particularly African American males was stigmatizing (Fenning & Rose, 2007) and generally described negatively. Both media and the educational literature portray African Americans as existing in cultures of drugs, violence, educationally inept, or social deficient and deviant. Scholars theorize, this perception directly contributes to African American students being overrepresented in exclusionary school disciplinary sanctions.

Teacher and administrator bias has been identified as a contributing factor to high representation of students of color in school disciplinary measures and Skiba et al. (2002) alluded to racial and gender bias against Latino and African American male students as a contributing factor to their overrepresentation in school discipline. Neal et al. (2003) found that teachers perceived the movement styles common among African American students to be more aggressive and in some cases less academically able than students with *standard* movement styles.

It is because African American students are perceived by school personnel “to engage disproportionately in delinquency, despite findings that they do not” (Payne &

Welch, 2010, p. 1024), that greater school punitive measures are directed toward them. Nichols (2004) went as far as to suggest that teacher and administrator bias regarding perceptions of deviance perpetuates the expectation of negative behavior and can contribute to more physical contact and vocal assertiveness of African American students. Monroe (2005) argued that African American students are “targeted for disciplinary action in the greatest numbers” (p. 46). Although the merit of these studies is without question, further investigation is needed regarding how students understand and make sense of their school experiences.

Very little prior research considers student’s perceptions regarding the enforcement of school rules and this is an area that requires further investigation; however, Howard (2001) assessed the perceptions of African American elementary age students and reported that student preferred classrooms where teachers displayed attitudes of care toward them. Studying the viewpoint and perspectives of students is necessary for understanding the range of variables that may shape their perceptions (Kupchik & Ellis, 2008), thus influencing their behavior. A limitation of the previously mentioned studies is the lack of attention to micro-level analyses of teacher-student interactions. As noted, analyzing the roles of teachers and students in classrooms has the potential to “impact students’ academic and social outcomes” (Hinojosa, 2008, p. 176).

### **Institutional Factors**

Various school characteristics have been found to affect disciplinary practices and student punishments. Schools with a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch, a high African American student population, and located in neighborhoods with higher crime rates tended to operate with stronger social control of

students. Arcia (2007) found that school personnel disciplined students depending on neighborhood crime rates. This means that students are disciplined more harshly when crime levels increase and less harshly when neighborhood crime rates decrease. It was concluded that the actions of school staff were seen as a safeguard for the school.

When this occurs school staff makes disciplinary decisions operating from a position of fear and in anticipation of future offenses that often results in severe forms of punishments to students. Such actions criminalize students. Payne and Welch (2010) remind us that the criminalization of students results in an intensification of harsh school discipline that can increase the likelihood of students committing future offenses and crimes.

Being a student of color and poor are strongly correlated to receiving school reprimands as Payne and Welch (2010) concluded that schools with a greater African American, Hispanic, and low income student population are more likely to respond to misbehavior in a punitive manner and less likely to respond in a restorative manner. Johnson, Boyden, and Pittz (2001) reported that schools with a student population comprised of 50% or more students of color, tended to use strict security measures than schools with a predominantly White student population. Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) suggested these acts of “beefed up security” imply “there is a socially constructed image of African American and Hispanic students that is manifested in an institutional context of schools that govern disciplinary actions” (p.102).

It was reported that over 80 percent of schools located in mostly urban areas, used some type of security and surveillance program (Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009). Aspects of these operations include detection dogs, adult supervision in hallways, uniformed

security guards, police officers, security cameras, locked or monitored doors, locker searches, and the use of metal detectors (Hirschfield, 2008; Giroux, 2003; Watts & Everelles, 2004). Besides police controlled canine searches, schools were also noted to conduct sting operations involving undercover police officers as students (Berger, 2002). Also reported were extreme cases where groups of students were strip searched by police officers to locate stolen goods (Sultan, 2001).

Schools increasingly resemble prisons where students appear more criminal like than pupils, and are treated like “suspects who need to be searched, tested, and observed under the watchful eye of administrators who appear to be less concerned with educating them than with policing their every move” (Giroux, 2003, p. 554). In many ways with the use of metal detectors and the presence of police in schools, combined harsh disciplinary practices schools function like prisons and criminalize students (Watts & Everelles, 2004). These types of school cultures produce prison like populations of students rather than populations of academically inspiring students. Opponents of prison like practices in schools, indicate that not only do these tactics create environments of mistrust and fear, but also puts students at risk.

In a response to widely publicized incidents of school violence, zero tolerance policies began being instituted during the mid-1990s (The Civil Rights Project/Advancement Project, 2000). The requirement for schools to develop their own zero-tolerance policies was put into motion with President Bill Clinton signing the Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA) in 1994. This law forced public schools to adopt a zero-tolerance policy or risk losing federal funding and mandated student punishment.

Students who brought objects to school that even slightly resembled a weapon would be punished with automatic suspension or expulsion.

Consequently, teachers elected to adopt a zero tolerance stance on student misconduct, issuing recommendations for suspensions to students whom they perceived to be misbehaving. Eventually many schools and school districts expanded their zero tolerance policy beyond its original scope and began enforcing even stricter disciplinary consequences. At the beginning of the last decade, 94% of U.S. public schools had adopted a zero tolerance policy (Skiba & Leone, 2001); many of which have extended their zero tolerance policy to include tobacco, alcohol, assault, knives or weapons, and explosives.

Payne and Welch (2010) suggested that certain school practices (e.g., zero tolerance) and staff perceptions of students influence the use of particular discipline policies in schools. Using data from a large Midwest predominantly urban school district in the state of Michigan, Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) examined how principals made disciplinary decisions relevant to the zero-tolerance policies and the impact those decisions had on students. The study included 36 principals from two high schools, three middle schools, and 17 elementary schools. In total, 80% of the district's principals were involved in the study. Of the school administrators surveyed, 61 percent of the participants were African American, and 39 percent described themselves as 'European American.' The student demographics for the study included 75% African American, 17.1% White, 5% Asian or Native American, and 2.4% Hispanic.

Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) concluded that school leaders' comprehension of zero tolerance policy indicated that each principal had his or her own understanding of

the zero-tolerance policy. Welch and Payne (2010) indicated that schools with a larger percentage of African American students used more punitive disciplinary response such as zero tolerance, and that the decision for greater use of punitive controls was a function of a racial threat perceived by school personnel. Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) found that principals' individualized interpretation of events and incidents led to differential treatment on like-offenses, indicating zero-tolerance policies were not equally applied among students. It was also reported that many principals made 'common sense and practical decisions' (e.g., considering if there was a parent at home to care for the student during their removal from school) when determining the necessity of a suspension or expulsion.

Findings indicated that the majority of expulsions occurred between the 6th and 8th grades or in the 9th grade. Forty percent of expulsions occurred in the 9th grade, whereas only 20% of expulsions involved 10th and 11th graders. Some differences were attributed to the age of the student or the number of previous offenses. Overall, it was determined that discipline policies were implemented and applied in school settings in a variety of ways and often with high levels of inconsistencies.

Dunbar and Villarruel (2002) provided valuable insight into principal's perspective regarding their interpretation of zero tolerance. They documented instances of zero-tolerance policies being arbitrarily imposed throughout districts in the state of Michigan. For example, they recorded that in a rural Michigan school district where hunting after school was a part of a community's culture, it was acceptable and not considered a violation of zero-tolerance for students to have guns in their vehicles as long as they remained concealed and students did not show the weapons to other students

while on school grounds. This district's practice was different than another rural community districts wherein if a principal was aware that a student had a gun in his vehicle, the student would be asked to leave school to take his gun at home and then return to school. An additional instance was noted in an urban school district where a student's beeper was heard and generated a search of his vehicle that led to the discovery of a firearm.

Dunbar and Villarruel (2010) documented instances of variability and clearly demonstrated that disciplinary policies are not evenly enacted. It is important to document these inconsistencies within school discipline policies and bring to the surface the fact that certain groups of students are grossly affected and denied their educational right. A strength of this work is the examination of institutional dimensions of school discipline policies and practices. Furthermore, the study revealed the continued need for school personnel to understand the impact their decisions have on students' educational experiences and lives outside of school. A limitation of the study is the relatively small sample size (36 principals), and hence, the limited generalizability of the study findings.

A great limitation of zero-tolerance policies is the subjective nature in which decisions are made. In addition, the automatic mandate for school suspensions has been seen as a denial of school access. Repeated suspensions and denied educational access places students on a pathway in a direction of future incarceration or involvement in the criminal justice system. Often when students are suspended, no homework is given or communication provided regarding class assignments. In many ways, zero-tolerance policies, suspensions and expulsions are not used as a disciplinary strategy, but as a way



to get rid of students viewed as trouble-makers (Arcia 2007; Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004).

The studies examined in this review make an important contribution toward addressing the gaps in the literature on school discipline policies and inequities; however, while the researchers build a strong case for examining disciplinary practices, a large percentage (81%) of the studies lacked an important feature—student voice. There is an absence of student voices within studies that focus on school discipline and punishment. Understanding students’ perspectives and interpretations of their environment and experiences would provide valuable insight into student behavior.

### **Summary of Explanations for Disciplinary Inequities**

Several explanations have been offered for African American and Hispanic students’ engagement in school discipline infractions. This research provides explanations at the macro-level as well as personal factors. At the macro-level, broad justifications were given which included the characteristics of a school (e.g., size, location), demographics of students and teachers at a given school, and school personnel’s understanding of school policies.

A variety of explanations were provided that suggested to play a role in Latino and African American male students being highly represented in school discipline. The main arguments contained in the literature centered on cultural deficit perspective, individual characteristics and institutional demographics, and students’ cultural backgrounds no being aligned with the culture of the school and teacher expectations. In short, described was teacher and administrator bias toward students, a student being disadvantaged based on a low socio-economic level, attending a school located in a low

income area, or students being perceived as defiant and challenging to authority. In summary, three broad explanations were outlined: (a) cultural deficit perspectives, (b) cultural differences, and (c) institutional factors.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Student actions regarded as misbehaviors are investigated through a sociocultural model that explains complexities of classrooms through the interdependence of three cultural layers: What People Bring, What's Already There, The Work People Do Together (Artiles, 2003, in press; see Appendix D). This perspective affords a more complex understanding of students' cultural tools that mediate their interpretations and decision-making processes during interactions with teachers. In addition, the model allows researchers to study the way discipline infractions that occur in the classroom are constructed during teacher-student interactions. Because student behaviors continue to emerge and cycle during interactions with a teacher, we need to account for these three layers to understand the complexity of misbehavior that can result in classroom conflicts.

Drawing on insights from sociocultural theory and the sociocultural origin of behavior, I explain how what notions, ideas, and *beliefs teachers and students bring with them* into the classroom contributes to their social functioning within a setting. I address the institutional layer of the framework by explaining *what is already there* through constructs from sociocultural theory. The *work that people do together* entails the interactional layer. In the interactional contexts of classrooms, teachers or students make decisions mediated in part by perceptions and interpretations.

Nested within the design of the conceptual framework for this study is the belief that when a teacher's perception is enacted upon the student, or vice versa, each responds

to the other based on their perception of what has transpired (see Figure 2). These iterations of moment-to-moment interactions create subjective behavioral outcomes open to criticism and scrutiny both personally and by others. These expected behavioral outcomes can be stated or unstated, distinguished or undistinguished, explicit or implicit, implied or directly communicated. Along with personal behavioral expectations, the teacher and student “expect” the other to “perform” or “act” in a certain way. It is within the space of *what teachers and students do together* that can lead to misunderstanding, misinterpretations, or misbehavior (perceived or real).

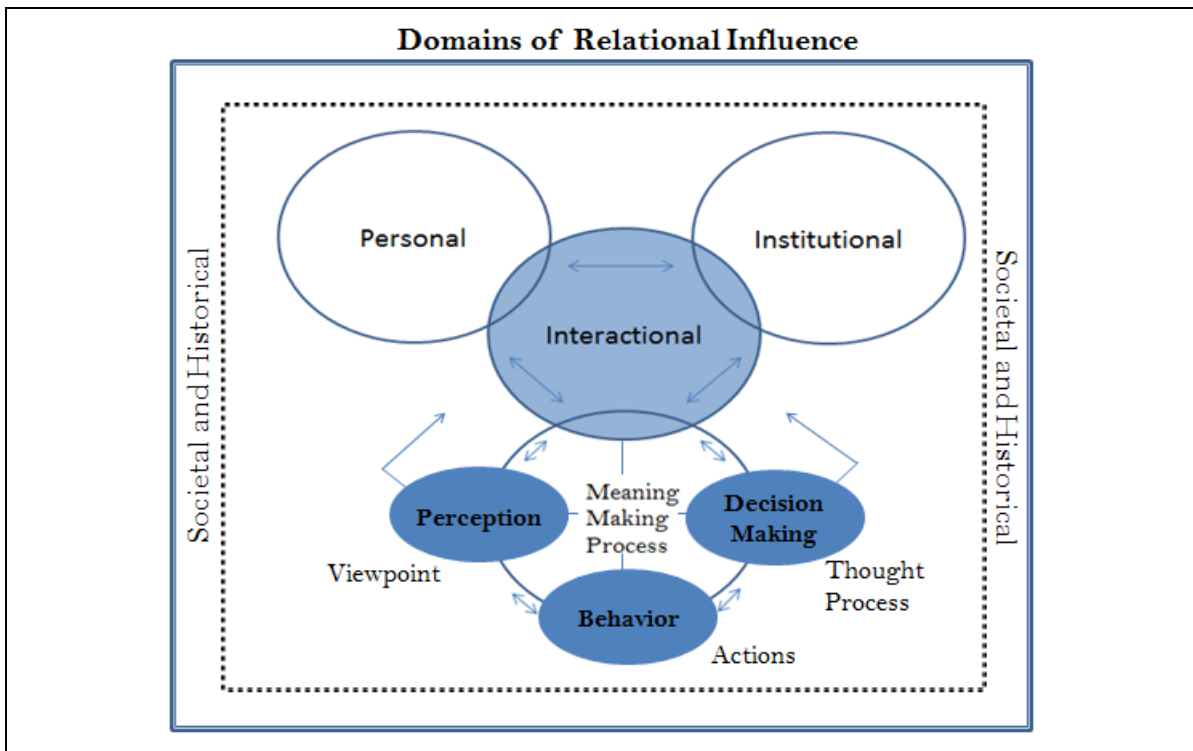


Figure 2. Conceptual framework. Source: Adapted from Artiles, A. J. (in press).

Relating this to conflict, the preceding review of the literature revealed that the precursors of student disciplinary infractions have been neglected in this knowledge base. In addition, the explanations and research methods used in this literature do not take into

account an interpretative perspective or examine interactional processes. Absent in this work is the perspective of the student and highly represented is only the teacher and administrator's account of transpired classroom events.

We know that most disciplinary referrals begin in the classroom (Skiba et al., 2002). This means that teacher perception of student behavior is a significant influence on referral decisions. Through teacher-student interactions, disciplinary infractions are co-constructed (Vavrus & Cole, 2002), but because of the relations of power between teacher and students, only the teacher's interpretation of what counts as disruptive classroom behavior is often valued as a *correct* interpretation of a disruption or what constitutes misbehavior. The individual beliefs and worldview a teacher has is a personal influence they bring with them into the classroom. Personal influence plays a role in a teacher's perception of students because it shapes how they deal with student behaviors. The same notion applies to students in that what a student thinks and how a student views a teacher also mediates the interactional space where classroom conflicts occur. Important is that African American males are "aware of how race [shapes] the manner in which they are viewed by their teachers and school administrators" (Howard, 2008, p. 954). The assumption could be made that if a student is aware a teacher perceives him negatively he could react awkwardly in response to his feelings.

Scholars have studied teacher beliefs and found that teachers often misunderstand and misjudge expressive movements of African American and Hispanic students (Cole & Boykin, 2008; Morris, 2005; Neal et al., 2003). This is a problem because the actions of students of color are generally interpreted as threatening, aggressive, disrespectful (Morris, 2005; Newcomb et al., 2002; Skiba et al., 2002), and in some cases, deceptive

(Gregory & Weinstein, 2008). White, African American, and Hispanic students can engage in similar behavior, although only the behavior of African American and Hispanic students may be brought into question (Morris, 2005).

This is important because we also know that schools are embedded with ideologies that unfairly position some students and construct social identities that earmark certain students as problematic. It is in these ways that some teachers' daily practices (subconsciously or consciously) can work against students. The difference between academic failure or success is deeply affected by how students are thought about, treated and taught by the teachers and administrators of the schools they attend (Nieto, 1999). This same premise can be applied to whether or not students experience social-emotional success or failure at school.

The ideologies that schools have are manifested through their practices of which one includes the overrepresentation of students of color in school discipline sanctions. These institutional influences represent "what is already there" and are powerful in shaping decisions and teacher- student interactions. When specific groups of students are highly represented in school disciplinary sanctions year after year, race, class and gender become static markers that seem to signify to school personnel that "trouble is on the way" or "has arrived". It is also through these oppressive practices that students with certain backgrounds (African American, Hispanic, lower socio-economic status) become "tagged" as problematic school contributors. Echoing that idea, Watts and Everelles (2008) indicated that schools use the oppressive ideologies associated with race, class, gender, and disability to justify the social construction of certain students as deviant or rule breaking thereby making it an individual rather than a social problem. Through a

Foucaultian analysis of schools, Watts and Everelles (2008) inferred that material school conditions existed that force students, especially African American and Hispanic students from low-income backgrounds to feel vulnerable, angry and viewed as resistant to normative expectations. Also incorporating aspects of Critical Race Theory, Watts and Everelles (2008) further asserted that in U.S. public schools, Whiteness continues to be constructed in such a way that material conditions produce and perpetuate difference to such a marked degree that both African American and Hispanic students experience segregation and discrimination through schools' sorting practices such as special education identification or school discipline policies.

These authors further argued through decisions made by individuals in power (i.e., teachers and administrators) the context of schools thereby manufactures students to become disabled, deviant, compliant, or capable, rendering them trouble makers. It is when race, class, and gender become static markers of negative distortions for teachers to view students, and thereby use their positions of power and influence to construct and label certain groups of students as rule breaking or deviant (Watts & Everelles, 2008) that oppressive ideologies are created, perpetuated and sustained. This type of socially constructed identity can have implications on group labels, group standards, institutional practices, and personal functionality affecting self-esteem and identity.

To address the shortcoming existing within the field of education surrounding discipline inequities, the conceptual framework for this study draws heavily from symbolic interaction (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 2007; Mead, 1934). Insights are also enriched from sociocultural theory (Artiles, 1998; Cole, 1990, 2003; Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; 1986). It is the blending of the work of these scholars that a more

comprehensive foundation for the study of school discipline that is specifically attentive to the role of culture can be achieved.

Symbolic interactionism is a distinctive approach to the study of human social life. It is a perspective that derives meaning of social processes from interactions and is used for the study of human lived experiences. The key principles of this theory are meaning, language and thought. Three major constructs of symbolic interactionism suggest that: (a) people act on the basis of the meanings that things have for them; (b) meanings are derived from social interaction; and (c) meanings are dependent on and modified through an interpretive process that occurs while people interact with one another. The theory suggests that a person's recollection of events is the basis for their interaction with others. Simply stated, perception mediates behavior. As a theory, symbolic interactionism endeavors to capture the voices, emotions, and actions of people (Denzin, 1989).

In the context of a classroom, a teacher makes decisions, based on their perceptions and beliefs. The same holds true for students. In other words, students and teachers react to what they perceive and the effect of perception can and does influence behavior and decisions. This suggests that if a teacher has the perception that a student is going to misbehave, then that teacher may preempt certain student behaviors (i.e., misbehavior).

Rubovits and Maehr (1971) tested the hypothesis of people acting toward things on the basis of the meanings those things have for them and found similar indications. They determined that it appeared student performance was influenced by teacher expectations, and that teacher perception seemed to affect teacher behavior directed

toward individual and groups of students. Reported in their study was evidence to indicate that teacher expectations did affect teacher behavior which in turn could affect student performance.

Mead (1934) asserted there is a social construction of reality and that people create knowledge to understand and function in the world. He emphasized that people do not build their understanding of the world and their view of themselves in isolation, but rather understand themselves and others through (intersubjective) interaction (Mead, 1934; Singleman, 1972). In this way, reality is seen as dependent on people's interaction with one another. Within the classroom, teachers and students co-construct their classroom identities through their responses with one another.

Symbolic interactionism proposes that along with influencing interactions between people and among groups of people, one's own understanding of perception and meanings they give toward things encountered also shapes the way a person views himself. How a person comes to understand their self, how a person understands others, and how others come to understand a person are processes of symbolic interaction. Steeped in the belief that the emergent self and language are socially embedded as central features of human existence (Prus, 1996), both Mead and Cooley's characterization places a strong emphasis on how to achieve solutions to ongoing problematic situations and experiences that exist among people. This premise can also perpetuate ongoing negative cycles, such as when students receive social labels like trouble maker or difficult.

Socially constructed identities understood through the application of sociocultural theory and symbolic interactionism suggests that deviance and rule breaking were created



by rule enforcers, who acted with bias against others. From this perspective, repeated acts of (perceived) deviance, defiance, disrespect and rule breaking leads to institutional labels which eventually can change a person's self-identity to view himself or herself as deviant and act accordingly (McDermott, 1977). In a sense, they internalize the label donned to them. Within school settings, labels can also cause others to perceive individuals negatively and foster low expectations and deleterious images for certain student groups. As it pertains to African American males and prescribed labels, Milner (2007) maintains that:

Entrenched in some teachers' thinking (often subconsciously) are stereotypes and misconceptions about Black males that prevent teachers from providing the best learning opportunities for students. In short, if teachers believe Black males are destined for failure and apathy, their pedagogies will be saturated with low expectations. (p. 244)

To that end, discipline can be seen as one form of oppression, because only certain groups of students are being positioned as displaying problematic behaviors and labeled as a school problem. So individuals in this group whose behavior is being labeled deviant, through the oppressive ideologies of systems that exist within schools, naming a student's behavior as "deviant" or a "violation", "troublesome", then such students adopt (socially or personally) a corresponding identity as such; and then therefore act out that behavior or are thereby seen that way.

I approach the study of discipline inequities differently in that I examine the moment-to-moment history of interactions between students and teachers while a conflict arises. This perspective is grounded in an interpretive angle because it assumes that

teacher-student interactions are mediated by psychological tools that are acquired in cultural contexts (Cole, 2003). For these reasons, it is necessary to study school discipline within the classroom context through the examination of teacher and student interactions. Thus, this perspective enables us to understand the intrapersonal process that occurs in a student's mind during instances of teacher-student conflicts, specifically how students mentally negotiate episodes of classroom conflicts. A theoretical underpinning of this perspective is that conflicts are constructed during interactions. Because I study interactions within the context of schools, there is a need to understand the classroom culture as a whole.

### **Research Question**

The guiding question addressed in this study was this: *How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted and negotiated between teachers and students?*

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

I have conducted a qualitative, case-study that relied on ethnographic methods such as participant observations, video classroom recordings, and interviews. I elected to conduct a qualitative study because this type of research enables researchers to understand a phenomenon (in this case, students' perspectives of teacher and student classroom interactions involving misbehavior and classroom disruptions) about which little is yet known (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). That point was relevant to my research, since interactions between students and teachers represent a phenomenon in discipline that has not received much attention. Specifically, it is not yet known how relational interactions as a construct relates to students' involvement in classroom discipline matters such as disruptions or misbehavior. To aid in the understanding and investigation of this phenomenon, I relied partially on hypotheses of grounded theory (Glaser, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is a research that is the study of abstract problems and processes (Glaser, 1992) which bodes well for studying the interactions between teachers and students during occurrences of classroom conflict.

In addition, I selected a case study approach because it is well suited for the conceptual framework chosen for this study. In doing so, three goals of this research were accomplished. First, incorporating a blending of two complimentary interpretive approaches allows for the study of how one becomes involved in, sustains, and disembroils with classroom misbehavior. Second, the utilization of Blumer's Chicago tradition of symbolic interactionism allows for the documentation of interactions among

students and teachers linking their behavior. Third, “the most fundamental concept of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is mediated” (Lantolf, 2000, p. 1). Each is relevant in that I investigated the explanations that students provided for their personal involvement in classroom disruptions and studied teachers’ and students’ understandings of misbehavior.

Merriam (1998) notes researchers in education often incorporate theoretical orientations and techniques of data collection and analysis from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, history, and anthropology. Likewise, LeCompte and Preissle (1993) point out that case studies drawing upon sociology have explored such topics as interaction as a function of classroom structure and the effect on teachers’ interactions with students (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Such was the case for this study, as I drew upon ethnographic research methods utilized in other disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology, anthropology).

My choice to incorporate ethnographic methods was influenced by the fact that ethnographic studies seek to “account for the behavior of people by describing what it is they know” (McDermott, 1976, p. 159). In addition, as a whole, ethnographic research establishes a framework from which combinations of factors related to students’ and teachers’ perceptions of their school experiences as they relate to intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions can be understood. Ethnography is also an approach that can be attentive to studying the unique features of human lived experiences (Prus, 1996); and in this case study teachers’ and students’ interpretations of misbehavior and classroom disruptions.

In addition, an interpretive method is also ideal when addressing matters of interaction and interpretation in the study of human behavior as it offers a means for examining multiple aspects of importance for investigating complex situations. This is particularly helpful when investigating areas of education where little research has been conducted (Laws & McLeod, 2004), and such was the case for this research.

### **Study Context: Intelligently Designed Academy**

The study at hand was conducted at Intelligently Designed Academy (IDA)<sup>3</sup>, upper campus. The study involved two teachers and four students in grades 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>. At the start of the school year and in the beginning of this study, all students were in one class and rotated from teacher to teacher throughout the day. Four months into the study, classes were reconfigured twice. For one day the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were combined into one class and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students into another class. After that, classes were again reconfigured and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were combined into a class, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade was in a class of its own. For the duration of the study, this remained the class structure with each class rotating from teacher to teacher approximately every two hours. Additional information about the teachers and students involved in this study is presented in a subsequent section.

IDA is a kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade charter school located in a large metropolitan area in a southwestern city of the United States. The school was founded in 1998. IDA's mission statement is to educate every student, including those considered "at risk", to become lifelong learners and successful members within society. It is unclear how students become identified at-risk, but such language is used on the school's

---

<sup>3</sup> All institutional and personal names are pseudonyms.

webpage to describe the school's population and is also included in the school's mission statement.

This year there are approximately 130 students registered at IDA with almost an equal percentage of male and female students. The majority of the students at the school are African American (44%) and Hispanic (43%). Eight percent of students were reported as White with American Indian/Alaskan Native students making up about 5% of the population. Over three-fourths of the student population is eligible for free or reduced lunch programs as compared to a state average of 47 percent. Eligibility of the National School Lunch Program is based on family income levels. No data were reported for special education, recent immigrants or English language learner students.

Regarding school outcomes, only achievement data information was available. According to the 2011 test results of the state's instrument to measure student achievement on learning standards, students in grades 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> at IDA performed below the state average in reading, mathematics, and writing. Based on the 2011 Terra Nova/Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 9) results, school wide performance levels of students were as follows: Language Arts, 28% (3% below district level); Mathematics, 31% (5% above district level); and Reading 31% (5% above district level). The goal on this test is for students to score at the national average which is 50%. Data were not available on school dropout rates, graduation, or discipline infractions.

The campus perimeter is marked by a fence and includes a large dirt and grass area. There are several buildings on campus: the administrative office building, bathrooms, cafeteria that doubles as an all-purpose room, and three pods for the lower, middle and upper grades. Inside the administrative building are a computer room, staff

lounge, and offices. Within each pod, there are four rooms (all connected). Each pod building is shaped like a square that has been divided into quadrants. Inside, there are four rooms with each room having three doors: an entrance and two interior doors for passage into another room (see Figure 3).

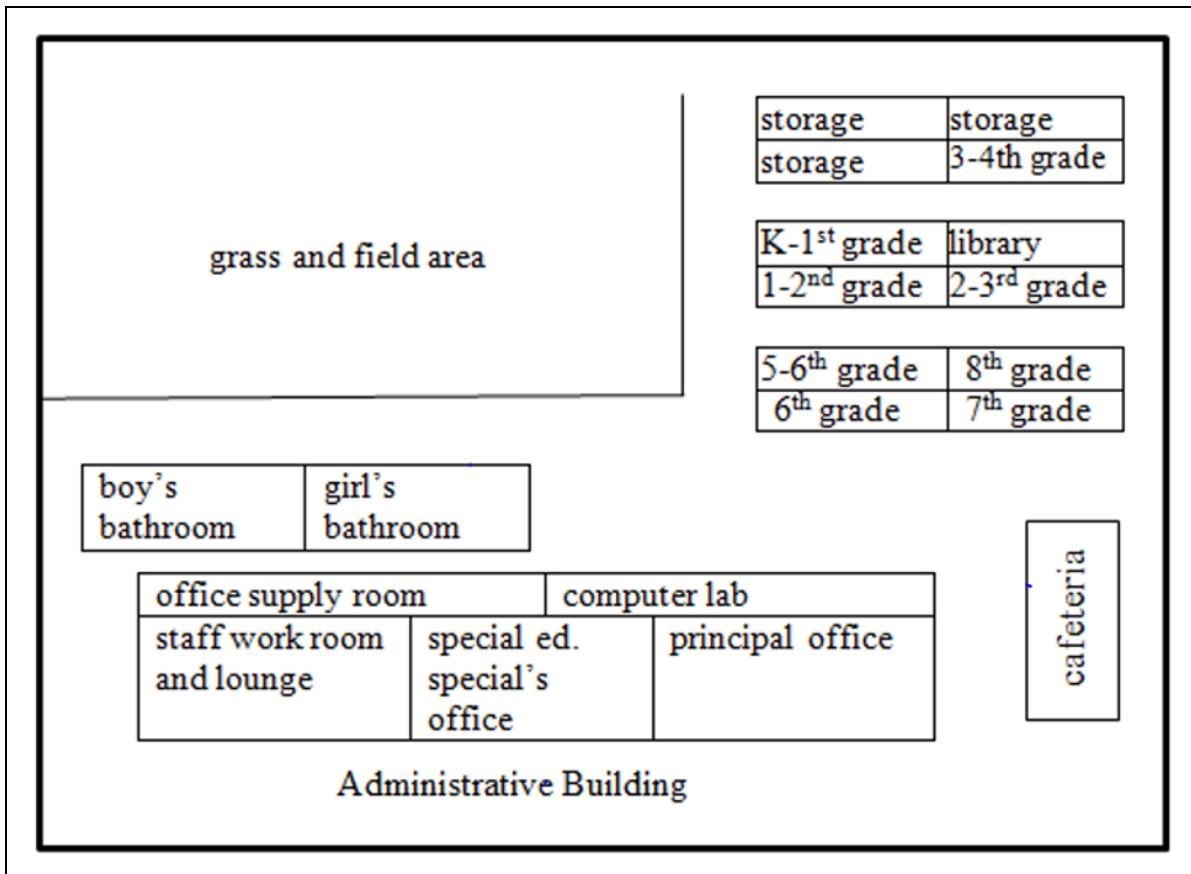


Figure 3. Diagram of Intellectually Designed Academy.

There are a total of 17 persons on staff at IDA: a director/administrator, founder/special education specialist, administrative assistant, nine teachers, two teaching assistants, nutrition specialist, building engineer/custodian, and bus driver. Class sizes are small ranging between 17 to 22 students. Some classrooms are multi-grade levels or combination classes. For example, the lower elementary grades consist of three

classrooms: K-1, 1-2, 2-3. The middle grades have a combination class of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. There is one 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom and one 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom that also include three 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Typically, students begin arriving at 7:30 AM to eat breakfast. The school day is from 8:00 AM to 3:05 PM and consists of block scheduling with students going to a homeroom first. There are three class blocks ranging from 85 to 120 minutes. In the morning, after a 30-minute homeroom period, students rotate to their first period. Throughout the day, students rotate two more times.

Students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, rotate between three teachers throughout the day. The first period begins at 8:00 AM with homeroom and lasts for 30 minutes. Students transition to their next teacher at 8:30 AM and remain in that class for 110 minutes. At 10:20 AM, there is a five minute rotation period and students begin their second class block at 10:25 AM to 12:25 PM. Lunch begins promptly at 12:25 PM and is combined with recess which is from 12:45 PM to 1:05 PM. The third rotation is 115 minutes and is from 1:10 PM to 3:05 PM. The school day ends at 3:05 PM.

The curriculum at the school includes writing and language arts; mathematics, science and health; and reading/phonics. Teachers are assigned a homeroom where attendance is taken and announcements are shared. In addition to the core curriculum, teachers are also responsible for teaching additional subjects such as social studies, art, character education and physical education.

The duty day for the teachers begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 4:00 PM. Teachers are also responsible to supervise students during lunch and recess. At the end of the school day, teachers are responsible for walking students to the bus or to the designated



parent/guardian pick up area. When necessary, students either wait outside with staff or in the administrative building for late pickups.

### **Site Access**

Before beginning this study, I obtained approval (Appendix E) from the ASU Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct my study at IDA. Once permission was received, I contacted Dr. Dianne Micala, school administrator of IDA to confirm when my study may commence. Because this study was developed from a previous pilot study, I requested an IRB study modification from the pilot protocol previously approved after the present dissertation study was approved by the dissertation committee.

I learned of IDA's existence, when I received a call on September 9, 2011 from Dr. Dianne Micala. She called to ask if I was available to interview for a short-term substitute teaching position at the school. As a result, I began volunteering at the school on September 14 and worked four days as a substitute teacher from September 20<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. While spending time at the school, I began to think of the possibility to conduct my study at the school. I observed a well-managed school, but at time students would refuse to follow teacher directions, argue with one another, litter the school grounds, and on occasion graffiti the bathroom walls. Overall, the students and staff were very nice toward one another and generally addressed behavioral disruptions by sending students to the office or calling home to a parent/guardian. From previous conversations, Dr. Micala knew I was in search of a school site and suggested I consider IDA.

After receiving permission to begin the study, the next step was to obtain consents and assents from each potential participant including permission from

parent(s)/guardian(s). Since I audio and video recorded interactions, I also needed to obtain the permission of every student in the class and their respective parent(s)/guardian(s) consenting to the audio and video recording.

## **Participants**

**Recruitment of teachers and students.** Upon receiving initial permission from the school administration to conduct research at IDA, I sought to obtain agreement from teachers to participate in this study.

While working at IDA as a substitute teacher and volunteer, through informal conversations with teachers and Dr. Micala, I learned that students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades engaged in the most disruptive behaviors. In addition, the literature on discipline inequities suggests those are also the grades in which the greatest inequities have been documented. Specifically, previous research shows that the majority of expulsions occurred between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002). Once I received approval from the IRB, I conducted interviews with the teachers, school administrator, and two school employees (i.e., nutrition aide, and special education specialist) to identify potential student participants. Staff and teachers also completed a behavioral nominations form to identify male students thought to exhibit strong behaviors. Students in a 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades were included in the sample as a way to examine grade levels not typically included in this research.

Nominations forms contained 10 behavioral descriptors. Students with the highest nominations were identified as potential participants. School records are informal and infrequently maintained; and were not available to use. Teacher nominations have been used in previous research and there is also evidence to the fact

that teachers can be good judges of students' performance levels (see Good & Brophy, 1972; Lane et al., 2009; Ramsey et al., 2010).

I also conducted interviews with the school administrator, special education specialist, and nutrition aide. The special education specialist and nutrition aide had contact with the entire school population and were a reliable source to obtain information regarding potential student participants. Teachers included a 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade combination class, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, and a 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade combination class. During each interview, school personnel was asked to identify up to three students that had longstanding histories of classroom misbehaviors that occurred during the previous school year. Since this study was conducted at the beginning of a new school year, information about students from the previous school year was the most recent available.

Students who received the highest nominations across the three different data sources (school administrators, teachers, and school staff) were identified as potential participants and a pool of 6-8 potential student participants were identified. I tried to select two students from the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom and two students from the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. The former was targeted because there was a dearth of research with that age group on discipline inequities and the latter was included because they represented the age group that is overrepresented in discipline inequities. The top four students identified and their respective teachers were approached and asked to participate in this study. I strove to get a balance of racial representation of minority students within the student sample of participants. A full schedule detailing the timeline for this study is contained in Appendix F.

**Participant profiles.** Five students in 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade and two of their respective teachers were included in this research study. Student participants included Jonathan, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade African American male student, Byron, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade African American male student, B.G. and Lil P, 6<sup>th</sup> grade African American male students, and Cookie, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student who identified himself as Hispanic. Each participant chose their name to use in the study. The students' respective teachers included in this study were Mr. Abrahm and Ms. Esther. Both teachers self-identified as African American.

Interviews with teachers generally took place in their classroom when no students were present. Interviews with students took place in a spare classroom, outside on a bench, in the teacher's lounge (no staff would enter), or in a small room located immediately across the front desk in the administration building. Some of the initial interviews were held in this room, and while conducting these interviews, although the door was closed, other conversations could be heard from within the room. I share this information about interviews here because in the following, I provide more detailed descriptions of each participant that also includes how their mannerisms and forms of expression changed within contexts.

**B.G.** B.G. is 12 years old, in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and says that he likes to break dance and play football. He described himself as, "being cool, attractive, talented, and having swag." He was born in the Midwest and attended IDA since 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. B.G. shares a room with one of his sisters and lives with his grandmother, two aunties and three sisters in a four bedroom apartment. He spoke of two brothers who lived elsewhere and did not speak of his mother and father during interviews or while at school during the duration of his participation in the study.

B.G. had consistent and regular attendance at school. He earned average to above average grades in school. He said, “I enjoy school and learn something every day. I also like to be g’d up and having swag.” He indicated that swag and being g’d up was really more than clothes and hats and was really about having style, and “looking good with it!” He said, “it’s not how you talk, but how you walk.” B.G.’s ways of being at school, his manner of cultural expressions, in his words entailed:

Being fresh, like you go somewhere and you was looking nice. Fresh is like you took a shower and all that stuff, and you’re just waiting for something to happen, like you’re going to a party or kicking back or something.

B.G.’s expressions and mannerisms were different in class than during our interviews. In class, he could be heard telling students to be quiet, be seen sitting straight up or slouching in his chair, raising his hand waiting to answer questions or calling out his responses. He moved around the classroom with confidence and appeared comfortable telling his peers what they should be doing. While class was not in session and during after school, there were several occasions staff reported B.G. bullying other students his age and at times much younger female students. At times during the initial interview, he covered his mouth while speaking and shared that he was nervous. During our remaining interviews, he was vocal, spoke with expression, engaged, and was highly attentive. Eventually, his nerves dissipated and he spoke with ease. B.G. was only interviewed while he attended IDA.

Three months into this study, B.G. moved and began living with one of his aunties. Reported by his grandmother, within a few weeks of this move, B.G. again

moved and began living with his mother. After his withdrawal from IDA, B.G. consistently attended one local area public school. His performance at that school is unknown.

**Byron.** Byron is 10 years old, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and reports he likes to play wide receiver. Byron described himself as, “talented and liking to dance.” Byron was born in the Southwest and primarily lived with his father until death near the end of Byron’s fourth grade year. Byron did not speak of his father during the duration of his participation in this study, but Byron’s mother and school staff indicated after the unexpected passing of Byron’s father, he began living with his mother full time. Presently, Byron lives with his mother, and three sisters in a three bedroom attached bungalow. He sometimes spends weekends with his grandmother.

Byron attended several area schools since kindergarten, and was expelled almost one year ago from an area public school for bringing and discharging a firearm in school. A child was slightly injured and no charges were pressed. He has attended IDA since 4<sup>th</sup> grade having consistent and regular attendance.

Four months into this study, Byron was accused of stealing permanent markers from a teacher and using them two weeks later to write on the sidewalk. He was suspended four days from school for stealing and tagging. Byron denied being involved, but school administrators made the decision to suspend him based on a student’s recollection nearly two weeks later of both incidents. According to Byron’s mother, Ms. Saborna, after being notified by Byron of his suspension, she immediately withdrew him from IDA and enrolled him in another area charter school.

Byron's mother Saborna, reported that Byron attended his second school of his 5<sup>th</sup> grade year for approximately three weeks until he was again expelled being accused of "slapping a little girl." She shared, "the principal rode the bus home with him to my mom's and said they don't want him back." After this incident, Byron was enrolled in yet another school; and two weeks before winter break, he began attending the third school during his 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. For reasons not shared with me, Byron again changed schools after winter break and started his fourth school during his 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. He attended this school for half of a day. Ms. Saborna indicated that when she enrolled Byron, she did not disclose his full school history and recounted by that afternoon, the school received his school file, and called her saying she needed to pick him up; and that he could not attend their school. She sighs, "Nobody wants him; they don't want him." Byron began a sixth school of his 5<sup>th</sup> grade year a few days later, where he currently remains.

While attending IDA, Byron earned average to slightly below average grades in school. He said, "school is kind of fun, kind of non-fun." Byron also responded:

The fun things at school are your friends, learning new things that you never heard of, and you get to have recess. I like some of the non-fun things. Some of the non-fun things that I don't like is when people make fun of me. Like I only had regular pencils. People were making fun of me.

He was unable to speak of a time he felt good at school, and said, "I get in trouble a lot for no reason, he thinks I talk a lot in the classroom, but it's not really me. One time we were doing the tests and a teacher ripped my test. I felt bad."

Byron and his mother described a child struggling at school. By report it appeared his mannerisms and ways of being were consistent within multiple school contexts.

Although school uniforms were required, Byron at times did not dress in uniform and wore a dark colored sweatshirt. During class, he would move about within his seat, talk to peers sitting near him, mouth words to friends sitting away from him, talk to himself loud enough for others to hear, sing quietly and hum, or pull his shirt over his head. He rarely raise his hand in class to answer a teacher's question, but would have necessary materials on his desk (e.g., pencil, paper, book). While class was not in session and during after school, he would excitedly engage with peers and at times run from place to place. During our interviews at school he spoke comfortably and seemed at ease. During our interviews at his home, he appeared tense, cautious and somewhat uneasy. When we were outside on the sidewalk in front of his home, he seemed to speak more freely appeared more comfortable.

*Cookie.* Cookie is 11 years old, in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and reports, "I like to play with people outside, but really only with boys." He described himself as talking too much, being funny, and liking to tell jokes. He shared that talking too much is bad and that teachers would probably call him annoying.

He was born in the Southwest but has lived in two different states. He shared, he remembers when he was little, moving suddenly into his grandmother's house with his mother. He mentioned that his father had been incarcerated for approximately 10 years and that he sometimes visits him. Cookie thought his father was going to be released soon, but that he would be going directly to Mexico. Cookie shared that his mother assured him that he would visit his father in Mexico. Presently, Cookie lives with his mother in an apartment three blocks away from IDA and says he has his own room. He has two pets, a dog named Frank and a gerbil named Sunshine.



Cookie attended four area public schools since kindergarten and was enrolled at IDA in the beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> grade. His attendance at IDA was consistent. Cookie earned average to above average grades in school. He said, “I like to play with my friends and stuff, when I can play basketball, or something like that. Today, I going to like it at the end of school, because it’s gonna be Boys Club.” He doesn’t like that school starts at 8:00 AM and wishes “school would start at 10:00 AM and get out at 6:00 in the night.” Cookie also indicated, “I don’t like teachers. They are always yelling at me.”

Five months into the study, there was an incident where Cookie felt he was being singled out by a teacher. A teacher left the students unattended and when a different staff entered the room, Cookie was reprimanded for talking and had to have his mother sign a sheet of paper acknowledging she was informed of his behavior. While Cookie and the teacher who reprimanded him were talking, she told him “he sticks out more because he talks often and does less work than the rest of students.” Cookie was visibly affected. With tears coming down his face, he emotionally responded, “he was being picked on by teachers.” Three days after this incident Cookie’s mother withdrew him from IDA and enrolled him in a different area public school, where he remains. Currently, Cookie reports, regularly receiving detention for talking, plays baseball and basketball and likes his new school; but misses his friends at IDA.

Cookie’s expressions and mannerisms at school varied from smiling and telling jokes, to speaking in a subtle soft voice. He moved about at his desk and throughout the classroom. He often left his seat (many times without seeking permission), would walk over to a peer’s desk, throw something away as if he had a basketball, or pick up a pencil from the teacher’s desk. He was jovial and could be seen smiling and often heard talking

to someone. There were times he sat in his desk quietly and would also raise his hand to answer a teacher's question. He would also blurt out answers quietly or at times loud enough for others to hear. While class was not in session, he would walk in a line or alongside a peer. Most of the time, he could be seen smiling and heard laughing. He experienced great difficulty in the cafeteria and shared, he often got in trouble for talking and had to take out the garbage and help clean up the entire cafeteria as a form of punishment. Helping to clean the cafeteria and remove the garbage was also solicited through volunteers, of which Cookie often volunteered.

During our interviews, Cookie was soft spoken, but engaged. He sat straight up in his chair, body very still and focused. He would also grin and laugh at times. He exhibited these same types of expression during his home interview that took place in a private room in the clubhouse of his apartment complex.

***Jonathan.*** Jonathan is 9 years old, in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and likes to play football, basketball and indicates his "favorite food is to eat spaghetti." He expressed, "I don't like it when people at school call me fat" and described himself as "a good person."

He was born in the Southwest and has only lived in one state. Jonathan lived in a house with his mother, four sisters and younger brother. He indicated that he sees his father whenever he goes to his house which is anytime he wants.

Jonathan attended IDA since 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and has consistent attendance. He earned average grades and thinks school is fun. He shared, "it is fun because you get to learn and do stuff and they make you learn good. When you pay attention and when you focus on a teacher, what she is saying and it gets stuck in your head."

Jonathan's expressions and mannerisms in class and throughout school remained constant. He was cheery and often volunteered to help teachers and staff. In class at times, he would talk out loud to peers when he seemed bothered, often resulting in negative attention drawn to himself. During class, he remained in his seat most of the time and often refrained from raising his hand when teachers probed students for responses.

Reported by staff, Jonathan would be bullied by B.G. during after school programs and occasionally teased by other students. During the day, Jonathan could be seen walking, swaying his shoulders from left to right and smiling throughout the school day. He often was seen and heard telling teachers about his classmates' behavior; and would openly share his opinions. During some interviews he sat straight up in his chair with varying facial expressions ranging from a grin to a serious and attentive posture. He comfortably responded to inquiries, providing short statements. At other times, he said he could not remember and seemed aloof, but enjoyed having one on one attention from an adult. Jonathan was interviewed only while he was at school.

*Lil P.* Little P (Lil P) is 12 years old, in the sixth grade, and likes to play football in the position of running back, basketball in the position of point guard and reading as a hobby and interest. He describes himself as, "smart" and shared that "he wants to be just like his older brother cause he played basketball."

Lil P was born in the Southwest and has lived in one state his entire life. He recently started living with his father and two brothers and sees his mother on weekends. He indicated he misses his mom, but it has been good living with his dad. Lil P has two sisters that live elsewhere.

He has attended IDA since first grade, has a history of consistent attendance and earned average to slightly above average grades. His father also works at IDA, and begins his shift near the end of the school day. Lil P indicated that he likes school because,

It helps you learn. Cause if you don't go to school, you ain't going to be able to get a job, cause you don't know how to count or anything. That's why I like reading and also cause something some reading helps you speak different languages. And if you get a job and customers don't speak English, you can speak like whatever language they speak.

Lil P perceived himself getting in trouble at school sometimes for talking when he was not the only student talking. Lil P said he gets mad when he gets into trouble for talking, but the other person does not get into trouble for talking. He shared, "When this happens, I get mad, get an attitude, but I still do my work. I like, just stop listening, but I still do my work, I just stop listening to him (teacher)."

Lil P's expressions, mannerisms and ways of being at school remained constant throughout the day within multiple contexts. During many classes, he would frequently display huge bright smiles. He regularly raised his hand to respond to teacher inquiry, but would also often just blurt out answers which were generally correct. One teacher would often say to Lil P loud enough for everyone to hear, "I know you know the answers, I want to hear from someone who may not know the answer." Lil P appeared relaxed, interacted with his peers and teachers comfortably, and moved about the class with confidence. Outwardly, Lil P had an even keel disposition and shared he always did what teachers asked him, even when he did not want to do it. Reported by Lil P, he would regularly volunteer to take out the trash after lunch and was given that responsibility

some times in one week increments. He seemed to pride himself in finding ways to take on additional responsibility.

During interviews Lil P appeared engaged, focused and spoke with great concentration. He spoke with great clarity and exuded the same confidence during our interviews that was observed in the classroom with his peers and teachers. Lil P was interviewed only while he was at school.

**Teachers.** The teachers in this study were selected based on administrator recommendation. Albert Abrahm and Mia Esther, both agreed to open their classrooms to the process of this study of which involved video and direct observations, face to face and stimulated recall interviews, and surveys. Each teacher also assisted in distributing and collecting consent from parents/guardians and receiving students' assent. Both Mr. Abrahm and Ms. Esther were working to obtain their state teaching license in general education and held bachelor's degrees in communication. Mr. Abrahm also held a master's in education administration degree.

### **Data Collection Procedures and Sources**

Previous studies that have explored misbehavior, discipline, or perception have used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Data collection methods for these types of studies have included a variety of sources, such as providing participants vignettes or behavioral descriptions, surveys, and questionnaires, videotaped class observations, stimulated recall interviews, and teacher and student interviews (Coleman & Gilliam, 1983; Saunders, Davis, Williams, & Williams, 2004; Supaporn, Dodds, & Griffin, 2003). Throughout this study, I collected data in the form of interviews, direct and video observations, surveys, audio recordings, memos, and field notes (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Inquiry-guided Data Collection*

Inquiry	Data Collection Procedure
Student Nomination Stage	Teacher interviews Staff interviews Administrator interviews Surveys
Study Question (Part A) What are students' and teachers' conceptualizations of misbehavior?	Teacher interviews Student interviews
Study Question (Part B) How do teachers and students account for the way classroom misbehavior is constructed, interpreted and negotiated?	Direct observation Participant observation Video observation Fieldnotes Memos Stimulated recall interviews Face to face interviews

As a way to understand teachers' and students' conceptualization of misbehavior, I initially conducted semi-structured interviews with students and teachers. The use of semi-structured interviews involved questions that were open-ended and allowed for the interview to be conducted at times more like a conversation (Merriam, 1998).

All interviews were audio recorded. Student interviews took place on campus in a private room either before or while students were at school, during non-academic periods such as breakfast, homeroom, lunch, or recess. All interviews were one-on-one. Interviews with teachers occurred in their classroom either before or after school or during lunch and recess. The length of the initial interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes. When necessary, interviews were broken up into smaller increments of time to allow for teacher and student scheduling.

The research question for this study focused on how teachers' and students' conceptualization of misbehavior accounts for the way classroom misbehavior is constructed, interpreted and negotiated. This was studied through understanding how students and teachers negotiate interactional moments during instances of teacher-student conflicts that may lead to school discipline inequities. It includes the social aspects of interactions, but also teachers' and students' meaning-making processes of misbehavior. The data collection procedures for this question were conducted in parts and involved participant observation (including field notes), videotaping, and stimulated recall interviews.

**Study Question (Part A): What are students' and teachers' conceptualizations of misbehavior?** I interviewed students and teachers about their views on classroom order, student misbehavior, and personal expectations regarding classroom routines and procedures. Individual interviews with both teachers and students were conducted to gain access to many different types of exchanges that participants employed in their routine interactions with others (Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2006). Initial interviews were conducted for the first 2-3 weeks of the academic year. Furthermore, individual interviews allowed the participants to share their conceptualizations and experiences in their own words while giving me (as the researcher) the ability to develop a complete view of each participant's construction of their reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Moore et al., 2009).

Given the need to conduct student interviews during non-academic and instructional periods, interviews had to be conducted during lunch or recess. I conducted up to six interviews lasting up to approximately 60 minutes broken up into 20 minute

intervals to coincide with students' lunch and recess period. On occasion student interviews occurred for up to 40 minutes lasting the entire length of lunch and recess. If student interviews were conducted during lunch, students ate their lunch during the interview. Interview times with students were also shortened to allow for them to participate in recess. I needed to be realistic in planning for frequent, but shortened interview periods with students.

These interview questions were based on constructs included in studies that investigated discipline, misbehavior, and perception (Coleman & Gilliam, 1983; Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Saunders, Davis, Williams, & Williams, 2001; Supaporn, Dodds, & Griffin, 2003; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Although it is included as Appendix F, below is a sample of questions asked during the initial interview of teachers and students:

- a) What are some examples of how students misbehave?
- b) If a student is being quiet but not participating or following directions, is that student misbehaving? Why or Why not?
- c) What can happen when a student misbehaves?
- d) What does it mean when a student misbehaves?
- e) How would you describe a teacher being fair?
- f) How would you describe a teacher being unfair?
- g) How are you expected to behave in class?
- h) How do you behave in class? Please describe the things you do. What it looks like. How it feels when you behave certain ways.

Immediately following each interview with students and teachers, I wrote in a research log comments and reflections about aspects that caught my attention that are



germane to the study. I included analytical and conceptual reflections, and notes relevant for the next contact, as well as general observations such as the mood, tone of the interview and general demeanor of the participant.

**Study Question (Part B): How do teachers and students account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted, and negotiated?** To address the second part of the study question, I used video recordings of classrooms, participant observation and field notes. Initial observations began on August 1, the start of the 2012-2013 school. The study concluded approximately 9 months later. The first four weeks of classroom video recordings were used to develop a portrait of the classroom routines and everyday practices. This allowed me to gain insights about the predictable rhythm of classroom events, understand teachers' and students' approaches to classroom order, and contextualize the analysis of teacher-student conflicts.

Observations and video recordings occurred in the morning between 8:00 AM and 12:25 PM. I worked with five students and two teachers, including two students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades. I observed students in their respective classes from 8:00 AM to 10:20 AM, 10:25 AM to 12:25 PM and 1:05 to 3:05. I would alternate the observations periods so that students could be observed across contexts and during varying blocks. Observations occurred at least three days per week between Monday and Thursday.

Classroom video recordings occurred in conjunction with participant observations. I began sketching field notes during the video recordings. I had two to three video cameras in the focal classrooms. One video camera was set to continuously record the whole group and focused on the teacher. The second camera was positioned in the direction of the focal students. A third camera was positioned in the direction of the

teacher. Videotaping captured observable events in the classroom. Fieldnotes from videotaped recordings were taken to identify and catalog instances of misbehavior and used to prepare for the stimulated recall interviews to come later.

Spending time as a participant observer and recording fieldnotes also provided me a sense of the life in the classroom. I conducted participant observations as a way to understand teachers' and students' definitions of misbehavior in naturally occurring events within the classroom. Participant observation was also used so that the "researcher can work to better understand the view of the [teacher's and student's world] through their own eyes" (Schnell & Wagner, 1983, p. 9). In addition, observations make it possible for the researcher to record behavior as it is happening (Merriam, 1998). During observations I focused the field notes on routines, participation structures, topics, and content covered in lessons and other academic or social activities, teacher/student talk, behaviors, and gestures, voice tone, physical distances between objects and furniture in the classroom, teacher and student proximity, student and teacher positions in the classroom, seating arrangements, and the like. Other things noted were seating arrangements and general classroom movement patterns of both teachers and students.

After I left the school, I developed the fieldnotes to document the classroom routines and rhythm (Emerson, 1995) to contextualize in detail classroom events, activities, and teacher-student conflicts. Field notes provided detailed descriptions of episodes and events that transpired during observations. I provided a comprehensive description of what happened during particular time periods such as episodes of teacher-student conflict or classroom instruction. Many settings have their own schedule (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) that can serve as a type of outline. Emerson (1995)

recommends starting observations at the beginning of a period (as determined by the setting) and concluding observations at the end of the period.

I used stimulated recall interviews to investigate students' and teachers' meaning-making processes during negotiated episodes of teacher-student conflicts within the classroom. During stimulated recall interviews, I selected clips of video recordings that depicted conflict incidents and asked students and teachers to discuss their participation in the event. Plaut (2006) and Sime (2006) indicated that many studies have used stimulated recall to study classroom interactions and Beers, Boshuizen, Kirschner, Gijsselaers, and Westendorp (2006) specified that stimulated recall interviews help researchers to gain insight into mental constructs of participants' minds. Stough (2001) implied this *think aloud* process enabled researchers *access to the thoughts of participants* and considered stimulated recall ideal when researchers want participants to be introspective and reflective so that their mental processes can be revealed (Mackey & Glass, 2005).

Within less than 48 hours of each videotaping, I conducted stimulated recall interviews with individual participants. Bloom (1953) found that students were able to accurately recall memories and thoughts that occurred during class up to two days later with approximately 95% accuracy. Although previously mentioned, interviews were one-on-one and they occurred before or after school or during lunch and recess.

I conducted at least four to six stimulated interviews with selected students and teachers. These interviews related to critical discipline incidents, which were reduced to shortened video segment. Each of these interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Again, when necessary, interviews were broken up into smaller increments dependent upon teacher and student schedules.

The use of stimulated recall involved students and teachers separately watching a video-recording of a specific classroom event in which they were involved. Teacher and student responses were audio recorded and during the interview, I asked questions that related to events observed in the classroom. Using an adapted version of Morine and Vallance (1975) stimulated recall interview procedure, during certain video clip segments, I asked questions like:

- a) What was going on here?
- b) What they were thinking?
- c) Was there anything else you thought about doing at the point, but did not?

I asked students and teachers other questions like these relating to the video clip until I exhausted the discussion of the incidents. General contextual information about each segment was also used.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

In this study, a combination of qualitative methods, specifically, case study (Merriam 1998), grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), and video analysis (Erickson, 2006; Ridder, 2007) provided the framework for data analysis and interpretation (see Table 9 for data analysis procedures). Given the strengths and weaknesses of various methods, researchers may combine methods in complementary ways as a strategy for investigating classroom interactions (Mercer, Littleton, & Wegerif, 2009). Such was the case for this study.

Table 9

*Data Analysis Procedures*

Inquiry	Data Collection	Data Analysis Procedures
Participant Selection through Nomination Stage	Interviews Fieldnotes Memos	High frequency nomination: select 6-8 students across nominator
Study Question (Part A) What are students' and teachers' conceptualizations of misbehavior?	Interviews Fieldnotes Memos	Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) including constant comparison method of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)
Study Question (Part B) How do teachers and students account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted and negotiated?	Observations: participant video direct Interviews: Simulated recall face to face Fieldnotes Memos	Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) including constant comparison method of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) Whole-to-part (Erickson, 2006) Video analysis (Ridder, 2007)

All interviews and stimulated recall video recordings were transcribed. After individual transcripts were completed, I analyzed the texts using open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The conceptual labels identified from open coding were sorted and compiled. Using Strauss and Corbin's (1990) suggestions for axial coding, categories from the data was arranged. This secondary analysis was used as a way to produce a conceptual model of student misbehaviors. I also systematically analyzed the data for thematic patterns using a constant comparison method of analysis (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In addition, by conducting a descriptive analysis, categories were created to describe the interactions of each participant. This was accomplished by:

- a) identifying key issues, recurrent events or activities in the data, i.e., types of reactions toward teachers and students;
- b) determining if patterns could be collapsed into smaller and similar categories;
- c) finding examples of transcribed text that illustrate different categories;
- d) writing about the categories being explored describing all the incidents in the data while searching for new incidents; and
- e) engaging in sampling, coding, and writing as the analysis focuses on key categories.

The use of video was incorporated as an extension of direct observations and allowed for a more detailed analysis to occur (Gobo, 2008). I used the first four weeks of video data to create a portrait of everyday routines in each of the classrooms observed. Field notes and video-recordings were closely analyzed for critical classroom behavioral events between the teacher and student. The teachers' and students' responses were coded several times to identify representations of misbehavior. Next I indexed video segments of conflicts from the 10 weeks of data collection and created a library of incidents per student. I used triangulate with field notes to identify episodes of conflict. Once this was done, I coded episodes of misbehavior to characterize strategies used by teachers and students to negotiate their moment-to-moment decision during instances of classroom conflict. I also developed categories from these preliminary codes to identify teachers' and students' thinking regarding their involvement in these incidents.

*Dedoose*, a web-based data software application, was used to aid in the analysis of text and video data. Adhering to data analysis mentioned I used this program to organize

and look for categories and themes. A part of the data analysis involved looking for contextual information of a rule infraction and from interviews to understand the meaning of students' and teachers' meaning of misbehavior. This entailed selecting video segments that were meaningful and displayed classroom disruptions or student misbehavior based on my interviews with teachers and students.

Erickson (1986) suggests that even if a correlation among behavior exists and seems to be very strong that as in interpretive researcher who seeks to explain the causes of human social life, one cannot solely rely on observed similarities between prior and subsequent behaviors. Erickson specifically states that, "an explanation of cause in human action must include identification of the meaning-interpretation of the actor" (1986, p. 11). He recommends seeking an understanding of "what are the conditions of meaning that students and teachers create together?" (1986, p. 11). To accomplish an understanding of how teachers and students conceptualized misbehavior and account for their thinking surrounding misbehavior, I had to understand the conditions in the classroom as they were understood by teachers and students. For those reasons, I asked teachers and students to identify episodes of conflict from shortened video segments that I chose.

I used two data analysis procedures: Erickson's whole-to-part (inductive) procedures with a focus on interaction for discovering and analyzing data from videotape (Erickson, 2006) and a modified version of Ridder's (2007) procedure for video analysis for analyzing the very short video clips used during stimulated recall interviews. The stages of analysis for Ridder were renamed according to their unique qualities and relevance for analysis in relational interactions:

Stage 1: digital recording of the whole classroom process

Stage 2: selection of classroom events

Stage 3: identification of episodes

Stage 4: definition of moment-to-moment acts

The first stage was completed during the first four weeks of video recording data collection. The entire classroom process was video recorded using a wide angle lens and two telephoto angle camera. After whole classroom processes were analyzed, interactions between a participant student and teacher were indexed.

At Stage 2, the single interactional events between a teacher and student were recorded, analyzed and indexed. Here a number of relational interactional occurred, but not all relational interactions were studied (or significant). I initially selected relational interactions thought to show teacher and student disagreements, but the selection of which interactions had meaning ultimately were identified by teachers and students.

At Stage 3, exchanges (individual responses made by the teacher and student that can be verbal or nonverbal) contained within each event were mapped. Exchanges involved interactional turn taking between the teacher and student. At this phase, the exchanges were linked to one another and also to an initial student action. Behavioral instances were further divided into single moments, so that at step 4 of the analysis process, a single act was further analyzed in greater detail.

Stage 4 (definition of moment-to-moment acts) was made of brief moments lasting no more than a few seconds, during which even the smallest act could be observed. It is during Stage 4 that the frame of interactive processes cannot be reduced any further and Schindler (1996) called this entity “moment to moment interaction” (p.



288). After stages 1 through 4 were completed, teachers and students were shown the edited video clips identified in Stage 3 and I asked questions pertaining to their interpretations of events, episodes, exchanges, and moment-to-moment acts. These interviews were audio and video recorded. Student and teachers responses were also coded for emerging themes and patterns.

### **Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness of this study was related to the description, analyses developed, and credibility of findings. The convention when conducting and reporting qualitative research of this type was a matter of intent and substantive focus; and to illustrate general claims through rigorous research methods. For those reasons, multiple strategies were used to warrant the trustworthiness of the study findings: *credibility* (member checks, adoption of appropriate and well recognized research methods, debriefing sessions with committee members and chair), *dependability* (in depth research study design and its implementation), *triangulation* (to ensure credibility and confirmability; Merriam, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **Credibility**

A significant consideration that enhances the credibility of this study was that the observations and interactions with teachers and students took place over an extended period of time. A key question asked was, “How congruent are the findings with reality? Do the findings capture what is really there?” (Merriam, 1998, p. 201). Participant interviews and observations were conducted in a natural setting that reflected the reality of students’ and teachers’ everyday classroom experiences. I was also diligent in developing familiarity with IDA and the culture of the school, classroom and participants.

The familiarity with the school and participants provided for an accurate report of findings.

An additional provision to ensure trustworthiness involved the member checking of data and interpretations formed by participants. The independent corroboration from multiple participants also increased the trustworthiness of the study. This was done through member checking and I took the data and tentative interpretations back to teachers and students and asked them if the results were plausible. Adhering to Merriam's (1998) suggestion, I did this several times throughout the study.

### **Confirmability**

Erickson (1986) indicated that the question of generalizability for an interpretive research study was inappropriate and that the purpose of such research was to develop an understanding with a particular depth. Such was the case here, as I strove to reach an understanding of students' involvement in classroom disruptions and school discipline matters. Merriam (1998) suggests that instead of focusing on replication of findings, the intent of the research study is to have others agree that the results are sensible and consistent with the collected data. Similarly, Erickson (1986) stated that the most important characteristic of qualitative research is the centrality of interpretation. This includes "issues of human choice and meaning and the improvements in educational practice" (1986, p. 5). To that end, the trustworthiness of the findings was dependent upon the extent that findings were justifiable and reasonable to this case study, but I also acknowledge that other plausible interpretations of students' classroom conduct could be made. Strategies used to ensure to a high degree that the results of the study can be confirmed by others entailed documenting the steps used for checking the data

throughout the study, namely I examined the data, findings, interpretation and recommendations to determine if internal coherence existed.

Another strategy used to increase trustworthiness was to reveal some of my assumptions and beliefs. My positionality as a researcher was not widely noted and this could be seen as a limitation. Although I believe in individual accountability, I think learning institutions and those who work in them have the responsibility to educate and teach all children. I also believe that education is a fundamental right and that every student is entitled to successful school experiences.

### **Triangulation**

Triangulation was also incorporated. Merriam (1998) states that using multiple sources of data and methods to confirm findings are a strategy that researchers can use to enhance trustworthiness. Keeping that in mind, this study used multiple data sources such as interviews, observations, video recordings, stimulated recall interviews, and field notes. I looked for evidence across data sources to support my interpretations regarding misbehavior.

### **Dependability**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), researchers should think about the “dependability or consistency” (p. 288) of the results obtained from the data. They insist the researcher is the primary instrument for gathering data and that only a human instrument is able to capture the intricacies of social settings of which include peoples’ experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Merriam (1998) remarks that the question is not if the results can be replicated, but if the results of the study are consistent with the data collected. Through debriefing (with peers, committee members, and committee chair), I

demonstrated that given the data collected, the results make sense, are consistent and dependable.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCEPTUALIZATIONS, INTERPRETATIONS, CO-CONSTRUCTIONS, AND NEGOTIATIONS OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY MOMENTS

The focus of this study was to investigate teachers' and students' apperceptions of misbehavior. This research sought to gain insight into how an understanding of behavior mediates classroom interactional processes that ultimately constitute the precursors of student disciplinary classroom infractions. The term apperception refers to the process of taking in information into the mind (Adediwura & Tayo, 2007). This concept provides a critical lens into the phenomenon of interest in this study because I investigated how teachers and students come to understand misbehavior. This study took place within two elementary classrooms at one charter school, Intelligently Designed Academy, and included five students in fourth through sixth grade and their two respective teachers. The research question I sought to answer was this: *How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted and negotiated between teachers and students?*

I use tenets of sociocultural theory (Artiles, 1998; Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; 1986) and symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934), as a lens for understanding classroom disciplinary moments. In doing so, I recognize that teachers' and students' beliefs mediated their perceptions and learning. Sociocultural theory proposes that learning is an active process with context being critical in learning (Hall, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Within classrooms, students and teachers see their self in relation to others, perception, and also through enacted social roles (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Mercer & Howe, 2012; Wertsch 1990). Combined these theoretical frameworks allow

new insights into the situated nature of classroom misbehavior and the unfolding of classroom disciplinary moments.

I begin by providing an overview of the main insights from this study, that is, the intricacies involved in the situated nature of misbehavior and the development of classroom disciplinary moments. The following five sections describe the various components of the overall model of student misbehaviors that I discerned from the study evidence. For this purpose, I first provide an overview of this model, namely teachers' and students' interpretative processes for deriving meaning through interactions. Second, I discuss teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior that they brought to classroom situations in which disciplinary incidents arose. Third, I provide contextual information that teachers' and students' use as part of their meaning making process for understanding classroom disciplinary moments at Intelligently Designed Academy. Last, I explain the various formations of misbehavior that arise from the negotiation processes that constituted classroom disciplinary moments.

### **Overview of the Situated Nature of Misbehavior and the Development of Classroom Disciplinary Moments**

There was order and logic in the ways teachers and students organized their thinking when relating to each other (McDermott, 1977). At the heart of teachers' and students' sense making was their interpretative meaning making process. This process was used for understanding classroom misbehavior and disciplinary moments. Teachers' and students' organization and execution of this logic was intricate, consisting of multiple overlays. In addition, the meaning making processes of teachers and students occurred

simultaneously and/or in succession. These processes also occurred within oneself, another person, and/or with the environment.

Classroom disciplinary moments were created in a progression which advanced through six phases. Students' and teachers' interpretative meaning making process evolved in parallel fashion. This meant that teachers and students could be involved in the same disciplinary moment, but interpret disciplinary moments in a coordinated way, or not. A disciplinary moment typically started with a "launching." This was defined as the student behavior that initiated a classroom disciplinary moment. The second phase was "interpretation." During this phase teachers believed that students willfully engaged in classroom misbehavior. The third phase was "coding." This was defined as teachers and students blaming each other. The fourth phase was "public recognition." This was defined as teachers doing something that signaled to students that he/she was aware of their misbehavior. The fifth phase was "sanction." This was defined as students being consequence for their misbehavior. The 6<sup>th</sup> and final phase was "closure." This was described as students and teachers having an immediate reaction to a classroom disciplinary moment.

The smallest interactional unit *within* each phase is called formations. Some disciplinary moments consisted of one student behavior and a teacher response. I called these paired formations "exchanges." Other formations were longer, including multiple exchanges. I called these instances episodes. Events began with a student behavior and ended with a teacher sanction. The difference between an exchange and episodes was that an exchange consisted of one student behavior and one teacher behavior. Behavioral episodes consisted of two or more linked teacher and student exchanges, that did not end

with a teacher sanction. Classroom disciplinary moments lasted less than a few seconds, others lasted for minutes.

Zooming into teachers' and students' behavior during moment-to-moment classroom disciplinary moments; again conceptualizations of misbehavior varied. Teachers and students processed information differently and at times perceived each other's actions similarly and other times dissimilar. In every instance, a classroom disciplinary moment began with a student externalizing some kind of behavior. Figure 4 graphically represents the comprehensive view of classroom disciplinary moments.



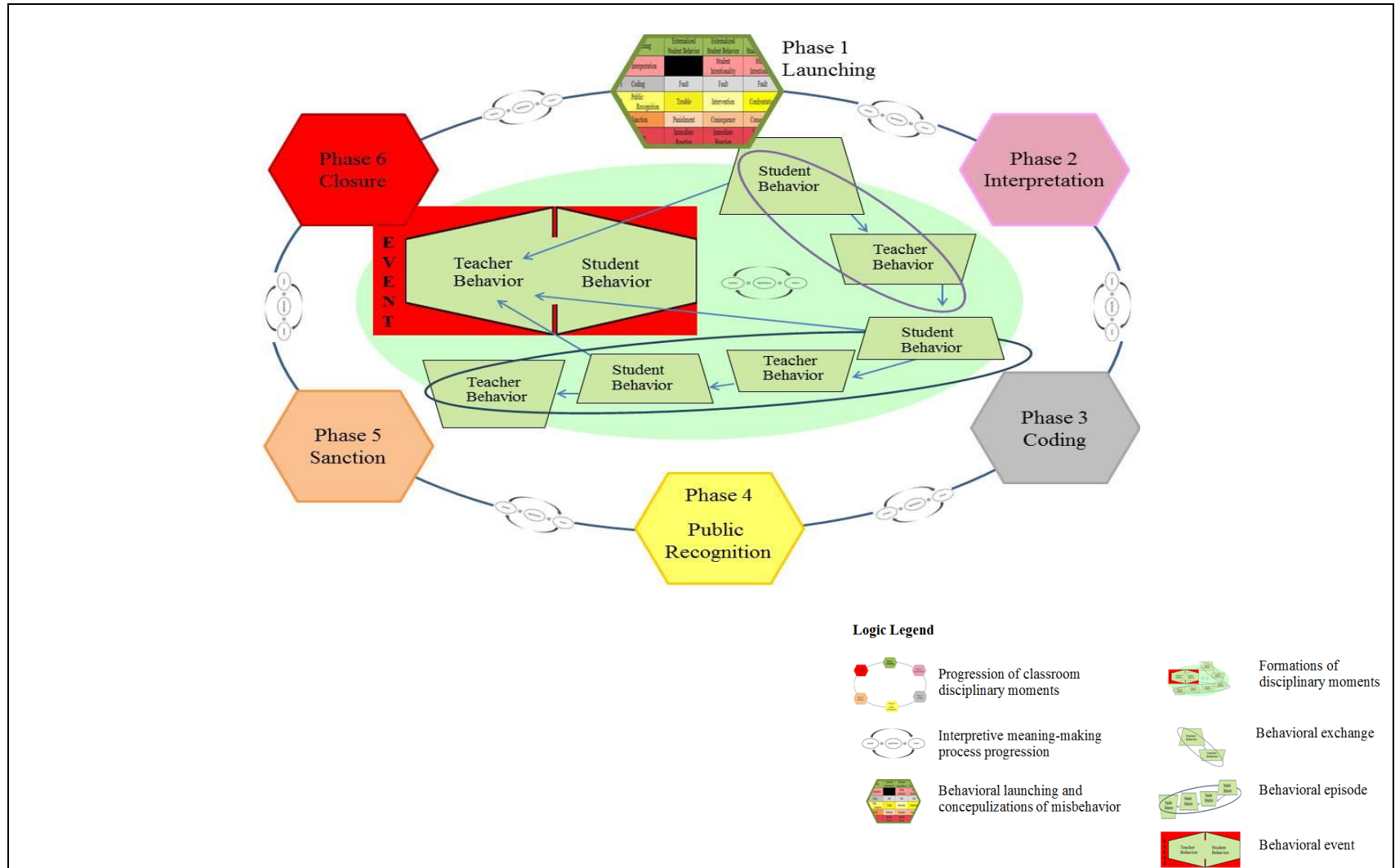


Figure 4. Logic model for understanding classroom disciplinary moments.

## **Deriving Meaning: An Outline of Interpretative Processes**

Classrooms are very active spaces. Typically, classrooms have rules and operate with some type of order. Generally, teachers and students walk around, speak to one another, respond and initiate interactions, engage in classroom discussion, look at one another, joke, and even have physical contact. Although these behaviors are observable, because of the situated nature of classroom misbehavior, the notion of misbehavior is a dynamic perception.

Misbehavior is a pervasive notion in schools; however, in live context, we see how teachers and students come to understand differently what Charles, Senter, and (1999) defined as misbehavior, “behavior that is considered inappropriate for a setting or situation for which it occurs” (p. 2). There are systems of discipline within each state, school district and school sites. Within schools, there are categories and rules displayed on charts and written in policies and outlined in handbooks. Created is an illusion and conveyed is the message that misbehavior is a static notion of acceptable and unacceptable conducts. I suggest this is not the case; and that the co-construction of classroom disciplinary moments is a situated phenomenon.

Theoretical tenets of symbolic interactionism suggest the process of meaning making involves three major concepts: symbols (i.e., objects, situations, constructs, vocalizations); signification (i.e., meaning of a symbol and or representation of what a symbol stands for or represents); and action (i.e., perception of meaning; Blumer, 1969; Farberman, 1985; Hewitt, 2003; Mead, 1934). Examples of an object as a symbol could be a tree, dog, pencil, textbook, etc. Situations as symbols could be a parent-teacher conference, or a student being sent to the principal’s office, etc. Constructs as symbols

could include notions such as misbehavior, the idea of schooling, or the idea of a teacher's role. Vocalizations as symbols could be a phrase a person uses, or words a teacher speaks to a student, etc.

Hewitt (2003) suggested that symbols, objects, and meanings are basic ideas that answer questions relating to human behavior and interaction. In turn, Vygotsky (1981) and Cole (1997) bring out that mediation of certain tools (e.g., symbols) requires a simultaneous processing of both something material and ideal. In that sense, symbols are "material in that they are embodied in material artifacts" (Cole, 1997, p. 249). Vygotsky calls this semiotic mediation of tools in human activity. Cole (1997) also points out that what differentiates symbols as a physical object (e.g., notebook) from a construct or language "is the relative prominence of their material and ideal aspects" (p. 249). Further, Vygotsky (1981) says symbols are used as a psychological tool to mediate mental activity in the relationship between people and their environment.

Understanding that teachers and students either relate to their environment or have a relationship with their environment (Farberman, 1985) suggests that they make sense of classroom behaviors by evaluating them through their interactions with others. In addition, continued processing of an interaction after it occurs leads to further interpretations and meaning making (Mazzotta & Myers, 2008). This interpretive meaning making process is shown in Figure 5. A person's decision to act emerges from an interaction with oneself. Charon (1989) refers to this as covert action because it takes place within one's mind. For that reason, I stress that teacher's and student's meaning making is internal (inside the mind). Important to keep in mind is that a symbol can also have more than one, or multiple significations. Next, I build on these basic premises

about meaning making to describe and discuss teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior that they use in their meaning making processing.

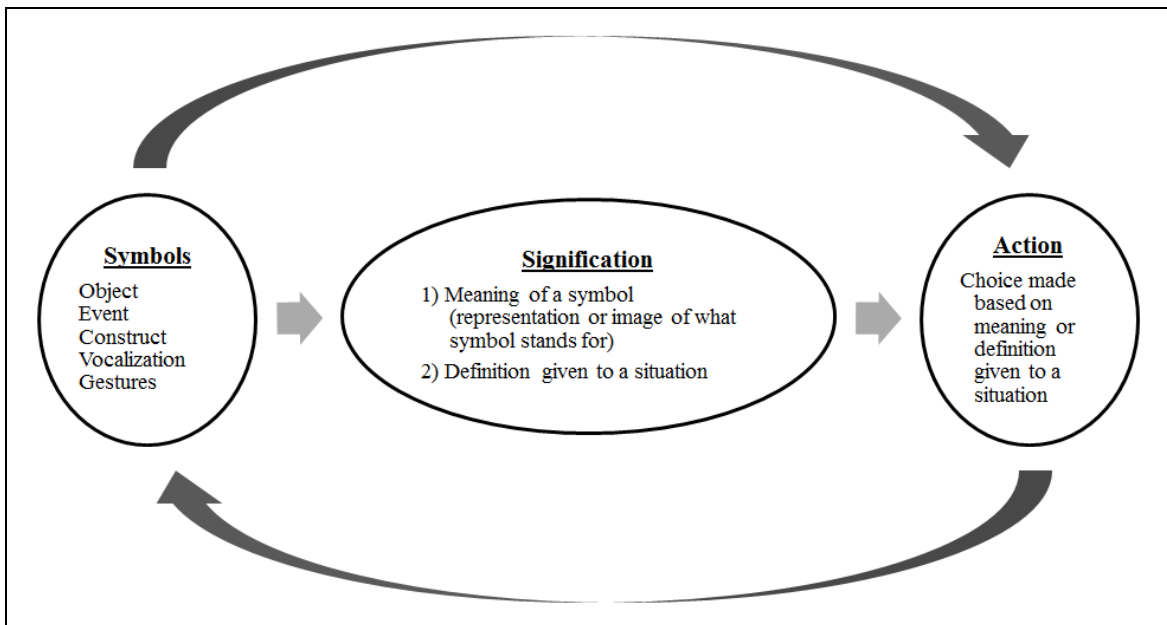


Figure 5. Interpretative meaning-making process.

### **Teachers' and Students' Conceptualizations of Misbehavior**

Teachers and students derived meanings differently during their interactions and developed varied conceptualizations of misbehavior during the progression of classroom disciplinary moments. Teachers' and students' conceptualizations were influenced by their preconceived notions of misbehavior, personal beliefs and cultural practices, and derived understandings from social interactions.

The evidence revealed that Mr. Abram, Ms. Esther, and participating students shared a common understanding of what symbols (i.e., objects, events, constructs, vocalizations, gestures) signified classroom misbehavior. Mr. Abraham insisted students

remain quiet, still, and looking in his physical direction. He interpreted this kind of behavior to indicate positive engagement and a readiness to learn:

When students are talking to a neighbor while I'm giving instruction, or getting out of their seat while there's instruction going on, or doing something other than listening; and I can tell, that is a distraction to the classroom, it is an interruption or disruption. When I begin the instruction I wait until everyone's eyes are on me. I say, Pencils down, eyes on me.

Ms. Esther considered noise and movement as central signifiers for misbehavior. She stated:

Well, unnecessary noises, just like random acts of noise. Students moving around the classroom when they are supposed to be seated, when it's not time to move around. Or taking someone else's attention from what's supposed to be happening. It is also throwing things, messing with somebody else's stuff intentionally, making faces, doing things to get attention from the other students and students use of language.

Students considered similar observable behaviors as symbols that signified misbehavior:

*B.G.:* Acting up or talking back. When I talk back, they tell me don't talk back, because you're a little kid. Don't mean nothing to me.

*Byron:* Either breaking one of the rules, doing something that you are not supposed to be doing or not keeping your hands to yourself.

*Cookie:* It's like talking, being funny, playing around in class telling jokes and not doing my work, just walking around and talking to everybody.

*Jonathan:* Talking back and doing bad stuff.

*Lil P:* If a teacher tells you to do something, and then, like if she is trying to—if you're constantly talking in class, and she's teaching something on the board, and then the other students, they next to you, you're talking, they're not gonna be able to hear her. While you're talking out loud, and they're trying to learn and take notes, but you're talking, and they didn't know what she's saying.

These quotes suggest teachers and students had similar notions of classroom misbehavior. Teachers and students understood classroom disciplinary moments based on preconceived definitions of misbehavior, contextual clues, and the interactional processes that occur during meaning making processes. In addition, environmental stimuli contributed to teachers' and students' sense meaning making as they interacted with one another and interpreted behaviors in the context of their environment.

The context of IDA defined misbehavior in their student handbook and parent compact. The compact dictated positive behavior to be ensuring a student's regular school attendance, reading for pleasure at home, using respectful behavior and language at school, and adhering to the school's dress code policy to wear school uniforms of which are provided at no cost. Furthermore, the school used a school discipline policy to define misbehavior. The school's discipline policy stated that "students are held responsible for their behaviors and must decide whether they wish to be recognized for positive behavior, or face the consequences for violation of school rules" (IDA Student Handbook, 2010). Another statement in the handbook indicated that students at any time "may be counseled by school personnel regarding their behavior and students are

encouraged to accept the advice as valuable and understand the intent to help students become successful.”

In addition to institutional behavioral expectations, classroom rules were posted in both classrooms. On a yellow square shaped bulletin board and on the classroom door, Mr. Abraham has five rules posted in a large typed font:

Rule 1: Raise your hand before speaking.

Rule 2: No shouting out.

Rule 3: Come to class prepared.

Rule 4: Use respectful language.

Rule 5: Be nice to others.

These posted rules reflected Mr. Abraham’s beliefs about misbehavior and a communal agreement among students regarding their ideas of classroom expectations.

In the corner of Ms. Esther’s room and behind her desk was a yellow rectangular bulletin board titled “Rights and Responsibilities.” To see the print, students needed to stand very close to the poster. Printed was: “You have the right to make choices; You have a right to learn; You have a right to be respected.” Ms. Esther indicated that:

I use rights and the fact that with rights there are responsibilities. So that's sort of the direction that I took, instead of saying here are the classroom rules. I know in the past I used to let the students make the rules but that just seems like a game at this point. I don't – not to say that their rules don't make sense but they're just so broad, they're so, so I just try to bring it in where the actual rule gave them the power, gave them that privilege.... I mean if they do something, I'll refer to it and I know I refer

to one way more than I do others which is the one where they have the right to make choices, because when they make a good choice there are good consequences, when they make a bad choice there are bad consequences. The other two rights are pretty – you know them coming into the game, you have a right to learn, you have a right to – it was respect. It had to do with being respectful and being respected.

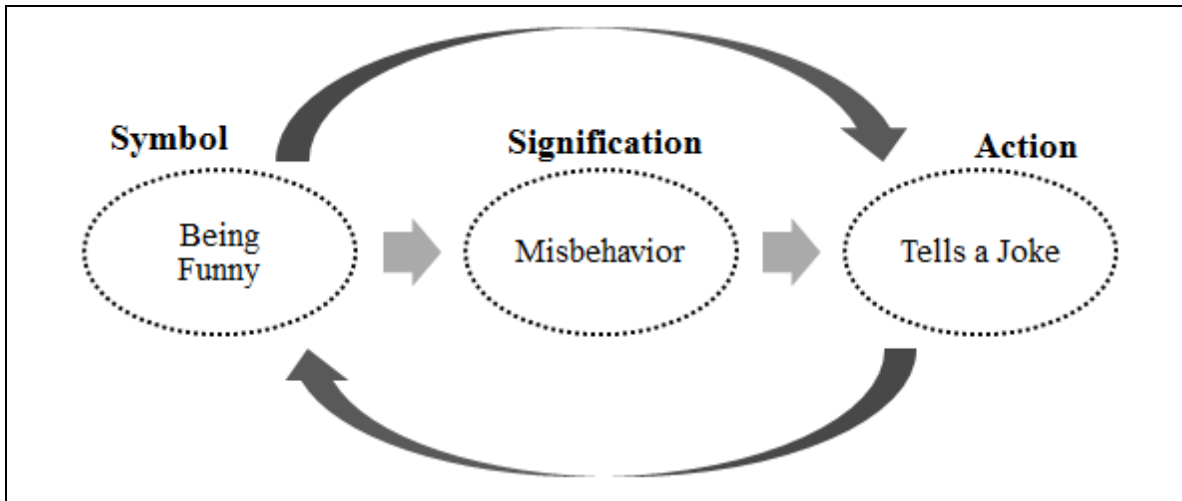
When asked about classroom rules, Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther read their classroom rules, or rights and responsibilities, as opposed to recalling the information from memory. In addition, based on direct and video observations, both teachers inconsistently enforced (implicit and explicit) classroom rules.

In short, Mr. Abraham's description of what constituted misbehavior matched the rules posted in his classroom, along with students' conceptualizations of misbehavior. On the other hand, Ms. Esther had more of an implicit alignment between her definitions of misbehavior and what was posted in her classroom; however, in the everyday life of these classrooms, it became evident that teachers and students came to understand misbehavior differently.

### **Teachers' and Students' Negotiations of Classroom Disciplinary Moments**

Cookie defined being funny, talking during class, playing with a peer, not doing work, walking around during class as symbols for the signification of misbehavior. His decision to act was then based on the definitions he gave to each situation or instance of misbehavior. For Cookie, "being funny" was a signification of misbehavior, which in turn he "acted silly in class." Presented in Figure 6 is Cookie's definition to his idea of "being funny."





*Figure 6.* Cookie’s interpretative process of symbol.

Symbolic interactionism provides a useful framework for understanding how meaning is derived in a given situation. In the framework, a stimulus is considered to be a symbol whose representation reflects an individual’s meaning making process. This means that each person gives a symbol a meaning uniquely shaped through a process that involves interactions with context, prior experiences and beliefs, and other influencing factors. Thus, a symbol achieves meaning or signification. This meaning then informs action as the individual acts upon the meaning they derived. The process is iterative in that meanings or signification of the symbols change as actors, history, environment and other stimuli shape the individuals’ understandings. This then leads to changing actions which become symbols and the meaning making process begins again.

Along those same lines, sociocultural theory provides the explanation that people learn in relationship. Mercer and Howe (2012) posits that one’s thinking and knowledge is not only individual, but also a result of the an exchange of common and uncommon understandings of a shared use of ‘cultural tools’ including language, objects, policies,

thoughts, and memories of lived experiences. It is the relationship between one's actions and thinking, and the characteristics of one's reasoning that underpins alignment or misalignment of teachers and students conceptualizations of misbehavior and classroom disciplinary moments.

We can see this process at work in schools. Teachers and students encounter multiple symbols throughout the school context and in this research the findings are clear that misbehavior signified different meanings for every actor. For example, in the illustration above, Cookie's meaning for the act of being funny was different from the way his teachers interpreted silliness in the classroom. Cookie's signification led him to tell jokes because his signification for being funny was of value.

To deepen this analysis, I then individually examined the representations for each of Cookie's symbols; and his ensuing actions. This same depth of analysis was followed for Mr. Abrahm, Ms. Esther, Byron, Lil P, B.G. and Jonathan. This examination revealed teachers' and students' interpretations of misbehavior during classroom disciplinary moments was systematic and organized.

Charon (1989) poses the question, what influences one's decisions in a situation? There was an organization to students and teachers understanding of classroom disciplinary moments; however, teachers' and students' organization of symbols, significations, and actions slightly varied. Students' conceptualizations of misbehavior involved them exhibiting an externalized behavior, believing a teacher intentionally highlighted their misbehavior, followed by them blaming teachers for making the choice to highlight their misbehavior. Students' processing also included blaming teachers, thinking they were in trouble, receiving a punishment, and having an immediate personal

reaction. Mr. Abraham also considered misbehavior was made up of a student externalizing a behavior, a student intentionally misbehaving, blaming the student for their own behavior, him intervening or consequences a student, and then both he and students having an immediate reaction. Very similar, Ms. Esther thought misbehavior involved a student externalizing a behavior, a student intentionally misbehaving, blaming the student for their own behavior, her confronting a student regarding their misbehavior, issuing a consequence, and both she and students having an immediate reaction. These findings were organized by actors (i.e., teachers and students) and grouped by closely related ideas. Illustrated in Table 10 is a more detailed representation of teachers' and students' mental organization of classroom disciplinary moments.

Table 10

*Teachers' and Students' Mental Organization of Classroom Disciplinary Moments*

Students		Teachers	
Byron, Lil P, Colton, B.G. Jonathan		Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior
Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality
Fault	Fault	Fault	Fault
Trouble	Intervention	Confrontation	Confrontation
Punishment	Consequence	Consequence	Consequence
Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction

Student classroom misbehavior was intricate and sophisticated in that there was great complexity in how teachers and students made sense of behaviors. Symbols signifying misbehavior for teachers' and students' included: eye gazes, physical gestures, verbalizations (e.g., yelling, calling out), swaying in a desk, leaving an area without permission, putting a pencil down on a desk, raising a hand, talking, walking around the

room, word choice, making faces, throwing objects, touching another student, as well as a litany of other possible behaviors.

Table 10 illustrates that students had different understandings about classroom disciplinary moments than did their teachers. In addition, teacher's individual conceptions of classroom disciplinary moments also varied. When the understandings of classroom misbehavior were misaligned, teachers and students could be involved in the same moment, but arrive at a completely different processing of what transpired. Furthermore, a student himself may become a symbol that takes on different meanings for different teachers, which in turn initiates various teacher actions. Examples of these differences are found in the vignettes that follow.

An example of a student becoming a symbol that signified misbehavior involved Cookie and Ms. Esther, while he was in Mr. Burrough's classroom. Mr. Burrough's classroom connects to both Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther's classrooms. Mr. Burrough left the students unattended and Ms. Esther heard a commotion, and entered the room. Students were seated, but talking loudly. She saw mathematical problems written on the board and instructed students to quiet down and work. She entered and left Mr. Burrough's room several times. She recollected:

There was problems on the board to add and subtract and some little strip of kids that don't work – when their mouths are all doing it. And I come in there several times in the past 15 minutes. You know, everybody else is talking. Some students don't have it [the mathematical problem] written down but at least they were doing something school related. And he [Cookie] is focused on taking the edges off the papers.

As a consequence, Ms. Esther wrote on Cookie's paper, "Refuses to work in LA [language arts] and Math. Had to write problems for him. Very uncooperative. Ms. Esther." Ms. Esther verbally instructed Cookie to complete the unfinished problems as homework and told to obtain his mother's signature as evidence he informed her of the incident. Keep in mind, only mathematics were being taught in Mr. Burrough's room, so Ms. Esther's comments about Cookie's behavior during language arts class was an embellishment to what occurred in Mr. Burrough's room. Cookie's account of what happened in Mr. Burrough's room was:

Mr. Burrough left us. Lil P was in charge. And then Lil P was telling everybody to be quiet. And then we all started arguing and stuff like that. Then Ms. Esther came in and she said that we were being loud. Then she said, "Do your guys' work." And then she left. After that she went back into her room. We were all arguing again, and then she came back in and she saw, 'cause I was cutting on my paper, Miss Esther, she saw me and she was all like "Cookie do your work." And then I didn't do it. Then she got me in trouble. Then she, like, she wrote down – she told me to write the problems down and go to the office. Then I was writing them slow and then she told me we needed a better idea, and then she started writing them. That's when she wrote the note on their too.

Cookie goes on to say:

I'm mad. She always, like, she always gets me in trouble. Because she tells everybody else – she always looks at the whole class and then she tells them to be quiet, and I always tell her, "How come you don't get

them in trouble, but you only get me in trouble?” Everybody else was talking and she just got me in trouble. Like, when I left, she said it all happy-like, she said “Today’s your lucky day,” and she started laughing and smiling. After that, I just got mad and shoved the chair under my desk.

It was time to go home. I think she was happy that I got in trouble.

Later that afternoon, Ms. Esther talked to Cookie about the event in Mr. Burrough’s classroom:

*Ms. Esther:* Okay, you stand out a little. They [other students] may be talking, but they seem to be getting something done. I’ll get to them, but when I see you not doing anything, you stand out more than the others. When you got your head laying on the desk, books not even open, you draw attention to yourself. That’s just what happens.

*Cookie:* I wasn’t reading.

*Ms. Esther:* That’s the only reason, and it’s not so much about unfair. It’s just that you stand out more when you’re not doing anything, as opposed to talking and working. Do you see the difference at all?

*Cookie:* [shrugs both shoulders upward]

What Ms. Esther referred to as “standing out” is a clear indication that for her, Cookie represented a student likely to misbehave. In Ms. Esther’s meaning making processing of the event, Cookie is at fault and she perceived his behavior as him having negative intentions. In return, Ms. Esther confronted Cookie and ultimately applied a consequence by writing a note on his homework and making him take it home to get signed by his

mother. Important to note is that following any behavioral event, multiple immediate reactions occurred from students and teachers alike. As a result, I unpacked teachers and students significations shared during interviews more explicitly.

Ms. Esther's idea that Cookie stood out more suggests that he was singled out. A closer examination of the data suggests there were positive and negative aspects to students being singled out (i.e., "standing out more"). Although Cookie signified misbehavior to Ms. Esther, there were many times during the day that Ms. Esther did not highlight Cookie's misbehavior. Specifically, Cookie would leave his area in Ms. Esther's classroom without permission, clearly being in violation of an explicit rule, but was not confronted by her. For example, during language arts class, Cookie left his area to throw away a crumpled sheet of paper. While standing approximately 3 feet away from the trashcan, Cookie lobs the ball of paper. This behavior is repeated several times during the day without public notice to Cookie. When Ms. Esther was asked about these behaviors, she remarked:

Well, you know, he (Cookie), just needs to move around. I get tired of telling him to sit in his seat all of the time. I finally figured it out that if I let him wander within reason, he just does better. Me and the other students have just grown to accept that he walks. As long as he doesn't talk to other students for the most part, I will allow him to get up without permission. If I don't I spend the day telling him to sit down, and that got old real quick.

It is in Mr. Esther's singling out of Cookie that he has both positive (i.e., being granted additional chances when a classroom rule has been violated) and negative (i.e.,

being the first student to capture Ms. Esther's attention and in turn, she then only highlights his misbehavior) classroom experiences. Cookie though only focused on the negative aspects of being singled out because those were the most impacting moments that stood out to him.

**Externalized student behavior.** Students considered externalized behaviors simplistically as an observable act. Teachers, on the other hand, interpreted certain externalized student behaviors signified disruption and disrespect. In fact, both teachers believed classroom disruptions were the sole results of a student's behavior. Table 11 illustrates examples of teachers and students significations of externalized student behaviors.



Table 11

*Externalized Student Behavior (Launching): Symbols and Significations*

	<b>Symbol Category</b>	<b>Symbols and Significations</b>
Byron, Lil P, B.G Cookie, Jonathan	Externalized Student Behavior	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking</li> <li>• not doing work</li> <li>• being silly</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• walking around</li> <li>• being loud</li> </ul>
		<i>Significations</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• misbehavior</li> </ul>
Mr. Abrahm	Externalized Student Behavior	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking</li> <li>• not doing work</li> <li>• not following directions</li> <li>• walking around</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being loud</li> <li>• not having pencil and paper</li> </ul>
		<i>Significations Examples</i>
		<p><b><i>Misbehavior</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Disruption</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an interruption to teaching or learning that interferes with oneself' s or other students' learning opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Rejection</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refusal or push back by either teacher or student</li> </ul>
Ms. Esther	Externalized Student Behavior	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking</li> <li>• walking around</li> <li>• being loud</li> <li>• throwing things</li> <li>• making faces</li> <li>• reading or drawing during class</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempting to obtain other student's attention</li> <li>• word choice (language/ talking back)</li> <li>• touching another student</li> </ul>
		<i>Significations Examples</i>
		<p><b><i>Misbehavior</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Disruption</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an interruption to teaching or learning that interferes with oneself' s or other students' learning opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Disrespect</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• verbal banter</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Personal Emotional Drain</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• negative impact on personal emotional state</li> </ul>

Mr. Abraham indicated:

If I ask a student to put the book away and I get, sort of, an adverse response, it becomes a disruption, because it's taking away from the instruction at the time. A disruption is something that is disturbing to the entire class. This becomes a choice a student has made.

Related, but yet somewhat different, Ms. Esther shared:

If a student is—for example, if I'm teaching a concept on the board, and I turn around and they're reading *Huckleberry Finn*, that's an interruption at the moment. It is a negative and at the same time, it is interfering with that person learning the concept that I am teaching or examples I am using on the board.

A notable difference is that although both teachers were discussing disruptions, Mr. Abraham described the disruption affecting the entire class, and Ms. Esther described a scenario where no one in the class is affected except the student (reading). This difference is important because each teacher's actions that followed would be affected, one for disrupting an entire class and another solely for individuals. Although both teachers described misbehaviors as disruptive, only Mr. Abraham places the blame on the student as someone who intended to disrupt the class. Mr. Abraham's blame placing foreshadows a finding that permeated multiple data points as both teachers ascribe intentionality to students, placing the blame on their shoulders. The teachers in this study believed that students chose their actions based on the same signifiers as the teachers whereas in reality, the significations differed. This differentiation also alludes to the adaptations required of students as they navigated the rhythm of each classroom. Each

classroom had its own set of rules, expectations, and operations. These differences also suggest that for teachers certain externalized student behavior signified misbehavior and an interruption to teaching and learning.

Common among actors (i.e., teachers and students) was that misbehavior occurred in public and became officially visible by teachers who brought attention to certain student behaviors. In most cases, misbehavior was also adverse and affected the involved student, their classmates and teacher. Both Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther interpreted instructional and learning disruption as misbehavior that typically interfered with individual and communal (e.g., other students in the classroom) learning opportunities.

Mr. Abraham had a slightly deeper apperception and noticed that he and students would often push-back against the other after he labeled their behavior problematic. This means that sometimes students disputed the meanings or intent of the behaviors that teachers chose to highlight. In fact, bringing attention to certain behaviors and not others is a way that Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther showed their significations of misbehavior but for students, these significations differed and therefore the students' actions reflected their own meanings rather than the teachers'. Then, Ms. Esther and Mr. Abraham brought meaning to the students' pushback and considered it problematic or disrespectful. Yet, in Ms. Esther's understanding of misbehavior, she interpreted student agency as disrespect which typically led to personal emotional drain for her. Ms. Esther commented:

Yeah, well that's like there's so many different parts to this, I think about the kids who are extremely respectful, quiet; and just, those are the little gems that sort of decorate the space and we [teachers] can have a conversation [with students]. I noticed with some other students who are a

bit more talkative and it is the way they talk and what they say that I just think to myself, lack of respect. Anything is liable to come out of their mouths. I mean I just see that this is a lesson they missed somewhere along the line and they talk to me as though they can talk to me any which way. That is a drain on me, a drain on time, and disrespectful.

For Ms. Esther, disrespect embodied verbal banter which also took a mild toll on her emotionally. Over time, students' displays of misbehavior negatively impacted her emotional state. During the course of this study, Ms. Esther exhibited subtle physiological effects of personal emotional drain such as experiencing headaches or exhaustion. She also became emotional during some interviews when discussing school and classroom matters. For example, she shared:

So, you know, part of me is probably feeling somewhat defeated. I am just tired. I don't know. Many days, I don't even – have not had time to eat. Plus, there is lack of administrative support to help us deal with all of the student behaviors. I just feel like, I need a break sometimes, so I take one and not come to work. I am just done.

Ms. Esther's experiences of personal emotional drain did not seem readily visible to Mr. Abraham or students. Her most distressing times were displayed during interviews when at times, she requested recording to stop.

The co-construction of classroom disruptions (i.e., contested classroom spaces) should not be understood as a series of unavoidable acts happening in isolation with little regard toward the sociocultural context of the classroom (Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Instead, the co-construction of student disciplinary classroom infractions were forged out of

negotiated social practices. For example, in this behavioral episode, Lil P speaks out without being called on:

*Mr. Abraham:* What is the key word that we have to know in this sentence to figure this question out, Leonard? And then we have two more questions and then we will stop. Leonard what words do you need to know in this sentence to figure out the answer here?

*Lil P:* [Left hand in the air. Right hand pointing toward the board. Index finger is extended, moving slightly up and down. Lips moving without sound. (appears to mentally calculate math equation written on board)] That's easy! I don't even have to write that down.

*Mr. Abraham:* Lil P, sh. if you weren't so smart, I'd get upset. But you get a pass, cause you're smart.

Mr. Abraham shared that when he knows a student knows the answer and calls out, he interprets that as anxiousness and an eagerness to positively participate in class. Through this reasoning, Mr. Abram positions Lil P as able and subsequently brands Byron as “that kind of kid,” in fact he uses the term “destructive disruption” as a referent for Byron:

That destructive disruption is the kind that really draws attention to yourself and away from the lesson. It causes me, as a teacher, to stop instruction, to focus on your behavior at the time, and to deal with it. And that takes away the time from the other kids that may be sitting still and wanting to learn. In this case, he [Lil P] knows the answer and it has been proven, though, you know, as I said with tests and so forth, and in his class

participation. It isn't destructive. It is not destructive behavior as in Byron's case. It's that antsy stuff, even the moving back and forth in their desks, that back and forth was like the same – very similar behavior, but I know Lil P, I guess, and he is not seeking negative attention from me.

**Student intentionality.** Shown in Table 12 are Mr. Abraham, Ms. Esther and students ideas that intentionality is an aspect of their conceptualizations of misbehavior. Teachers believed that when students exhibited an act of misbehavior, they were purposely *seeking attention* and were convinced that students had a desire to disturb the entire class by interfering with teaching and learning; however, Mr. Abraham considered *personal choice* as secondary dimensional aspects of students' intentionality and thought students purposively and willfully exhibited an adverse response to his prompt or directive to disrupt his teaching. Mr. Abraham considered himself being personally attacked by students when they made this type of choice. Through observations and interviews, it was determined that teachers believed that when students misbehaved it was to seek negative attention. Both Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther were convinced students had a desire to disturb the entire class by interfering with teaching and learning. There was a clear element of intentionality in their behaviors. Ms. Esther remarks:

I feel like students encourage others to, you know, join, you know, follow and not do what they are supposed to be doing. Even after I turn around and ask students to be quiet, some just chime in anyways. It's a choice they make not to listen. I think often, it's still just the fact that they're (students) not following directions. There's something they should be

doing and talking or doing whatever isn't it, so that's really what it boils down to.

Mr. Abraham thought:

Students make the choice to disrupt the class. They need to take responsibility for their actions. At the moment of correction, they often deny their involvement; even when you say, I saw you. Students should take correction without attitude.

In contrast, students did not consider they were always deliberate in their behavior, acting with intent to disrupt teaching and learning; or cause an undue hardship on teacher, self, or other students. The findings of this study suggest that students' planning were conscious and unconscious; but not necessarily with a negative intention (as described by teachers). During interviews students shared:

*Cookie:* Sometimes, I just feel like being silly. That's all. Sometimes I get my work done when I'm silly and sometimes I'm done. My friends always get their work done. Sometimes teachers let us, sometimes they look, or I just get in trouble.

*Byron:* I know Mr. Abraham sometimes doesn't like me. That is what he wants. I think he gets up in the morning and decides who is gonna get it. It is usually me.

*B.G.:* They always thinking we doing something on purpose. Like I'm trying to get somebody in trouble or I want to be in trouble. I get bored then start coming up with things I can do. That's all. If I

don't get my work done at school, I just do it at home. What's the big deal?

*Lil P:* He (Mr. Abrahm) thinks I'm trying to start stuff. Most of the time it's not even me. I just do what he says. My Dad tells me to just do what the teachers say. Don't argue. They are always right. So that is what I do, just go along with stuff.



Table 12

*Student Intentionality (Interpretation): Symbols and Significations*

	<b>Symbol Category</b>	<b>Examples of Symbols and Significations</b>
Byron, Lil P, B.G. Cookie, Jonathan	Student Intentionality	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not doing work</li> <li>• not following directions</li> <li>• making faces</li> <li>• being loud</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acting silly/being funny</li> <li>• throwing things</li> <li>• reading or drawing</li> <li>• touching another student</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Example</i>
		<p><b><i>Deliberate Planning</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conscious and unconscious planning (but not to purposely cause undue hardship on teacher, self, or other students)</li> </ul>
Mr. Abraham	Student Intentionality	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not doing work</li> <li>• not following directions</li> <li>• not having pencil and paper</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being loud</li> <li>• talking</li> <li>• walking around</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<p><b><i>Misbehavior</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Attention Seeking</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• desire to obtain teacher’s attention to disturb entire class by interfering with teaching and learning</li> </ul>
Ms. Esther	Student Intentionality	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking</li> <li>• walking around</li> <li>• being loud</li> <li>• throwing things</li> <li>• making faces</li> <li>• reading or drawing during class</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempting to obtain other student’s attention</li> <li>• word choice (language/talking back)</li> <li>• touching another student</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<p><b><i>Misbehavior</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Attention Seeking</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• desire to obtain teacher’s attention to disturb entire class by interfering with teaching and learning</li> </ul>

**Teacher versus student fault.** Teachers and students blamed each other for classroom misbehaviors. In most cases, students believed teachers purposely singled them out and purposely wanting them to experience some type of hardship. In a way, these students were navigating these situations in a moral space in which teachers' actions were judged as fair or unfair (see Table 13). When being accused of misbehavior, students proclaimed their *innocence* and often refuted the teacher's claim. Students' regularly declared their innocence and pushed back against the teacher's insinuation of misbehavior. Students considered teachers intentionally sought to purposely get them in trouble. During interviews students share:

*B.G.:* I didn't do nothing. They (teachers) just do stuff on purpose.

*Cookie:* She (Ms. Esther) got me in trouble.

*Byron:* Sometimes I get in trouble and I'm sitting at my desk.

*Jonathan:* I see other kids do stuff, but she (Ms. Esther) just gets me in trouble.

Commonly observed were students pushing back through enacting stances of denial through postural tension, physical gestures, or verbal responses. This demonstrates students' lack of power and also sets the stage for feelings of frustration because there was no acknowledgment of self-accountability. On the other hand, their responses indexed considerable agency, though as I explained, they were generally interpreted as resistance, which consolidated the construction of misbehavior.

Table 13

*Fault (Coding): Symbols and Significations*

<b>Symbol Category</b>		<b>Examples of Symbols and Significations</b>	
Byron, Lil P, B.G Cookie, Jonathan	Fault	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		• talking	• walking around
		• not doing work	• being loud
		• being silly	• not doing work
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
		<b><i>Innocence</i></b>	
		• refusal or denial of displaying misbehavior	
		• belief that teacher is the cause of student misbehavior	
Mr. Abraham	Fault	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		• talking	• being loud
		• not doing work	• not having pencil and paper
		• not following directions	
		• walking around	
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
		<b><i>Misbehavior</i></b>	
		<b><i>Culpability</i></b>	
		• presumption of guilt and belief, or accusation and charge of displaying or engaging in misbehavior	
Ms. Esther	Fault	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		• talking	• attempting to obtain other student's attention
		• walking around	• word choice (language/talking back)
		• being loud	• touching another student
		• throwing things	
		• making faces	
		• reading or drawing during class	
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
		<b><i>Misbehavior</i></b>	
		<b><i>Culpability</i></b>	
		• presumption of guilt and belief, or accusation and charge of displaying or engaging in misbehavior	

In contrast, teachers presumed students were culpable and blamed them. Mr. Abraham remarked, “Some of them just can’t help it. No matter how hard I try, support

them, punish them, reward them, some of them still don't get it. It's like they just want to act up in class." Similarly, Mrs. Esther shared,

The harder I try, some of them get it, but some of them seem to give me even more attitude and lip. I think they know better, but students nowadays, just don't give a damn. Some of the students in here care, most of them do, but then you have those classes that no matter what, you just have a group of students that just choose to misbehave, no matter what.

Because participation is a major analytic concept in the analysis of schooling, it can be used to show how the process some behaviors evolved into misbehavior and others did not. It seems, therefore, that the sequential progression from externalized behavior to judgments about intentionality and conclusions of fault positioned some students as able and others on the margins (Erickson, 1979; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004; Mehan, 1979; McDermott, 1976; McDermott & Gospodinoff, 1979; Philips, 1972).

This also suggests Goodwin (2002), in *Time in Action*, discussed the process that an archeologist uses when classifying the color of a soil sample. He indicated that for the color of soil to be classified, parameters have been predetermined such as soil color, texture and consistency; thus shaping how information is coded. This process also creates constraints on how color may be perceived, and is used as a scale for separating soil properties into distinctive categories. In doing so, the nature of the soil qualities is examined according to the established parameters of the archeologist's professional vision that is implemented through the perceptual system embedded in coding systems.

We see this same type of perceptual infrastructure in the teachers' and students' interpretation of student behavior. Although meaning was created through interaction, the

parameters that teachers and students used to classify the distinct properties of misbehavior involved one's individual conceptions. It is in this way that Mr. Abraham is able to view behavior through different parameters for each of the students in his class. This may sound like a misuse of Goodwin's notion of coding but it is not. Adhering to Goodwin's notion of coding and explanation of a *template* or set of rules applied to events, Mr. Abram had two sets of principles. A template for meaningful contributing students and a template for those students he viewed as lackluster contributors. Mr. Abraham interpreted Byron's hand-raising as an "out-of-turn" gesture. He also considered him getting out of his desk during class and making sounds for "no reason at all," as a strategy for gaining teaching attention or disrupting the class; however, when other students exhibited the same behavior, Mr. Abraham would either ignore their behavior or it would go unnoticed. On several occasions while Byron remained quiet and still, sitting erect in his desk with pencil in hand writing, he was still blamed for making noises and exhibiting attention seeking behavior that was actually displayed by other students.

Although classroom misbehavior and disciplinary moments are situated, and teachers' and students' sense making to a degree are dependent upon the limitations of their own mental parameters, through interaction, predefined conceptions of misbehavior can change. Interactions are a powerful influence on conceptual change (Dole & Sinatra, 1998; Gregory, et al., 2014; Piaget, 1932; Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle, 1993; Sinatra, 2005). It is through one's ability to change their perception that hones the point of classroom misbehavior and disciplinary moments being negotiable.

Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther regarded *culpability* as an attribute of misbehavior. Each cited the presumption of student guilt as a central feature when students violated a

classroom rule. Both teachers automatically presumed students misbehaved, even when the student was adhering to classroom rules.

At times Byron was enthusiastic about learning and could be seen singing or humming quietly to himself at his desk or subtly swaying rhythmically as if he was listening to music. While in Mr. Abraham's classroom, quite regularly when Byron enthusiastically or slowly raised his hand in class, or calmly spoke, his behavior was considered a class disruption. Mr. Abraham shared:

I think everything he [Byron] does, he wants attention, whether it is good or negative, and unfortunately, he's learned how to do a lot of the negative to get attention.

In contrast of how Mr. Abram constructed misbehavior with Byron, interactions with Lil P were distinctly different. Mr. Abram described Lil P this way:

You know, he is really a bright kid, and he's – I know that he should be in another grade, but he really is a bright kid. He is often – right, all the time. And he really doesn't belong in my class, you know? He's just misplaced. It is refreshing to have him in there.

Mr. Abraham characterized Byron's hand raising and calling out in class as negative attention seeking and troublesome behavior. In contrast, Mr. Abraham considered Lil P a "bright kid" and took personal ownership of his behavior consequently interpreting Lil P's calling out and raised flailing arms as eagerness to answer a question or participate in class. Mr. Abraham also interpreted Lil P's actions as indicators of his good instruction and the sign of a "smart kid." In contrast, when Byron swayed back in forth in his desk, it was considered a disruption and a plea for attention rather than having a response to a

question or the ability to make a positive contribution to the class. Mr. Abraham reported, “It's the anxiety, because he [Lil P] knows the answer and he wants to answer, as opposed to being out of control [like Byron], and I just can't – you know.”

**Trouble, intervention, and confrontation.** Mr. Abraham, Ms. Esther, and students, all varied in their ideas of immediate public acknowledgement and recognition of student misbehavior. Students perceived when teachers publicly acknowledged their misbehavior as a signifier for trouble. Mr. Abraham thought he was being proactive by intervening with students and Ms. Esther considered herself confronting them as an effort to detour or thwart misbehavior. These perceptual differences are highlighted in Table 14.

Table 14

*Trouble, Intervention, and Confrontation (Public Recognition): Symbols and*

*Significations*

	<b>Symbol Category</b>	<b>Examples of Symbols and Significations</b>
Byron, Lil P, B.G Cookie, Jonathan	Trouble	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name on board</li> <li>• name called out loud</li> <li>• teacher silence</li> <li>• stand near students desk</li> <li>• question student about behavior</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name on paper</li> <li>• teacher glare</li> <li>• walk toward student</li> <li>• teacher quip</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<b><i>Trouble Misbehavior</i></b>
Mr. Abraham	Intervention	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name on board</li> <li>• name called out loud</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name on paper</li> <li>• teacher glare</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<b><i>Intervention Misbehavior</i></b>
Ms. Esther	Confrontation	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name called out loud</li> <li>• teacher glare</li> <li>• teacher silence</li> <li>• walk toward student</li> <li>• stand near students desk</li> <li>• teacher quip</li> <li>• question student about behavior</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<b><i>Intervention Misbehavior</i></b>

Although perceptions varied, the common determinant for signaling a disciplinary moment (i.e., trouble, intervention, confrontation) for teachers and students was a teacher’s immediate acknowledgement and public recognition of the student’s behavior. At the instance teachers wrote a student’s name on the board, called their name out loud, glared, looked in a student’s direction, smirked, or made a snide remark, students considered themselves in trouble. Students said:



*B.G.:* He [Mr. Abrahm] just looks at me when he thinks it is me talking.

But it isn't. I know I am in trouble when he writes my name on the board. I don't even care though.

*Cookie:* He [Mr. Abrahm] always gets me in trouble. I see him either writing my name or saying, Cookie. That is when I know I'm in trouble. When he says my name.

*Byron:* I'm always in trouble. I think I am just bad. Mr. Abrahm always puts my name on the board or writes it down. So do the monitors, even when I don't do nothing.

*Jonathan:* Ms. Esther gives me some mean looks. When she looks mean at me, I guess I'm in trouble.

*Lil P:* I try not to get in trouble. My Dad doesn't like it. He tells me to do what the teacher says. This one time, I didn't even know I was in trouble till Mr. Abrahm told me to come here. He told me what to go and sent me to Mr. Burrough's room.

Mr. Abrahm also discussed his ideals about classroom order and the perceptions he had of student misbehavior.

When I call out students' names, something disturbing has happened, there has been a disruption into the instruction and I want to single out that particular person, and ascertain where the source of the disruption is coming from. This is an impulse of mine to just bring them (student) back into the flow of things signaling them out. Three strikes and they're out! In

fact, any disruption, even if for a brief time becomes a major concern of mine.

Keeping historical influences in mind and the detrimental effects of schools' exclusionary disciplinary policies (e.g., zero tolerance), Mr. Abraham's "three strikes and they're out" comment is reminiscent of such school initiatives and policies. Mr. Abraham's idealization strengthens the damaging effects of students of color being placed on the periphery and adds to the increased denial of their inclusion and participation in classrooms. Although not included in the analysis of this research, tolerance also seems to play a role in Mr. Abraham's pedagogical style.

On another day, Mr. Abraham recalled a classroom disciplinary moment with Byron that took place during a mathematics lesson. While sitting on a stool in front of the class with his back turned toward the students, he heard talking. Mr. Abraham immediately grabbed a sheet of paper and pen without leaving the stool. With his back still partially toward the students, and his body turning to face them, Mr. Abraham firmly said, "Byron!"

Byron facing the board and sitting erect in his desk, wearing his backpack over his shirt, writing with his right hand, lifts his pencil from the paper, mouthed "it wasn't me" as he gestured with his left hand open toward the student sitting to his left. He lightly pounded his right fist on the desk, leaned back in his seat, and looked away. Still holding his pencil in the air, he slouched in his chair as he pulled his right hand to his face and looked down in disappointment.

As Mr. Abraham continued teaching, he wrote an equation on the board. Lil P blurted out, "I think you wrote it too high." Byron squinted, and then quickly cuts both

his eyes sharply to the left in Lil P's direction. Quickly Mr. Abraham retorted, "sshh, Lil P!" Now with pursed lips, Byron deeply pushed his tightly balled fist into his face. With a look of deep sorrow and despair, Byron placed the pencil on his desk, brought his fist back to his face, positioned his head downward and closed his eyes. Rubbing his closed eyes with his opened right hand, Byron shook his head left to right. While Byron reacted, Mr. Abraham continued teaching, and listened to a student's answers to a question. He responded to her, "very good." Having no regard for Byron, Mr. Abraham seemed unaffected by Byron's dismay. Ironically, while Byron was fully withdrawn and disengaged, Mr. Abraham could be heard in the background saying to the student about her response, "I'm okay with it, but you have to find out if they (other students in the class) are." Students around Byron chorally responded to her, "it's okay." Shortly thereafter, Mr. Abraham retorted to yet another student talking out, "sshh!" In reference to this disciplinary moment, Mr. Abraham explained:

I think what is going on here, as I can recall, is I wrote the name down as opposed to dealing with what was the issue at the moment because it becomes an attention getter where he (Byron) needs to take up too much time to correct him and hoping by writing his name down, that pulls him back. And in a sense, I think it does pull him back because they know that later on they end up losing.

This classroom disciplinary moment between Byron and Mr. Abraham started thirteen minutes into the lesson and lasted 90 seconds. After one minute of withdrawal, Byron does reengage. During the stimulated recall interview, Mr. Abraham continues about

Byron, mentioning his interpretation of Byron's display of emotional distress during this lesson as attention getting:

See that? Okay, hold on, hold on. Okay, that [referencing Byron's face] and I interpret that as just getting attention. I mean this almost-want-to-cry face or his frown. That's him wanting attention. Byron has had a lot of difficulty last year and the beginning of this year. So, I have been in a way encouraging him trying to bring out the positive. He likes the positive attention. This is kind of, I think, an act showing a disappointment in what I just did by writing his name down. I think it is just an act. If I read this right a little further on it almost looks like he has got a little smirk on his face. That he has the attention that he gets to be the limelight for the moment. He is very much a manipulator. He is very cool in that way. I think the tapping of the hand, the slouching, the eyebrow movement; it's all part of wanting to get more attention. He is trying to draw me in.

Mr. Abrahm elaborates:

What I mean by draw me in is, into the contest. Into this battle he wants to have about whether his name should go on the paper or what did I do kind of thing and why is my name on the list. I think that it a constant thing for him not excepting responsibility for his actions. So, he kind of masks it or hides behind this that he has done nothing wrong. I think that it is all just an act. It is an act to hide behind his inability to accept responsibility for his actions.

Byron's viewpoint was different and he indicated:

Mr. Abraham thinks I was talking but I wasn't. It was the new kid that was talking to me. He was, but he wouldn't like be talking like, like, he was asking me a question like what are we supposed to do? I don't get it. So, Mr. Abraham went and put a check by my name.

When describing his thoughts and feelings, Byron shared:

I started getting mad. But I wasn't that mad, I was just a little mad. Then I was getting madder. Everybody knows when I get mad, I slouch down and then I put my hand like on the desk right there, and I go like this. I sometimes I'll put my pencil down and I'll and I'll do the same thing but I'll go like this. When this stuff happens, that tells me that I don't want to be in there. I stayed because if I would have walked out of the classroom, I would have got suspended, because Mr. Abraham didn't give me orders to walk out the classroom.

This situation is significant because it shows the different meanings of classroom symbols. The check on the board, the use of a writing a student's name on a piece of paper, or calling out a student symbolically represented distinctly different notions for teachers and students. Byron interpreted these symbols to signify trouble. It also reflected a moral assessment of fair versus unfair. Mr. Abraham, however, thought calling out Byron's name and placing a check on the board next to his name, and writing his name on a piece of paper served as a warning; that is, an intervention. This too is another example how teacher' and students' conceptualizations and interpretations can lead to misalignment of which leads to classroom disciplinary moments.

Mr. Abraham says, “I was putting him (Byron) on notice.” Notice in the sense that Mr. Abraham was making it known to Byron that if his misbehavior continued, stronger reprimands would be issued. There is a clear conflict in perceptual differences between Byron and Mr. Abraham. Also shown are the limited parameters Mr. Abraham used to organize and make sense of Byron’s behavior.

Hewitt (2003) suggests meaning making is symbolic as well as behavioral. Teachers’ and students’ understanding of each other’s vocal or physical gestures entails signification. This alludes to a person’s understanding of a word, voice volume, or physical gesture and being dependent upon what each object signifies to them. The idea of signification is simple: an object (e.g., sign, smell, person, or sound, physical position) that is apprehended through the human senses (i.e., sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste) denotes the presence of something else (Hewitt, 2003). This too explains how Mr. Abraham saw his use of writing a student’s name on a sheet of paper or putting a checkmark next to a student’s name on the board differently than Byron.

Another example of Mr. Abraham’s meaning making process, occurred during mathematics. B.G. has his head on the desk and Mr. Abraham commands him to sit up. As B.G. processes Mr. Abraham’s command, he promptly sits up without saying a word. In front of the class, Mr. Abraham remarks to B.G., “Sitting up, lets me know you are paying attention.” In this example, we see Mr. Abraham publically reminding B.G. the signification of a student lying down on desk represents to him. By telling B.G. explicating what a student’s head on the desk means to him, Mr. Abraham overtly communicates that he interprets students sitting upright in their desk to signify paying attention and a demonstrating a readiness to learn.

Mr. Abraham is clear in that Byron's behavior (e.g., frowning, withdrawal, appearing emotionally distressed) signified attention seeking and him being disingenuous. Using a different set of parameters and signifiers, when Lil P spoke out, Mr. Abraham verbally corrected him instead of issuing him a warning or sanction. In this instance, Mr. Abraham interpreted the symbolization of Lil P's behavior as an annoyance or in some cases eagerness. However in most cases, Mr. Abraham interpreted Byron's behavior as a disruption. As a result, two very different teacher responses were displayed; and again one student is constructed as able and the other as a disruption.

The question to ask is, can we tell what mediates Mr. Abram's differential responses toward students, beyond the fact that it was personal? During an interview Mr. Abraham shared the idea that female students were more likely to follow directions and rules. His reasoning was, "Well, I think it from my personal experience. My daughter was very easy to raise, only because I guess she loved daddy." He also thought gender can evoke different student responses. He shared:

I think it does, because a lot of the background—if you look at the background, the father's not in the thing. I think it works adversely with the boys, though; but with the girls, there's a tendency to almost see us as some sort of a surrogate kind of male significant adult in their lives.

Mr. Abraham goes on to say:

Because of my work in urban African American schools, I have noticed in certain ethnic backgrounds, where you see it in the African-American families, the father is absent. You see, it is like, I mean, it's so classic. To put it that way, in terms of, it's almost a resentment to the male authority.

From the boy's point of view, in that is [Black male authority] so absent in their lives. When an African-American male comes in, you'd think that would be a positive thing, see a positive role model; but they're so used to negative role models, abandonment by those African-American fathers and other significant male figures in their lives. Since I'm just speculating, I'm sure there's no history on this; but, they actually resent that authority figure.

Furthermore, when asked if he could describe what types of students, or which students come to mind about being more likely to break the rules or not follow them, he responded:

Well, of course, Byron is the first one on my list, a young African-American boy that is in that 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Hardly comes in to class organized. Hardly pays attention, easily distracted; and through a lot of negative behavior, gets the kind of attention I think he's missing somewhere else.

In response I ask, "Does anybody else come to mind?" Mr. Abrahm says, "Just Boys." I then responded:

Are you saying you believe that Byron is more likely to break the rules because he's male, because he's Black, and lives in an urban area? Could it just because of his personality? Given your perspective, what do you think is unique to him being less likely to adhere to classroom rules?

Mr. Abrahm says:

I think it's the very thing that he resents, is the lack of a strong male figure in his life. I had his (Byron) sister over the summer, and I also had her



when I substituted before getting my contract here. Unfortunately, she's not here this year, but she was really a delight. She's just the opposite of him, and they're from the same home. She's smart, she's well organized, she comes in and participates, she's a strong leader. She's a very classic definition as, you know, I would put these other girls in in the 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. They're from the same household, just totally different people.

Mr. Abraham's personal life experiences, being a single father raising two children, thinking his daughter was an easy to raise child; provides a glimpse into Mr. Abraham's positionality and beliefs toward students in his class, particularly Byron. Sadly, Byron reminded Mr. Abraham of the negative stigmatization of African American males and the Black family. This is the misnomer that African American males are anti-intellectual (Howard, 2014), raised by a single mother, living in poverty, having an uninvolved father, and causing problems at schools (Ferguson, 2001; Monroe, 2005; Noguera, 2003). In contrast, for Mr. Abraham, Lil P was an exception to the stigmatization of African American males. He is smart, being raised by his father and visiting his mother on the weekends, his father being significantly involved in Lil P's schooling, and doing well at school and having a pleasant demeanor.

Mazzotta and Myers (2008) remind us the importance of recognizing that people are social objects during interactions and that societal symbols become affixed to individuals. In this sense Mr. Abraham's interpretative meaning making process encoded Byron as the symbol for the representation of misbehavior and signified that his class behavior (good or bad) was behavior considered unsuitable for a situation (Charles, Senter, & Barr, 1999). As a result Mr. Abraham's interpreted Byron's behavior as

problematic and actions toward Byron tended to be punitive. Mr. Abraham's interpretative process of Byron is shown in Figure 7.

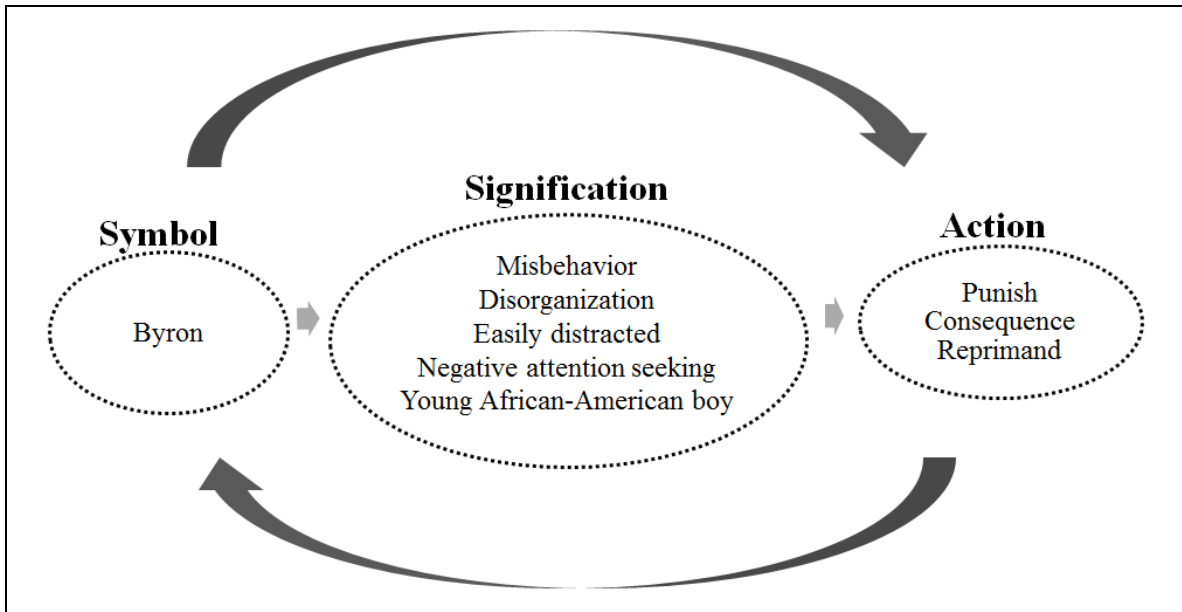


Figure 7. Mr. Abraham's interpretative process of Byron.

Although within this interpretive meaning making processing during interactions can influence ideas or create a conceptual change (Prochaska, Redding, & Evers, 2013; Psycharis, Chalatzoglidis, & Kalogiannakis, 2013; Sinatra, 2005), Mr. Abraham's significations of Byron remained consistent. According to Mead (1934), an object (e.g., students, observable behavior, sign, smell, person, or sound, physical position) has specialized representation to individuals and personalized symbolic meaning. Ideas are symbolically constructed whether it is in the memory of one's lived experiences and history, something that actually occurred or something anticipated that is yet to happen. Hewitt (1988) claimed that meanings for things are not fixed, but determined through interaction and how an actor acts toward an object. In the case of Mr. Abraham and Byron,

we see Mr. Abraham acting toward Byron based on social stigmatization and the memories and perceptions that Byron evoked in Mr. Abraham.

McDermott (1977) reminds us that teachers and students' sense making is "made in common with other people within institutional contexts" (p. 202). Wilson (1977) also informed us that not only do individuals determine a part of their reality through their interpretations and definitions of situations, but that the environment itself can generate behaviors; however, because of various demands and expectations sustained mutual understanding is rarely achieved. Such is the also the case with students thinking they were being punished by teachers while teachers thought they were fairly acting in response to student's misbehavior.

**Student punishments and teacher consequences.** Students thought teachers were punishing them when they got into trouble for misbehaving; however, teachers thought of their responses to students' misbehavior as a sanctions or consequence. A key distinction between punishments and sanction is that a sanction happened when a rule was broken, whereas consequences were regarded as teachers' attempts to place responsibility back on students; that is there was an instructional implicit goal for students to act accordingly to implicit and explicit environmental expectations. Students and teachers perceptions of punishments and consequences are shown in Table 15.

The school's disciplinary procedures included "the consequences of inappropriate behavior: (a) warning issued to student; (b) completion of discipline form, talk with student, after school detention; (c) notify parent; (d) meet with parent in person, lunch or after school detention with principal; and (e) lunch or after school detention with principal, parent re-notification. Severe rule infractions such as defiance of authority,

fighting, assault, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, gambling, theft of any kind, weaponry, or intentionally damaging school property could result in immediate suspensions or expulsion.” Note teachers’ and students’ preconceived notions of what was misbehavior did not align with policy definitions in either the school handbook or parent’s compact.

Reported by teachers and students, consequences (e.g., reprimands and punishments) consisted of students being removed from the classroom, denial of recess or physical education, loss of a privilege such as participating in a fieldtrip, afterschool detention, and cleaning up the cafeteria. Tending not to punish a student by the denial of a privilege, Ms. Esther would confront students, issue a whole class warning or redirection, attempt to call a student’s home, send a letter home with a student, threaten to call a student’s home, or remove the student from the classroom. Below is an example of her publically confronting Cookie by calling out his name in class. Cookie recalls a time he got into trouble while in Ms. Esther’s classroom:

She just, she just, when we're all sitting down, once I got in trouble, she just called me Cookie, and she tells me to go to Mr. Burrough. Another time, when I was in class, we were just playing and we had stickers on our back and I flipped my shirt around to see the sticker. I saw it and I took the sticker off. Because I didn't have my paper and pencil with me, Ms. Esther said, "Where is my pencil and my paper?" I said, "It's over there." I was going to go get it but then she said, "No, never mind don't get it." She just grabbed sheets of papers to work on and she took me all the way to Ms. Nichél's office.

On this particular Thursday, Ms. Esther sent Cookie to the vice principal's office at 10:30 am for not having his paper, pencil and being out of his area. He ate lunch in Ms. Nichél's office and remained there for the duration of the day. The next day, on his own, Cookie began his day working in Ms. Nichél's office and asked if he could also eat lunch with her. She obliged.

Table 15

*Punishments and Consequences (Sanction): Symbols and Significations*

<b>Symbol Category</b>		<b>Examples of Symbols and Significations</b>	
Byron, Lil P, B.G Cookie, Jonathan	Punishment	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up cafeteria and carry trash to dumpster</li> <li>• Detention (denial of after school program)</li> <li>• Denial of physical education or recess</li> <li>• Lunch with teacher</li> </ul>	
		<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letter/phone call home</li> <li>• threaten to speak to parent</li> </ul>	<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sent to alternate classroom</li> <li>• sent to office</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
<b>Misbehavior Punishment</b>			
Mr. Abraham	Consequence	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up cafeteria and carry trash to dumpster</li> <li>• Detention (denial of after school program)</li> <li>• Denial of physical education or recess</li> <li>• Lunch with teacher</li> </ul>	
		<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letter/phone call home</li> <li>• threaten to speak to a parent</li> </ul>	<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sent to alternate classroom</li> <li>• sent to office</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
<b>Misbehavior Neutral (Natural) Consequence</b>			
Ms. Esther	Consequence	<i>Symbol Examples</i>	
		<p><b>Teacher Request for Whole Class Silence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical gesture by teacher mimicked by students</li> <li>• Teacher ringing bell chimes</li> </ul>	
		<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letter/phone call home</li> <li>• threaten to speak to a parent</li> </ul>	<u>Home Communication</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sent to alternate classroom</li> <li>• sent to office</li> </ul>
		<i>Signification Examples</i>	
<b>Misbehavior Reprimand Warning Redirection</b>			

When asked what prompted him to do this, Cookie responded: “I won’t get in trouble because there was whole bunch of noise and people in the cafeteria. When there’s

a lot of noise, we don't get to go outside." Eventually, Cookie was ready to return to class; however, unbeknownst to him, as a consequence of his behavior the day before, Ms. Esther forbids his to return on Friday. Once again, Cookie found himself spending a quiet afternoon with Ms. Nichél in her office. The following Monday Cookie's sanction was lifted; however, Ms. Nichél invited him to work in her office again. Cookie obliged and Ms. Esther provided work for him to do in Ms. Nichél's office. Finally, Cookie returned to Ms. Esther's class on Tuesday, three days after being asked to leave the classroom for not having his work done and being out of his area without permission.

Unique to Cookie was his response to the classroom environment. During interviews, Cookie shared,

I do better when the room is quiet and when I don't have anyone to talk to. Sometimes when kids start talking and the room gets noisy, it makes me want to get up, walk around, not do my work, or just talk to my friends.

Ms. Nichél was aware of Cookie's environmental triggers and felt she was offering him a more comfortable learning environment. During class with Mr. Abrahm and Ms. Esther, Cookie would walk around the room at will throwing items in the trash, make basketball shots in the garbage can with wads of paper, or talk to the student sitting next to him; however, although isolated from his peers, when Cookie worked in Ms. Nichél's office he physically appeared calm, focused, and productive.

Ms. Nichél's office was used for multiple purposes and it was unclear how teachers determined when students would go to the office; or what would take place when they arrived. Even when talking to school administrators, teachers, and students, it was undistinguished if students were going to the office to work, speak to an

administrator, to eat, or sit. Regularly, Ms. Nichél's office was used as a place of safe retreat and [or?] punishment. Notably, Cookie did not seem to mind this indistinction. Through his remarks during an interview, Cookie shared, "I like working in her office. It is quiet and I don't get in trouble." Notwithstanding the lack of communication between the vice principal, Ms. Esther and Cookie, equally troublesome was the amount of time Cookie was out of the classroom and remained isolated from his peers. In speaking with Ms. Nichél, she indicated:

It's a quiet space for him to come and work. I am licensed and it is good for him to have positive interactions at school. He is a good kid and gets his work done when he is with me.

Profound, is the power of environmental influences on behavior. Considering context, Ms. Nichél's comments are another example of competence being defined by context. It is troubling that Cookie must be excluded from his peers, isolated and removed from classroom instruction to have productive interactions at school. In addition, in Ms. Nichél's office, Cookie is regarded as a competent student, capable of appropriate social interactions and having the ability to complete school work; however, when students' social abilities were in question (i.e., not following directions or established classroom routines and norms), teachers generally issued a consequence.

Keeping in mind the role of context in relation to competence, using her own set of mental parameters for organizing behavior, Ms. Esther understood misbehavior in yet a different manner. Ms. Esther's teaching style allowed movement and provided opportunities for students to act enthusiastically in class. On a regular basis, she played melodic background music in her room while students were working. Byron sat near the



front of the classroom and could be seen bobbing his head and gently swaying his torso and head from left to right as he listened to the music playing while he worked at his desk. I asked Byron why he swayed his body back and forth even when no music played. He replied, "I listen to my own music in my head."

Although the expectation in Ms. Esther's room was for students to stay at their desk during her instruction, students would randomly leave their area without consequence or redirection. This teaching style boded well for Byron and Cookie who seemed to have the need to either move about the classroom or be physically active while being seated. In Ms. Esther's classroom, classification of certain externalized behaviors (i.e., not sitting still) was generally interpreted as unproblematic. It is through Mr. Abrahm and Ms. Esther mental parameters; and organization and classification of distinct behavioral properties that I am able to recognize how compliance or disruption between teachers and students is co-constructed within classrooms.

Consequences (i.e., punishments) for rule infractions varied and were randomly imposed by teachers. There was no discernable pattern other than certain students were more likely to receive sanctions than others. Regularly, a student's sanction started out as one day, but as time continued, the length and severity of punishments were extended. On several occasions a one day denial of recess evolved into multiple days on denied recess.

For example, during class, Mr. Abrahm thought Byron was making noises and moving around too much in his desk. Given these improprieties, Mr. Abrahm directed Byron to leave the room and work in Mr. Burrton's classroom. After class, I asked Mr. Abrahm when Byron could return and he responded, "Unfortunately, there is no condition on his return. He is just incapable of sitting still in the classroom. He just can't

do it.” Mr. Abraham could not be specific about Byron’s behaviors and it was equally unclear how Mr. Abraham arrived at this decision. When asked to discuss this behavioral event further, Mr. Abraham remarked, “After one day, students would return to class and exhibit the same unwanted behavior. This is how more days were added.”

**Immediate reactions.** Teachers and students alike had immediate personal reactions during a classroom disciplinary moment. Shown in Table 16 are teachers and students ideas of their immediate reactions. Teachers and students alike described each other as “having an attitude.”

Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther attitudes were shown through their verbal address to students. Ms. Esther would respond with a quip or retort. She also changed her tone by talked louder or softer, and would also grimace or stare at students. Mr. Abraham tended to maintain his same disposition, show no change in his expression or tone; and address students in a matter of fact manner.

Attitudes can account for given human behavior (Blumer, 1969). Mead (1934) suggests that

observable behavior finds expression within the individual, not in the sense of being in another world, a subjective world, but in the sense of being within his organism. Something of this behavior appears in what we may term ‘attitudes,’ the beginnings of acts. (p. 5)

Farberman (1985) remarked that attitudes are inner parts of a person’s behavior that can lead to certain response tendencies. He also referred to attitudes as inner experiences that influences one’s externalized behavior. In general, attitudes are a summary judgment derived from a recollection of past experiences relative to an object (e.g., symbol) where

one acts (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). As such, sense and meaning making are the building blocks for attitudes to develop (Bem, 1970). In this sense, teachers' and students' symbolic meanings for attitudes resulted from an interaction with oneself, the environment, and with one another.

Table 16

*Students' Immediate Reactions (Closure): Symbols and Signification*

<b>Symbol Category</b>		<b>Symbols and Significations</b>
Byron, Lil P, B.G Cookie, Jonathan	Immediate Reaction	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Symbol Examples</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Verbalization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• producing sound/talking</li> </ul> <p><b>Postural Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• crossing arms</li> <li>• slouching</li> <li>• head down on desk</li> </ul> <p><b>Facial Expressions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frowning</li> <li>• pouting</li> <li>• squinting</li> <li>• staring</li> <li>• grimacing</li> </ul> <p><b>Physical Expression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pounding fist</li> <li>• gesturing to another student</li> </ul> <p><b>Diminished Effort</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disengage/withdrawal</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Sensation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• internal feeling</li> </ul> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Signification Examples</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Disapproval</b></p> <p><b>Explanation</b></p> <p><b>Acceptance</b></p> <p><b>Denial</b></p> <p><b>Mad</b></p> <p><b>Satisfaction</b></p> <p><b>Frustration</b></p> <hr/>

Table 17

*Teachers' Immediate Reactions (Closure): Symbols and Significations*

<b>Symbol Category</b>		<b>Symbols and Significations</b>
Mr. Abrahm	Immediate Reaction	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<b>Verbalization</b>
		• spoken address to student • verbal emphasis
		<i>Significations Examples</i>
		<b>Misbehavior</b> <b>Disapproval</b> <b>Frustration</b>
Ms. Esther	Immediate Reaction	<i>Symbol Examples</i>
		<b>Verbalization</b>
		• spoken address to student <b>Facial Expressions</b> • glaring • grimacing
		<i>Signification Examples</i>
		<b>Misbehavior</b> <b>Disapproval</b> <b>Frustration</b>

In the case of Mr. Abrahm, Ms. Esther, Byron, Lil P, B.G., Cookie, and Jonathan attitudes were blatantly visible. Upon a deeper probe, students' attitudes consisted of an appearance, emotion, duration and effect. Students' attitudes varied in length; lasting all day, an entire class period, an extended period of time that was over before class ended, or momentarily (i.e., less than 3 minutes). Students' also displayed visible signs of distress in postural changes, facial expression, gestures and having a diminished effort to work. Students' having an immediate reaction tended to cross their arms, slouch in their desk, put their head down, frown, pout, grimace, or squint. In some cases, students also experienced an emotional component when misbehaving and shared feeling satisfied, frustrated, angry and acquiescent. For example:

*Byron:* I just put my head down and don't do my work. Sometimes my attitude can last for the whole day. It is also a mad feeling that I get.

*Lil P:* I don't treat him [teacher] the way he treats me, like he treats us the right way, but when I get in trouble by him, I just stop listening, but I still do my work, I just stop listening to him.

*Cookie:* I act silly and feel like a clown. After I'm done being silly, I'm thinking I'm going to be in big trouble, but I like getting more popular.

*B.G.:* I just do whatever work he gives us and just put my head down when I'm done.

Bathey (2013) mentioned that relational interactions between teachers and students are verbal and non-verbal communicative acts that convey meaning beyond the curriculum. Due to teachers and students personal meaning making processes during their moment-to-moment interchanges, contested classroom spaces were sometimes spawned when teachers' and students' had differing ideas regarding the signification of classroom symbols (e.g., checkmarks on the board, students' names of the board, classroom downtime, paper).

### **The Progression of Classroom Disciplinary Moments**

Important to note is that the development of classroom disciplinary moments tended to occur in a structured progression. This progression of classroom disciplinary moments moved from phase to phase in their formations however each phase varied in length, frequency, and intensity. Therefore, the co-construction of misbehavior was

dynamic, multidimensional, and non-linear. As such, misbehaviors were not routinized or fixed although they did follow a structure that was influenced by the co-creation and formation of classroom disciplinary moments.

An important finding of this study was that what encapsulates a classroom disciplinary moment has been ill-defined in the literature base and in the understandings of teachers and students. The data collected provided defining features of classroom disciplinary moments once analyzed that offer a foundation of shared understanding for future work. The definition of a classroom disciplinary moment emerged from the data as a process that occurred during moments of time that varied in structure and length. What follows is a description of the process as well as the structure and length that formed classroom disciplinary moments.

Classroom disciplinary moments could consist of exchanges between two people, an episode of multiple exchanges, or a discipline event which involves both multiple exchanges but also a sanction for a student. Some classroom disciplinary moments move from a single exchange into more and more interactions or exchanges, thus creating episodes. And sometimes episodes become so heated as to involve sanctions, thus creating an event. Other times, an event is created immediately, without this progression; however, whichever way the discipline moment happens, all moments involve phases as they progress. What follows is a description of what constitutes an exchange, episode, and event. Later, we return to the conceptualization of phases that are processed through during an episode, exchange, and event. To provide visualization of these co-constructions, Figure 8 shows the various formations of classroom disciplinary moments and their definitions.

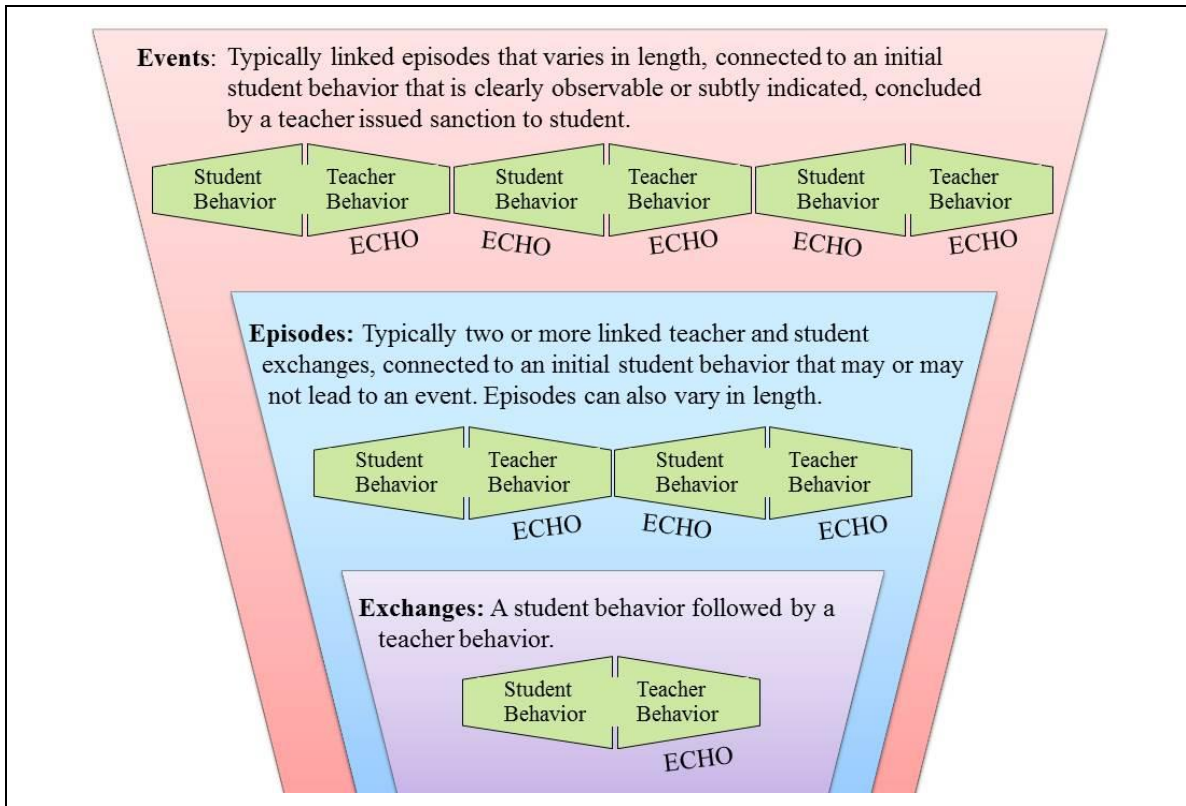


Figure 8. Formations of classroom disciplinary moments.

We know that classroom disciplinary moments begin with students exhibiting some kind of observable behavior. In this study, linked relays of behaviors were conceptualized as behavioral echolations, whereby a student's behavior set forth a chain of reactions (or echo's) between a teacher and a student. After a student's initial action, behavioral echolations were considered subsequent teacher and student responses.

The reverberation of behavioral echolations also created various formations of misbehavior. Because of the highly contextualized nature of classroom disciplinary moments, teachers' and students' interpretations and concerted negotiations, made the contour of misbehavior malleable. This means that given the situation and circumstances, behavioral echolations varied in number of reverberations. For example, an exchange was

short and consisted of a single echolation, or response. An episode had more echolocations and involved teachers and students volleying behaviors back and forth at least three times. When the course of misbehavior progressed in a step-by-step fashion, an event typically consisted of the most behavioral echolations. Generally, an event consisted of at least three teacher and student exchanges and contained at least three behavioral echolations.

I found that classroom disciplinary moments varied in construction (e.g., exchanges, episodes, events) and happened for two main reasons. First, classroom disciplinary moments could occur as a result of behavioral dissonance (i.e., teachers and students are involved in the same situation, but developed differing perspectives with regard to what actually took place). Second classroom disciplinary moments occurred because teachers and students perceive each other's actions to be different than the behavior expected for a certain setting. Next, I discuss the formations of classroom disciplinary moments in detail, beginning with an exchange.

### **Classrooms Disciplinary Moments: Exchanges, Episodes, and Events**

**Exchange.** An exchange was always limited to one echolation (or response). The boundary of an exchange was defined by a student's beginning behavior that was followed by a teacher's response. These small exchanges occurred throughout the day and varied in repetition. Case in point, during language arts with Ms. Esther, Cookie reaches his arms straight up in the air over his head, claps his hands once, and blurts out "one, two, three." In turn, Ms. Esther turned her head and grimaced while she peered at Cookie. The relay of behaviors stopped at a single exchange consisting of Cookie's verbalization and Ms. Esther's smirk. In this instance, the exchange involved a



verbalization and simultaneous gesture by Cookie coupled with Ms. Esther's gesture. Happening in tandem and linked to Cookie's initial behavior, Ms. Esther grimaced. When asked about her grimace, Ms. Esther commented: "That's probably the look of, you know, we're finished with that moment. So let's not go there. It's my what-the-hell look. I give it often. Cookie indicated, "Well, I think she didn't actually look at me, but like she just turned her head and then she turned back. But then she was just watching. Her watching made me stop."

This exchange between Cookie and Ms. Esther demonstrates misalignment among conceptions. Cookie interpreted Ms. Esther's look at the possibility for his behavior to be highlighted and "officially labeled as misbehavior" is what made him stop. This moment is also characterized as an exchange because there was only one echolation with no teacher sanction.

In another incident, Jonathan talked out loud without permission during social studies class with Ms. Esther (see Figure 9).<sup>4</sup> Here is the exchange that unfolded.

---

<sup>4</sup> Although this example is what a conversation analysis would call an adjacency pair (Gee & Handford, 2012; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), I did not use conversational analysis (Duranti, Alessandro, & Goodwin, 1992; Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Heritage & Atkinson, 1984). I focused on teachers' and students' meaning making processes during instances of classroom disciplinary moments. Although conversation analysis seeks to describe underlying social organization and places emphasis on people's orientation to the institutional substratum of procedures, interactional rules and conventions (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990), the lens that I used to understand misbehavior privileged symbolic interaction and sociocultural theory. This distinction is important because although some behavioral exchanges may be structured the same as an adjacency pair, conversational analysis is not recommended for research on people's opinions or making sense of larger social interaction embedded within multiple levels of an organization (Peräkylä, Ruusuvuori, & Vehviläinen, 2005; Ruusuvuori, 2012; Ruusuvuori, 2014).

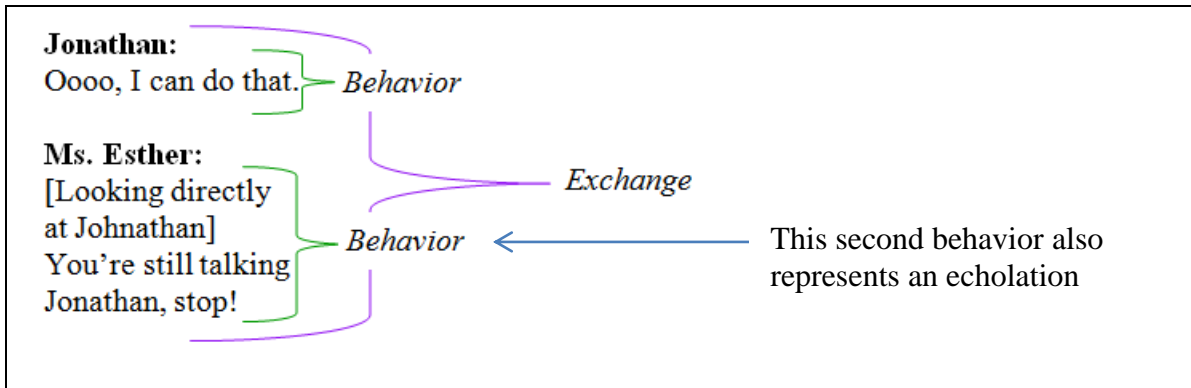


Figure 9. Jonathan and Ms. Esther exchange.

Illustrated in these two examples is the variability that can exist between teachers and students during the co-construction of behavioral exchanges. In the first example, Ms. Esther responded non-verbally to Cookie. However in Jonathan's case, Ms. Esther looked at him and told him to stop talking. Although the exchanges were constructed differently, the behavioral echolations discontinued after a single exchange. How come? Do we know why? In addition, this cessation thwarted the escalation of the exchange progressing into an event. Next, I discuss the formation of a classroom disciplinary episode.

**Episode.** As seen in Figure 10, Byron spoke out of turn in Mr. Abraham's class. During the stimulated recall interview, Mr. Abraham described Byron's talking out as a class disruption and his swaying back and forth while seated in his desk, as attention seeking. On the contrary, Byron indicated, "I was working, doing my job." Mr. Abraham elected to overlook Byron's attention seeking attempt and efforts to disrupt the class. Instead of issuing a sanction, Mr. Abraham corrected Byron, cueing him to raise his hand and wait to be called on.

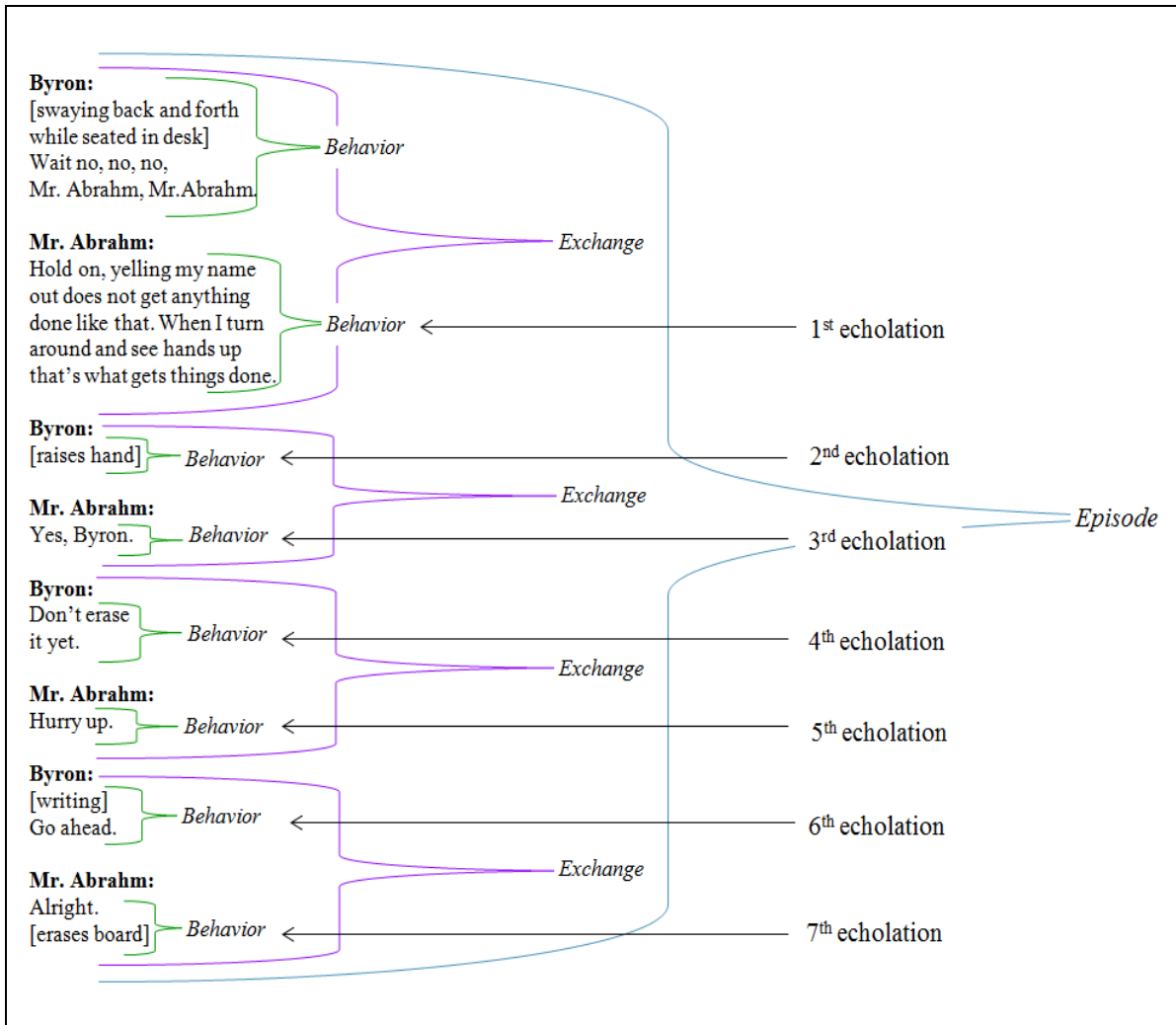


Figure 10. Byron and Mr. Abraham episode.

In this example, there were seven behavioral echolations between Mr. Abraham and Byron. Identified as an episode, Mr. Abraham did not sanction Byron for his rule infraction, but instead, interpreted the misbehavior as a teachable moment, seizing the opportunity to remind Byron of classroom (i.e., teacher) expectations. Negotiated by Mr. Abraham and Byron was Mr. Abraham's choice to instruct behavior and Byron's choice to follow Mr. Abraham's redirection.

Unfortunately, there is not anything extraordinary that indicates why Mr. Abraham interacted with Byron positively. The point of bring this episode to light, it the rare occasion that Mr. Abraham did not sanction Byron. This example illustrates the power of our mediated interactions in that Mr. Abraham interpreted Byron's hand raising and calling out to signify a readiness to learn.

Another illustration of an episode is between Lil P and Ms. Esther. During a social studies class, Ms. Esther talks to the students about the internet. She highlights the changes in forms of communication over the decades. The excerpt is detailed in Figure 11. Although Lil P breaks a classroom rule by talking when not called on by the teacher, Ms. Esther confronts him twice. Each time, she asks if he is done talking out loud. During a follow up inquiry with Ms. Esther about her choice, she indicated:

It's just not worth it sometimes. For Lil P and others, they usually turn it around with a redirection. Plus, we don't always get administrative support. I used to handle it myself and keep kids in for recess. But then, it started to feel like, I was punishing myself; so had to stop that.

Next I discuss the formation of an event during a classroom disciplinary moment.

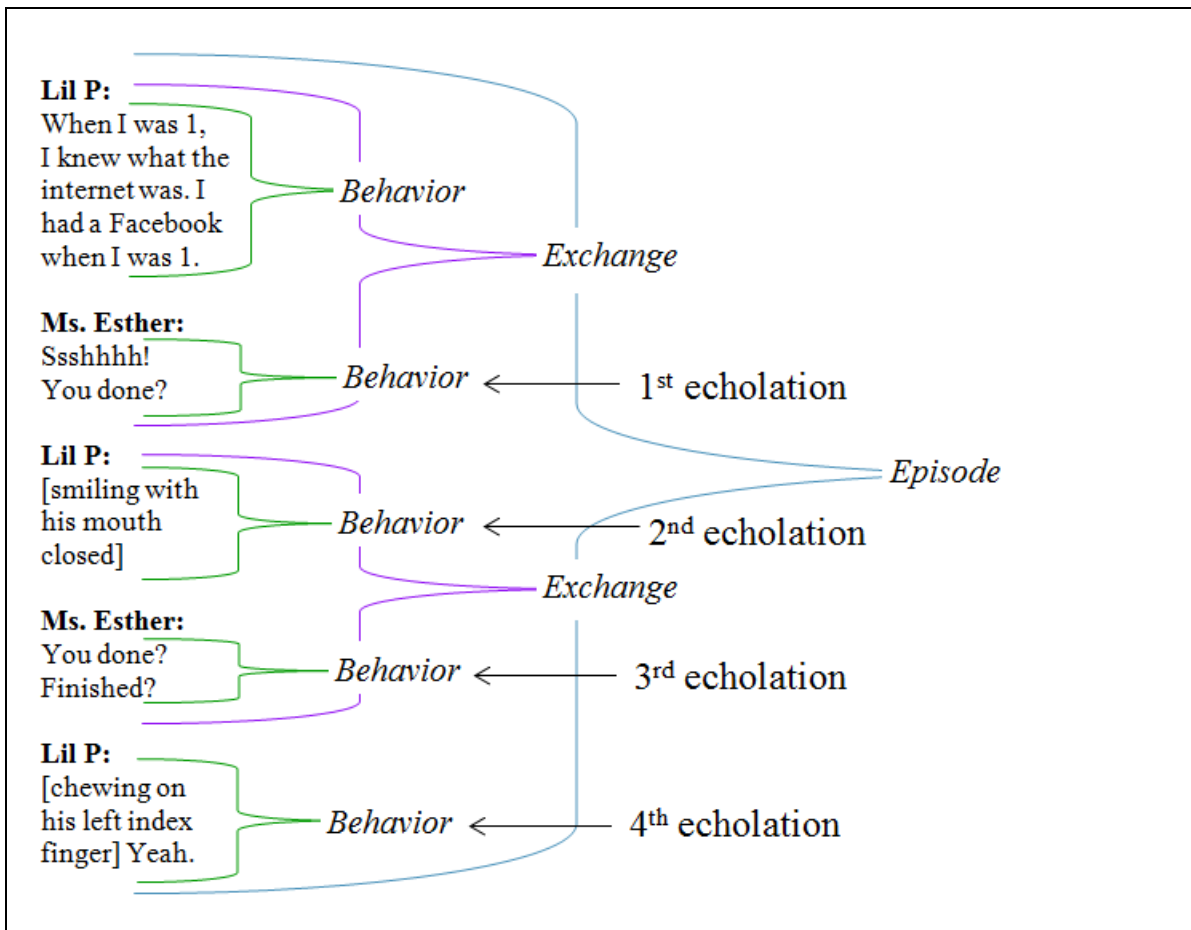


Figure 11. Lil P and Ms. Esther episode.

**Event.** An event was typically characterized by linked episodes between a teacher and student. The subsequent echolations are all connected to one specific student behavior that is considered the launching of the event. The boundary of an event was a specific student behavior that ended with a teacher issuing a sanction to the student; however, the construction of an event did not have to follow a predefined sequence. In some cases, an event only consisted of one exchange or echolation. That is, a student behavior and a teacher response that was a sanction.

For example, Lil P is immediately reprimanded after Mr. Abraham suspects he is disturbing the class by making indistinct and barely audible sounds. With desks arranged in five straight rows, Mr. Abraham circulated the room. He slowly walked up and down each row with his hands joined behind his back. Hearing a noise, Mr. Abraham stopped near Lil P's desk. Facing Lil P, Mr. Abraham looked to the right, in Lil P's direction, then directly at him. While Mr. Abraham looked, Lil P also turned his head in that same direction, then calmly looked straight ahead. Lil P brought his right hand to his mouth and began to bite his thumb fingernail. Moving away from Lil P, Mr. Abraham begins walking slowly toward the classroom door, still with his hands locked behind his back. Keeping his left arm behind his back, Mr. Abraham reaches with his right hand and turns the doorknob, opening the door. Standing in the doorway, Mr. Abraham peers into the other classroom. With his head still turned away and without saying a word, Mr. Abraham raises his left arm and cups his hand. Bending each finger, he gestures "come here." Remaining silent, Mr. Abraham, looks at Lil P, again raises his left hand, snaps his fingers three times, and then points at Lil P. Hearing the snaps, Lil P looks up. He brings his left hand inward toward his chest and mouths, "me?" Mr. Abraham again gestures with his hand "come here." Rising from his desk, Lil P stands. He swings his arms gently back and forth as he walks toward Mr. Abraham. Very coolly and matter of fact, Mr. Abraham says to Lil P, "I will be talking to you and your father after school." After telling Lil P his work assignment, Lil P sits down in the other classroom. Mr. Abraham closes the classroom door. Class resumes and Lil P's desk now sits empty.

Although only Lil P was sanctioned, Cookie was also involved. He was sitting diagonally from Lil P, one row to the right, and two desks forward. On video, both

students can be seen and heard making “ch” sounds; however, during class, Cookie’s involvement was undetected by Mr. Abraham.

During this classroom disciplinary formation, the initial behavior involved two students, Lil P and Cookie making “noises.” Mr. Abraham’s meaning making process during this event, led him to exclusively focus on Lil P. At the time of detection, Mr. Abraham perceived Lil P was the only student involved. Mr. Abraham arrived at this decision by narrowing the source of the sound as he approached Lil P. In this instance, there was one exchange: Lil P made a sound (behavior) and Mr. Abraham ejects Lil P from the classroom (sanction). Mr. Abraham summoning Lil P is the echo. Lil P being removed from the classroom is the sanction that also determined the boundary of this interaction as an event. With that said, Mr. Abraham’s and Lil P’s interactions only entailed one exchange being comprised of a single echolation.

When Cookie and Lil P were asked what was going on in class while Mr. Abraham walked up and down the rows of desks, both students said they were making faint sound effects (and not noise). What for? This speaks to the different meaning making processes derived through our interactions with one another that is situated within the domain of interactional influence. In this instance, during the meaning making process, both boys’ perceptions, decisions, and behaviors were identical. Cookie and Lil P thought they were making sound effects. Mr. Abraham’s viewpoint differed and he interpreted the faint sound he heard as noise. Given that Mr. Abraham, as a classroom teacher has more power than Lil P, only Mr. Abraham’s opinion counted as fact.

The distinguishing factor of an event is that it begins with some type of observable student behavior that ended with a student being sanctioned by a teacher. The

sanction itself served as the determinant of the episode becoming an event. In addition, multiple behavioral events may occur in a discipline moment if more than one student misbehavior is being highlighted. Table 18 illustrates the evolution of two behavioral events occurring simultaneously involving Byron and Jonathan. In this example, breakfast had just ended and students were assembling themselves in a line outside Ms. Esther's classroom door as they prepared to enter. Standing and watching nearby was Mr. Burrough.

Prior to this disciplinary moment, Ms. Esther had a series of behavioral exchanges with the class as a whole [lines 1-4]. She has two whole class exchanges before her individual exchange with Byron. During this exchange, Byron is immediately sanctioned [line 8]. Within a few seconds, Jonathan passes Ms. Esther and jokes with friends that he too wanted to be removed from class. Over hearing this, Ms. Esther immediately reprimands Jonathan [line 13]. Additional exchanges between them ensue. These ensuing exchanges are also examples of behavioral echolations (a chain of reactions (or echo's) between teacher and student) [lines 14-20]. The displeasing behavior reverberated between Ms. Esther and Jonathan, until Jonathan walked away; allowing the echolations to cease.



Table 18

*Byron and Jonathan Event with Ms. Esther*

E P I S O D E	Exchange with whole class	1	Students:	[Talking and assembling themselves into a line]
		2	Ms. Esther:	[Holds up left hand, extending two fingers, signaling to students she is requesting silence]
	Exchange with whole class	3	Students:	[Some students mimic Ms. Esther's gesture and stop talking]
				[Students begin talking and lower hands]
		4	Ms. Esther:	Still waiting. Although it is Tuesday, we are going to treat it like Monday. Alright? And we're going to come in as if we remember how to come into the classroom, which is quietly and take your seats. That means no talking, no playing, no running. Got it?
5	Students:	Yes		
		[Student begin walking in line toward classroom door, talking.]		
E V E N T	Exchange with Byron	6	Ms. Esther:	[Points to Byron] Come here!
		7	Byron:	[Walks toward Ms. Esther]
	Exchange with Byron	8	Ms. Esther:	He's with you! [looks to Mr. Burrough standing near here]
9		Byron:	[Silently] walks toward Mr. Burrough	
E V E N T	Exchange with Jonathan	10	Jonathan:	Yeah, let me go on ahead and go there too
		11	Ms. Esther:	Come here Jonathan.
	Exchange with Jonathan	12	Jonathan:	Huh?
		13	Ms. Esther:	Bye!
E P I S O D E	Exchange with Jonathan	14	Jonathan:	Na, I was playing.
		15	Ms. Esther:	No you're not playing. I don't have time for this!
	Exchange with Jonathan	16	Jonathan:	Man, I was just playing.
		17	Ms. Esther:	I don't have time.
	Exchange with Jonathan	18	Jonathan:	Man.
		19	Ms. Esther:	(speaking to Mr. Burrough) You got him too! Thank you.
	(speaking to Jonathan) Watch what you wish for!			
Exchange with Jonathan	20	Jonathan:	[Walks away (with Mr. Burrough and Byron)]	

key: [ ]: researcher's notations ( ): researcher's notations

In the first behavioral event [lines 6-9], Ms. Esther sanctioned Byron for talking after she instructed students to remain quiet. Several students were talking and playing in line, as they passed Ms. Esther to enter the classroom; however, among them, Byron was the only student reprimanded. His punishment was removal from the classroom for the morning. Within a few seconds of Byron's reprimand, the second behavioral event follows [lines 10-13]. Jonathan joked that he too wanted to be removed from the classroom. Taking him seriously, Ms. Esther also removed Jonathan from the classroom for the morning.

As a way to gain further understanding into these interchanges, all parties were separately interviewed. When speaking to Byron about this behavioral event, he indicated:

*Byron:* Me and that kid Lil P, and Cookie were playing around.

*Interviewer:* And when you say, you were playing around, what do you mean? What were all of you doing?

*Byron:* We were like talking, messing around, talking to each other.

*Interviewer:* Even though all those students were playing around, why did Ms. Esther only ask you to go with Mr. Burrough?

*Byron:* Because when, when all of us, at the time when all of us were playing, they had stopped and she had caught me playing. And she told me. I was messing with Lil P. I was tapping his shoulder with my fist and Ms. Esther saw that, I guess. Then she told me to go with Mr. Burrough.

Ms. Esther commented:

As we started walking into class, there was a lot of crowding going on. Jumping, they might as well have been doing cart wheels. Just you know, Byron, was hanging around in line and basically just running his mouth as usual as was Jonathan. Students were just out of control. I had said a couple of times, okay let's quiet it down. We are going to pretend like this is Monday. Like you remember how to go into the classroom quietly. This is what we are going to do when we get in there. So let's start this day on a good foot. So the line started moving and Byron was still loud and just playing. He wasn't really paying attention and I had to get his attention to even keep him moving. Byron said something to the effect of, being in Mr. Burrough's class. I am going to Mr. Burrough's class and that was just like the 15th thing I had heard from him so I said, fine go. And he was like oh no, I was kidding, I was kidding. I was like well there you go. You're going over there. So he went.

Byron and many of his classmates were not following Ms. Esther's directions. Captured in Ms. Esther's narrative, is her admission, that Byron was being removed from class for talking in line in addition to his past transgressions. Rather than seeking clarity from Byron, Ms. Esther exerted her control and authority, forcing Byron's separation from his peers and limiting his exposure to the curriculum. Although somewhat troubling, both Byron and Ms. Esther were in agreement with their joint co-construction of misbehavior. Byron felt like his punishment was justified, explaining, and that he got caught doing something that he was asked not to do. He also mentioned that he, "had a feeling he was

gonna get in trouble” and said that out loud to a friend, seconds before Ms. Esther said, “Come here!”

In an interview with Jonathan about his involvement, he indicated:

*Jonathan:* She asked us not to talk, and I was playing in line, so Ms.

Esther sent me to Mr. Burrough.

*Interviewer:* What were you doing, that you were playing in line?

*Jonathan:* I was just talking.

*Interviewer:* Who were you talking with?

*Jonathan:* I was talking with Cookie and Lil P and Jessica and Ronald.

*Interviewer:* What did you say to them?

*Jonathan:* I told them I wanna get kicked out too. But I was just playing.

Ms. Esther also spoke about the behavioral event with Jonathan and remarked:

Jonathan went past me and came in the door and everybody else was quiet and Jonathan said, ‘I want to go to Mr. Burrough’s class.’ So I was like, fine bye! And I sent him, and his response was the same. No, no, no, I was just playing. I was just playing. I said careful what you wish for. And I sent him on his merry way.

Asking, Ms. Esther if her actions in removing both boys from class was justified, she responded:

So I think my choice, and my decision to do that was just based on the fact that there had been repeated episodes with them, where a part of me feels like it was just them doing something on their own and not getting it, or caring. I could address that easier than I could control them. Cause here I

had been trying to get them to basically stop with all the excess jabber and it had just gotten to the point of being constant. I don't know, I know there're other things that are going on with them, as far as other consequences for different things they have done. At least I know Byron got busted for tagging (i.e., graffiti) outside of the literacy lab. I think this morning it was just the fact that it shouldn't have taken me that long to get their (all of the students) attention. We had just started the day and you know, in line it was one thing. Out on the playground it was another thing. And then walking into the classroom it was more commotion. And so I just nipped it before it even got into the classroom. I had two new students start today. I wasn't in the mood to handle them and the new students. I really doubt it would be more of a disservice to the new students, than it would be to them. Behavior is just off the charts.

One consequence is that a student's removal from class results in a denial of access to peers and the curriculum. Despite the loss of direct classroom instruction, in this instance, Byron, Jonathan, and Ms. Esther felt the students' removal from class was justified. The students shared they were talking after being asked to remain silent and therefore deserved to be sent out of class.

Nevertheless, this co-construction of misbehavior among Ms. Esther, Byron, and Jonathan is troubling. Concerning is that Byron and Jonathan both indicated they were not serious in wanting to be removed from class. Ms. Esther also recognized their humor; however, in spite the harsh punishment of being removed from class, when interviewed, all parties, felt the outcome reasonable. This lack of understanding and compassion,

contributes to the ongoing and seemingly unjust classroom disciplinary practices. Bothersome is the harsh and prolonged removal from class. Similar to disciplinary practices of African American students attending public urban schools being harshly sanctioned (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008), teachers at IDA also employed this same practice. Unfortunately, for Jonathan, Byron, and Ms. Esther, short-term and extended removal from class was a common part of student's school regimen.

### **Phases**

In any exchange, episode, or event, the same sequence of phases happened. In this study, teachers' and students' negotiations of classroom disciplinary moments involved six phases: a launching, interpretation of intentionality, coding, public recognition, sanction, and closure. The progression of negotiated classroom disciplinary moments is presented in Figure 12. Next to each phase are teachers' and students' conceptualizations of each other's behaviors as classroom disciplinary moments progressed.

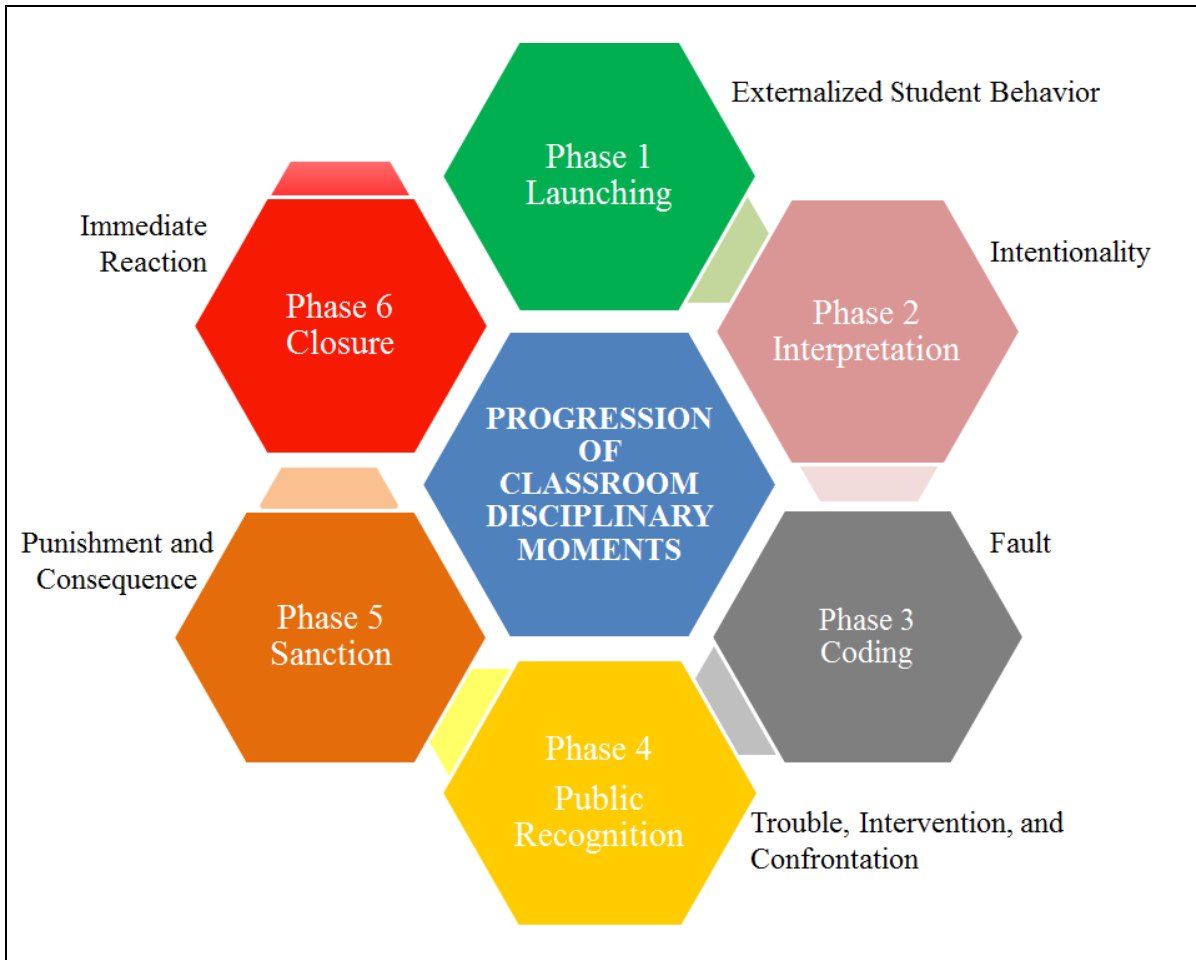


Figure 12. Progression of negotiated classroom disciplinary moments.

In Table 19, I also illustrate the complete progression of negotiated classroom disciplinary moments, by person; showcasing teachers' and students' conceptualizations during each phase. This level of detail is necessary for understanding how teachers' and students' understandings of classroom disciplinary moments become misaligned. Combined both illustrations show not only the progression of disciplinary moments, but where breakdowns begin to occur.

Details of each phase specifying teachers' and students' individual conceptualizations are provided in Table 20 through Table 24. Providing this specificity

enables a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' and students' interpretations and negotiations during the progression of classroom disciplinary moments. Prior to discussing each phase separately

Table 19

*Progression of Negotiated Classroom Disciplinary Moment, by Person*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
1	Launching	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior
2	Interpretation	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality
3	Coding	Fault	Fault	Fault
4	Public Recognition	Trouble	Intervention	Confrontation
5	Sanction	Punishment	Consequence	Consequence
6	Closure	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction

**Phases 1 and 2: Launching and interpretations of classroom disciplinary moments.** The launching or initiating a classroom disciplinary moment of a classroom disciplinary moment began with a student exhibiting an observable behavior that came into question by Mr. Abraham or Ms. Esther. During the interpretation phase of misbehavior, Mr. Abraham, Ms. Esther, and students considered intentionality as an image of misbehavior (see Table 20). Students did not show an interpretive phase during their meaning making process of understanding classroom disciplinary moments. For specific examples of symbols and significations for externalized student behaviors refer to Tables



11, and for specific examples of symbols and significations for interpretations, see Table 12.

Table 20

*Phases 1-2: Launching and Interpretation*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
1	Launching	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior	Externalized Student Behavior
2	Interpretation	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality	Student Intentionality

**Phase 3: Coding of classroom disciplinary moments.** During the coding phase of a classroom disciplinary moment, teachers and students blamed each other (see Table 21). Students believed teachers were the reason for their misbehavior being highlighted and teachers thought students were automatically culpable. For specific examples symbols and significations for coding, see Table 13.

Table 21

*Phase 3: Coding*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
3	Coding	Fault	Fault	Fault

**Phase 4: Public recognition of classroom disciplinary moments.** During the public recognition phase of the progression of classroom disciplinary moments teachers

would do something that signaled to students that he/she was aware of their misbehavior (see Table 22). Students interpreted teacher signals to indicate trouble. Mr. Abraham thought his public acknowledged signified a positive intervention. Ms. Esther acknowledged student misbehavior by confronting them in some type of way. For specific examples of symbols and significations of public recognition, see Table 14.

Table 22

*Phase 4: Public Recognition*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
4	Public Recognition	Trouble	Intervention	Confrontation

**Phase 5: Sanctions during classroom disciplinary moments.** During the sanction phase, students thought they were being punished whereas, Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther thought their responses were natural consequences to a students' misbehavior (See table 23). For specific examples of symbols and significations of sanctions, see Table 14.

Table 23

*Phase 5: Sanction*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
5	Sanction	Punishment	Consequence	Consequence

**Phase 6: Closure of classroom disciplinary moments.** When a classroom disciplinary moment was ending, students and teachers alike had an immediate reaction (see table 24). Sometimes reactions were visible; and other times they were not. Students and teachers both would sometimes have emotional reactions. For specific examples of symbols and significations of immediate reactions, see Tables 16-17.

Table 24

*Phase 6: Closure*

Phase	Progression of Disciplinary Moments	Misbehavior Clusters		
		Students	Teachers	
		Byron, Lil P, Cookie, B.G. Jonathan	Mr. Abraham	Ms. Esther
6	Closure	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction	Immediate Reaction

**Summary of Teachers’ and Students’ Understandings of Misbehavior and Classroom Disciplinary Moments**

This chapter highlighted key conceptualizations and meaning making processing for understanding classroom misbehavior for two teachers and five students. Discussed in detail were teachers’ and students’ conceptualizations, constructions, interpretations, and negotiations of classroom misbehavior and classroom disciplinary moments. Brought to light was the complexity in understanding teachers’ and students’ meaning making processes for a situated understanding of misbehavior. Revealed was that misbehavior is a pervasive notion that is malleable and dependent on contextualization; and greatly influenced by intra and interpersonal interactions. The intricacies and sophistication of

teachers' and students' interpretations of how they negotiate classroom disciplinary moments were also reported.

I first explained teachers' and students' interpretative processes for deriving meaning through interactions including the way they used context, prior experiences, personal beliefs and interactive processes. Following that discussion, an exposé of teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior was provided. Last, I further expound on the findings by describing and explaining the formation of classroom disciplinary moments. On the whole, the analyses showed that teachers and students developed their own logic as a way to organize their own thinking to make better sense of their environment and interactions with one another. In the next chapter, I discuss conclusions, implications, and recommendation that arose from the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### **The Situated Nature of Misbehavior**

In this study I aimed to answer the question: How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted and negotiated between teachers and students? What follows is a discussion of the findings as they build upon current scientific literature. In addition, the research findings are discussed in light of the theoretical framework (i.e., sociocultural theory and symbolic interactionism) that underpins the study. Limitations of the study along with providing theory-based recommendations for future efforts in the field of education, and with implications for studying classroom disciplinary moments are also included.

This research sheds new insights into the situated nature of misbehaviors during teachers' and students' sense making of classroom disciplinary moments. Some of the findings support current literature while others provide evidence different from previously published studies. This research is also valuable by articulating results of disciplinary inequities contextualized within the lived school experiences of teachers and students while classroom disciplinary moments occurred.

A key finding of the current study is the disclosure of teachers' and students' meaning-making efforts during the constructed classroom misbehavior moments. I documented that teachers' and students' sense making of classroom disciplinary moments is sophisticated and deeply embedded within their personal understandings of misbehavior. In fact, personal understandings of perceived aspects of misbehavior were

an integral part of teachers and students meaning-making processes during classroom disciplinary moments.

Baiyee (2013) noted there are essential differences between considering children in need of discipline, and seeing them as agents of their own lives possessing voices and viewpoints that must be heard. Knowing this is significant in light of a few facts: 1) teacher behavioral referrals take place in classrooms (Skiba et al., 2002); 2) some circumstances (i.e., safety, de-escalation, intervention) may require a student's removal from the classroom (Losen, Hewitt, & Toldson, 2014); 3) African American (male and female) and Latino students are more likely than any other students to be suspended or expelled (CRDC, 2014; Carter, Fine, & Russell, 2014), and 4) Hispanic and African American students represent 56% of expulsions in school districts that report expulsions adhering to zero tolerance policies (CRDC, 2014).

The documented school experiences of African American and Hispanic students tell us that the organization and execution of school discipline is multifaceted and its topographies multidimensional. Current studies and reports (e.g., Civil Rights Data Collection, 2014; Toldson, 2011) typically provide very important statistical information such as number of students being suspended or expelled, the number of students expelled under zero-tolerance, suspension rates, and the like. These sources offer compelling evidence about which students are most likely to be represented in school's exclusionary school disciplinary practices. Nevertheless, missing and yet to be understood are the precursors to these disparities; that is, teachers' and students' understanding of classroom disciplinary moments as they unfold.

This study also showed that during classroom disciplinary moments, teachers and students jointly employed personal interpretations of their own actions. Teachers and students also made sense of each other's actions through interpretative processes. Teachers and students alike, organized information according to their personal sense-making parameters. The organization of teachers and students logic involved naming and grouping behaviors around constructs of personal cultural reference. Thus, for example, present in teachers and students ideas was the notion of attitudes. If students spoke to Ms. Esther in a certain way she considered it having an attitude. Students, on the other hand, thought at times Ms. Esther's looks suggested she had an attitude. With regard to Mr. Abraham, students interpreted him to always have an attitude or be in a "not so good mood."

Teachers' and students' notions, ideas, and beliefs contribute to a person's social functioning within a setting. Situating disciplinary moments within the sociocultural context of the classroom creates opportunities for interactional patterns to be examined among teachers and students (Gee & Green, 1998). These types of approaches to understanding classroom disciplinary moments allow researchers to study negotiated social practices considering context (Vavrus & Cole, 2002).

Although the idea of classroom misbehavior seems to be somewhat of a fixed notion, results of this study indicate the opposite. Even though teachers and students articulated similar words to describe their conceptualizations of misbehavior, the nature of classroom disciplinary moments was highly contextualized. Teachers and students interpretations were dependent upon the sociocultural context in which the classroom disciplinary moments occurred (Vavrus & Cole, 2002).

## **How do Teachers and Students Conceptualize Misbehavior?**

Teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior were highly contextualized and thought of as a singular verbal or non-verbal behavior that occurred during moment-to-moment interactions. During interviews teachers and students were able to articulate similar notions of misbehavior. They considered that misbehavior entailed talking, not doing work, walking around the classroom, being loud, among many other actions; however, teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior *changed* during moment-to-moment interactions. This is an important distinction with important implications for future research on discipline inequities. Many researchers rely on study participants' reports on their conceptualizations about key constructs such as misbehavior gathered through interviews. This study suggests it is critical to document not only people's *conceptions* of these notions, but also to collect evidence on the actual practices in which disciplinary moments emerge in everyday classroom life. That is, this study offers empirical support for a *situated analysis* of discipline inequities.

Meanings emerged not only from individual behaviors of teachers and students, but also as a product of coordinated processes of interaction (Goodwin, 1986). Investigating what people do and say provides insight into how misbehavior becomes interactively constituted between teachers and students in the classroom. Teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior were a foundational aspect for understanding classroom disciplinary moments. As classroom disciplinary moments progressed, teachers and students made mental, emotional and physical shifts (i.e., movements). These shifts were guided by teachers' and student's individual perceptions, but also influenced interpersonal interactions.



Teachers' and students' perspectives during interaction ultimately shaped one's thinking that allowed behavior to seem the same or viewed as changed. Consistent with a symbolic interactionist perspective, these shifts showed how teachers' and students' perceptions mediated the meaning that was derived during their interpersonal interactions (Blumer, 1969). Moreover, a changed viewpoint, (e.g., Mr. Abraham, Ms. Esther or students exhibiting a new behavioral response to one another) was often dependent upon and modified through interactions (Blumer, 1969).

The literature on school discipline published between 2000 and 2010 tended to focus on three main areas: perceptions, profiles, and school disciplinary sanction patterns (Dunbar & Villarruel, 2002; Kupchik & Ellis, 2008; Knoff & Ferron, 2002; Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006; Lewis et al, 2010; Payne & Welch, 2010; Rocque, 2010). Perceptions included teachers' and students' impressions about one another and fairness of school discipline policies. The literature relating to profiles included demographic information such as who are the students involved in school discipline. School disciplinary sanction patterns included information about disciplinary infractions such as types of student offenses and issued sanctions. Included also in this knowledge base were at least three traditional explanations for the disproportionate representation of African American male and Latino students in school discipline: (a) cultural differences, (b) cultural deficit perspectives, and (c) institutional factors.

In line with this research, the findings of this study indicated that teachers' and students' sense making of misbehavior were mediated by a composite of influences that included their personal conceptualizations and interpretations of misbehavior, and IDA's policies (i.e. perceptions, institutional factors, profiles, and disciplinary sanction

patterns). In addition, teachers' and students' evaluations of interpersonal interactions during classroom disciplinary moments also influenced their sense making of misbehavior. Although Mr. Abrahm, Ms. Esther, Byron, Lil P, Jonathon, and B.G. were African American, they each understood and negotiated classroom disciplinary moments differently. This is an interesting pattern in the study evidence in light of what has been reported in the literature—(e.g., cultural synchronization and Black-student to White-teacher binaries).

Black-student to White-teacher binary was heavily articulated in the discipline research on perceptions and sanction patterns. On the surface, the student population at IDA appeared homogenous with the majority of students being African American and living in poverty. Additionally, nearly all of the teachers were African American, but none lived in poverty. This point illustrates the urgency to infuse analytical attention to within-group differences in studies of educational equity and opportunity. Cultural differences between teachers and students could also be due to difference, geographic upbringing, internalized oppression, or a myriad of other sociocultural factors (Howard, 2010, Morris, 2005; Hinojosa, 2008; Vavrus & Cole, 2002).

Several frameworks have addressed the role of culture in schools: multicultural education (Banks, 1992; 2009); culturally relevant teaching (Howard, 2001, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2014, 1995); cultural responsive teaching (Gay, 2010); cultural synchronization (Monroe, 2006; Monroe & Obidah, 2004); and cultural discontinuity (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Ogbu, 1982; Self & Milner, 2012). This work suggests that knowledge of community dynamics, community influences, and the ability to implement strategies reflective of personal cultural knowledge can bridge cultural differences that

exist at schools between teachers and students (Bondy, Ross, Galligane & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2014); however, not well articulated within the literature especially pertaining to school discipline, is recognizing the powerful mediating role of within group differences. Attention to within group difference in future discipline inequities research will require a deeper examination of the production of classroom disciplinary moments.

The study findings are significant given the fact that members of the same minority group have been treated as monolithic populations (Artiles, Rueda, Salazar, & Higareda, 2005; Arzubaga, Artiles, King, Harris-Murri, 2008). It reveals how the construction of misbehavior across different African American students as well as African American teachers can be different. Notably, the study findings also dispel the image that *all* African American students misbehave. Furthermore, because misbehavior was co-constructed in different ways between two African American teachers and their African American students, the heterogeneity *within* the African American population is exposed. An added importance of these findings is to learn more about the situated nature of misbehavior to discover how context along with perceptions mediate classroom disciplinary moments between teachers and students.

A corollary to the preceding discussion is that skin color alone (i.e., race) is not the required ingredient for determinations of cultural discontinuity, synchronization (Irvine, 2003) or cultural congruence (Lee, 2003). There is no doubt that considering the role of race and culture in schools can benefit certain student groups when considering community dynamics and cultural knowledge (Flory & McCaughtry, 2009). This is true especially considering that teachers' and students' perspectives are influenced by their

personal values, lived experiences, and views. For example, in the case of Byron and Mr. Abraham, he knew Byron was a lower achieving student and lived in poverty. Shaping his interactions with Lil P, Mr. Abraham knew he was an above-average student. It could be said, that in spite of the presumed cultural continuity indexed in skin color, teachers and students still struggled to understand each other's behavior.

### **How do Teachers and Students Negotiate Classroom Disciplinary Moments?**

Osher et al., (2007) indicated that teacher and student responses to one another may also contribute to instances of classroom disciplinary moments and classroom disruptions. This too was the case for this study. In Mr. Abraham's and Ms. Esther's classrooms, students and teachers influenced each other's behavior by co-creating new stimuli or reacting to old stimuli. The interactions between teachers and students involved mental, emotional and physical shifts. Teachers and students would position themselves through personal responses or initiated actions with one another.

Teachers and students ideas of misbehavior reflected a highly complex process. They developed order and logic as a way to organize their own thinking to relate to each other (McDermott, 1977). In doing so, within Mr. Abraham's and Ms. Esther's classrooms, the production of misbehavior involved multiple and simultaneous negotiated aspects of behavior that began with a student exhibiting externalized behaviors. It was a student's behavior that typically functioned as the impetus for a relay of behaviors between teachers and students that led to various formations of classroom misbehaviors (i.e., exchanges, episodes, events).

The creation of misbehavior was dynamic and took shape in a multitude of ways. Results indicated that teachers' and students' had varying perceptions of misbehavior and

that classroom disciplinary moments were malleable. Because of the variety of teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior, classroom disciplinary moments had "ooblick" like qualities in that personal interpretations of interactions could change. Thus, the study of classroom disciplinary moments is complicated by the fluid nature of misbehavior.

Given its negotiated nature, the meaning of misbehavior changed based on context and personal interpretation. A potential consequence of this fact is that teachers can contribute to perpetuating social inequities if they are not aware of the situated nature of misbehavior (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Making the findings of this study timely, Swadener and O'Brien (2009) recommended teachers understand students in the context of their daily realities. Mathur (2007) also pointed out that a teacher's conscientiousness impacts students' classroom experiences.

The formations of classroom disciplinary moments at IDA involved teachers responding to students' behaviors and the subsequent students' responses. This back and forth notion determined the length of classroom disciplinary moments. It was during the unfolding of classroom disciplinary moments that I was able to discover that teachers' and students' notions of misbehavior changed in live context.

Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003) support this notion and indicated in their study that teachers' management of the social context of classrooms can impact student outcomes. Within this study, an example of teachers' management style that impacted student outcomes was Mr. Abraham's "singling out" students and Ms. Esther saying to Cookie that "you stand out more." In Mr. Abram's case, his singling out students was negative in that he was attempting to identify the student he thought was

misbehaving. By doing so, he brought negative attention to students' behavior that generally resulted in students being sanctioned or having some adverse internalized or externalized response (i.e. immediate response). In the case of Ms. Esther, her management style of paying additional attention to "students standing out more" equated to extending behavioral latitude toward some students (e.g. Cookie). This meant sometimes students would openly violate a classroom rule, but their behavior would be of no consequence. The resulting outcome was then an intact classroom where all students remained in class; however, on the opposite end of the spectrum, because a student "stood out more," when a class disruption occurred involving multiple students, those singled out students were approached first, assumed culpable and often issued a reprimand.

Reaching mutual understandings of the meanings of symbols involves mediation of cultural tools (Cole, 1993; Vygotsky, 1981) and simultaneous conceptual agreements among people. Integral to this study's findings is the belief that teachers and students interpretive processes involve symbols, signification and action. Relative to this research, studying classroom disciplinary moments between teachers and students as they occurred in real time revealed that conceptual misalignments happened when simultaneous understandings of moments were not achieved.

It was during these occurrences of perceptual and conceptual misalignments among teachers and students that varying ideas of misbehavior constituted the gestation of contested classroom spaces. The process of interpretation also functioned as an intermediary between one's proclivity to act and the act itself. In this way a "situation has

meaning only through a person's interpretations and definitions of it" (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p.14).

Classrooms are very complex settings and represent the convergences of a multitude of cultures. The cultural intersectionalities (e.g., the development, articulation, appropriation, beliefs, and discursive practices) that exist within a classroom represent awareness that we inhabit and are inhabited by "multiple categories of identity," (Lorde, 2013, p. 177). It is at the intersection of race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, ability, deviant, and other identity categories, that classrooms have become the spaces for cultural collisions and distortions (Artiles, 2003; Crenshaw, 1989; Howard, 2014;). It is in the collision of ideas, beliefs, and practices that seems to breed common threads of misunderstanding between teachers and students.

In this research, I documented that learning spaces (i.e. classrooms) have unique rhythms and flows. With Mr. Abraham's and Ms. Esther's classrooms were a convergence of cultures. It was the amalgamation of 'complexities of cultures' (Artiles, in press), that teachers and students were able to weave threads of opposition and rejection or of acceptance. The cultural cadence of a classroom (i.e. the rhythm and flow of the environment through students and teachers use of and mediation of cultural tools) at times created a melodic or dissonant environment. At the school level, cultural cadences encompassed rules and regulations, policies and practices, implementation of policies, relational interactions, and the like. A dissonant environment, in short, describes limited agreements in how established procedures play out in the daily lived experiences between students and teachers.

A clashing of ideas, the over use of behavioral referrals, teachers' presumption of guilt for students when they are involved in classroom disciplinary moments creates behavioral dissonance and contested classroom spaces. When behavioral dissonance occurs, the rhythm and flow of the classroom ceases to exist in harmony; and instead a collision of pressing ideas and actions has negative impacts.

When agreement among varying beliefs is achieved the cultural cadences of a classroom sets forth the opportunity for teachers and students to achieve repose among the differing cultural experiences and personal perspectives that can exist within classrooms. Melodic cultural cadence can also create a sense of cultural repose and resolution that sets forth pathways for differing cultural experiences and perspectives to harmoniously exist within classrooms. In achieving melodic cultural cadences as opposed to behavioral dissonance that results in the unjust and unfair treatment of students can be achieved through a deeper examination into the sociocultural context of classrooms where disciplinary conflicts occur.

Gregory and Weinstein's (2008) study examined teacher perspectives and found behavioral referrals were specific to situational contexts. Similar to their findings of variability in insolent behavior, Mr. Abraham thought Byron's actions to be deceptive and challenging to his authority. In an interview with Mr. Abraham he admitted to having some negative views regarding the Black community. Although Mr. Abraham, Lil P, and Byron shared a common heritage, Mr. Abraham's cultural beliefs celebrated Lil P's classroom contributions and interpreted Byron's classroom contributions negatively. As such, Mr. Abraham's variances in perceptions of students created spaces for misunderstanding that ultimately lead to classroom disciplinary moments (Howard, 2010;



Morris, 2005; Hinojosa, 2008; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Most apparent were the individual expectations Mr. Abraham held for Byron and Lil P. Even though Mr. Abraham, Lil P, and Byron are Black males, at times Mr. Abraham had conflicting perspectives of them. In doing so, Mr. Abraham's perceptions of Black boys made Byron's representation in classroom disciplinary inequities at times inescapable.

Even though the meanings that people have about things are not fixed and perceptions can change through interactions (Hewitt, 1988); Mr. Abraham's significations of Byron representing misbehavior remained consistent throughout the duration of this study. Given the sensitive nature of classroom discipline along with its intended and unintended consequences; the findings in this study align with previous research regarding teachers' deficit perspectives of students of color (Artiles, 2003; Gay, 2010; Lee, 2010).

The study findings also showed how students whose behaviors were perceived outside official norms were placed on the margins; and in many instances excluded by institutional policies and classroom practices. Given that context is essential, Wilson (1977) posited that environments can also generate behaviors. Further, Demanet and Van Houtte (2012) conducted a study investigating teacher's expectations to student misbehavior. They concluded that student performance was influenced by teacher expectations. Specifically, a correlation between low teacher expectation and self-reports of misconduct. This means that the organization, routines and procedures of Mr. Abram's and Ms. Esther's classroom mediated behaviors beyond teachers and students personal interpretation. In this sense, IDA appeared to operate in an intolerant fashion toward specific students. For those reasons, some students were categorized as difficult,

challenging, or troublemakers. As such, at IDA, through teachers' meaning making processes and the classroom context; certain students were manufactured into becoming problematic.

Understanding that identities can be constructed and are also real (Siebers, 2008), suggests that some challenges students face at school are significant in light of the ways in which their historical and cultural identities intersect in the reality of their daily lives within society. This point is critical and pushes back against deficit perspectives that situate students' difficulties at school to be a result of personal inadequacies (Valencia, 2010).

In a general sense, all of the participants in this study were considered by their teachers and school staff to have strong behaviors. Although all participants were of color, (i.e., African American and Latino); race, class, and gender became static markers of negative distortions (Watts & Everelles, 2008) for Mr. Abraham to view students, in particular Byron. Mr. Abraham's socially constructed identity of Byron had major implications for how he viewed Byron in class. Another byproduct of this socially constructed lens of Byron was his self-image and the idea that he was a "bad" person.

Mead (1934) indicated that people act based on their personal views. In Byron's case, Mr. Abraham shared that he thought Byron's sole purpose was attention getting. Therefore, when Byron raised his hand in Mr. Abraham's class in the same manner as his classmates; because of Mr. Abraham's perspectives of Byron, Mr. Abraham considered Byron's behavior inappropriate; even when he adhered to classroom rules. This perception is linked to the interpretive meaning making process that Mr. Abraham used to organize his perception of Byron which typically only included limited parameters in

which he (Mr. Abraham) classified Byron's behavior as an aberration. This symbolization of Byron as a troublemaker also represents Mr. Abram's disposition regarding the stigmatization of African American males.

The ideas of bad students or individuals being inherently bad are not new constructs. Deeply represented in the literature on school discipline is the deficit perspective. Negative student perspectives can situate classroom difficulties as something that is produced within, by, or due to individual circumstances (Valencia, 2010). In spite of Byron's difficulties at school and in Mr. Abraham's classroom, research shows that teachers over emphasized the need to control behaviors of African American students (Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Richart et al., 2003; Skiba et al., 2002) and were more likely to demonstrate reactions that appear to be more severe than required (Monroe, 2005). Unfortunately, this finding is also in line with research that suggests teacher perception is stigmatizing toward African American males (Fenning & Rose, 2007); however, the perception of Byron's behavior can also be interpreted as a type of "transformational resistance" (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001). Transformational resistance provides a lens for understanding how Byron, Lil P, Cookie, Jonathan, and B.G. internalized their school experiences and interpersonal interactions. Through transformational resistance, students become active agents that are constantly involved in a meaning making process (Cerecer, Ek, Alanis, & Murakami-Ramalho, (2011). More so transformational resistance allows people (e.g. students) to negotiate with their environment and derive personalized meaning of interactions. In other words, students have agency, and are not simply acted upon; but rather are seen as courageous and skillful "to act on one's behalf" (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001, p. 316).

Through this perspective, students placed on the margins and perceived as deviant can be seen through a renewed lens of transformational resistance rather than recipients of subjugation or subordination. In particular, the notion of transformational resistance forces the critique of the social conditions surrounding students whose behavior appears to be disruptive (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001). Mr. Abraham's publically shared negative perceptions of Byron always being considered "bad" and Byron's awareness of classroom disciplinary inequities certainly created conditions for students to demonstrate resistant behaviors.

Solórzano (1997) details negative stereotypes of students of color as "images and words that wound" (p. 5). He also suggests critical race theory as a framework for challenging negative stereotypes in classrooms. In doing so, the claim can be made that there is a need to oppose teachers' negative perceptions of students of color while also legitimizing students' classroom contributions. As such, attending to race as a factor, race is something that cannot be ignored when explaining individual experiences (Russell, 1992). For that matter, critical race theory challenges the dominant perspectives on race and racism by examining how school policies, perceptions, and teachers' interactions with students are used to relegate certain student groups (Bell, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997, 1998; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Tate, 1997).

Race mediated classroom processes observed during the construction of student misbehavior. In several instances during class with Mr. Abraham, Byron was fully engaged and adhering to implicit and explicit classroom rules; however, given Mr. Abraham's conceptions about the role of race in student behavior, often times, Byron's

presence in the classroom represented misbehavior, ignorance, willful disobedience, and a lack of focus (see Figure 6).

Mr. Abraham's conceptualizations of misbehavior seemed to embody a type of internalized oppression. He re-appropriated in his classroom through his interactions with students the negative effects of discriminatory acts perpetrated against African American males. In this way, Byron became the symbol for our society's problems and his classroom behavior (even when appropriate) was viewed negatively by Mr. Abraham. It is this kind of thinking that often functions as the germination for personal and social ideologies that materialize in classrooms and influence a teacher's perception of student misbehavior. Watts and Everelles (2008) remind us that it is the contextualizing of these oppressive ideologies that allows those with power (e.g., teachers) to determine behavior considered appropriate for a situation or setting.

Mr. Abraham's conceptualizations of Byron also created an interesting inlet into the histories of participation and how participation mediated teachers' semiotic understandings of behavior. In particular, Mr. Abraham's negative conceptions of blackness were the factors that mediated his engagement with the Black male students in his classroom. This cannot be ignored.

Certainly, the influence of using race for explaining discipline inequities has been examined (Howard, 2010; 2014; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Toldson, 2011). The permeated effects of racial oppression transcends time affecting the schooling experiences of Latino and African American male students; and are unfortunately still very much alive in our society today. It can be argued today that schools still function to exclude and deny through special education placement and the high representation of African American

male and Latino students in exclusionary discipline practices. For that reason, it is necessary to be cognizant of historical influences and oppression ideologies (Watts & Everelles, 2008).

Recognizing the influence of historical and societal influences was identified as a relational domain of influence for the construction, interpretation, and negotiations of classroom misbehavior and classroom disciplinary moments. Knowing that the history of the United States' educational system shows that school policies and classroom practices have been used as tools of exclusion for some students is paramount in understanding how the permeated effects of racism in our society can influence classroom disciplinary moments.

The history of societal and educational influences for people of color is known, particularly, African American males. Decades of research document the school failure and disproportionality of students of color in schools' exclusionary discipline measures and special education placement. Still today, it can be argued the foremost education challenge is to create learning environments that maintain the cultural integrity of every child while enhancing their educational success (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995) without compromising learning opportunities.

Through socially constructed identities, at minimum African American male students carry two negative societal burdens with them to school: (a) the identity of being a member of the African American race and (b) the stigma of being Black and male (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). With that said, the high representation of African American males in school discipline and their reported school experiences has them adopting socially created identities such as emotional-behavioral disordered, endangered,

disabled, criminally minded, dangerous, at risk, and bad (Jackson & Moore, 2006; Majors & Billson, 1992; Monroe, 2005). As such, Skiba et al. (2002) submit that African Americans are regularly excluded through school discipline measures such as suspension and expulsion (Skiba et al., 2002). This same measure of exclusion was also adopted by IDA in that students were routinely removed from class and denied common day privileges such as eating lunch with peers, recess, or participating in physical education.

We know that individuals interpret their world through a cultural lens (Giroux, 1992) and sociocultural influences such as personal values, beliefs, and attitudes influence teacher and student perspectives. We know that within group differences exist. A common problem when considering culture is the notion that culture is a static collection of characteristics (Rogoff, 2003). Nieto (1999) considers culture as interrelated characteristics that are more than rituals and artifacts. Even more, culture can be local to a context of which includes socioeconomic status, family structure, race, ethnicity and religion (Barrett & Noguera, 2008; Flory & McCaughtry, 2009). With that said, and given the findings of this study, there is a need for a deeper probe and examination into the relational classroom interactions between teachers and students; even with teachers and students are of the same or gender.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

It is important to bear in mind that the study design and descriptive nature of the findings allow for further inquiry into the production of classroom misbehavior. Another significant contribution is the new direction of analysis into school discipline and classroom misbehavior. There needs to be a deeper probe into school discipline inequities and the *production* of misbehavior. We know that a root of disciplinary classroom

infractions is perceptions of behaviors and conceptualizations of misbehavior. Years ago, Skiba et al. (2002) reported that disciplinary moments began in the classroom between teachers and students. Knowing teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior can shed light into understanding how classroom disciplinary infractions are created. Understanding the phenomenon of classroom misbehavior also allows insight into school disciplinary inequities.

Future research should examine in more detail the situated nature of classroom misbehaviors and the effects of sociocultural influences on: a) teachers and students conceptualizations, b) interpretations, and c) negotiations of classroom disciplinary moments. Future studies on school discipline should investigate classroom disciplinary moments between teachers and students at an interactional level. Such a focus, will allow researchers to gain insight into teachers' and students' meaning making processes of misbehavior and understanding of classroom disciplinary moments.

Because research suggests that teacher-student relationships are a foundational aspect for reducing behavioral referrals (Hamre, Pianta, Downer, & Mashburn, 2007), and teachers' perceptions of students vary (Gregory & Thompson, 2010); there needs to be closer attention into examining the sociocultural context of classrooms. Teachers and students understandings of the sociocultural knowledge and considerations of cultural factors can improve social, behavioral, and academic learning opportunities (Boykin & Bailey, 2000; Neal et al., 2003). Next steps to continue work on school discipline inequities might be better understood through the contextualization of culture in classrooms.



Keeping the research question for this study in mind (i.e., How does one's conceptualizations of misbehavior account for the way classroom disciplinary moments are constructed, interpreted and negotiated between teachers and students?); it is necessary to move beyond deficit notions and deficit based thinking regarding Latino and African American male students. A small amount of attention was given in this study to the raced and gendered experiences of African American male and Latino students. This was not an omission or issue of neglect, but an act to analyze students and teachers conceptualizations of misbehavior. The study findings showed for whatever reason race and gender was attenuated for the participants in this study. This is not to suggest that race and gender do not matter or are not of significance; but simply an analysis of a single case of teachers' and students' conceptualizations involved in this study. Although not explicit in teachers' and students' thinking involved in study, the educational literature unmistakably provides clear evidence that African American students have raced and gendered experiences throughout all stages of their educational career (Howard, 2008; Jackson & Moore, 2008).

Mr. Abram's problematic socially constructed identity of Byron, demands deeper attention to the raced and gendered experiences of African American male and Latino students should occur. Given the permanence of race, the Black student-White teacher binary, and the existence of racial microaggressions; critical race theory as an analytic tool in education is a recommended lens for understanding school discipline inequities. As a framework, critical race theory assumes the permanence of racism, addresses the salience of microaggressions and views personal cultural knowledge as a strength (T.C. Howard, personal communication, April 18, 2014; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, Ceja, &

Yosso, 2000; Yosso, 2005). Because critical race theory draws on lived experiences, future research in the investigation of discipline inequities among African American male and Latino students should use such methods as family history, biographies, and counter narratives, wherein students (and teachers) can speak directly to any racial ramifications they thought pertinent.

Because critical race theory draws on lived experiences, future research in the investigation of discipline inequities among African American male and Latino students should include methods as family history, biographies, and counter narratives, wherein students (and teachers) can speak directly to any racial ramifications they thought pertinent. This would allow researchers to ask teachers and students how and to what extent race enters into the conversation and influences relational interactions in the classroom.

Researchers who study school discipline tend to use either a qualitative or quantitative approach toward understanding school discipline inequities. We know classroom disciplinary moments exist, but there needs to be a closer examination of disciplinary inequities that is beyond sanction patterns. Also, examinations of school discipline at the interactional level also allows for an investigation into the moment to moment occurrences of classroom disciplinary moments to determine the ‘how and why’ instead of the ‘whom, what, and how often.’ The probe needs to consider the quality of relational interactions that leads to classroom disciplinary moments. For those reasons studies that utilized a mixed methods approach would also allow for a deeper probe into the co-construction of classroom disciplinary moments.

Future research of classroom disciplinary moments should include explicit examples of race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, language, and other pertinent social psychological variables. In addition, improvements in video editing and the procedures for conducting video research in education are needed in future studies. Because I sought to capture teachers' and students' perspectives of their self and one another meant that to capture teacher and student interaction it had to happen in the same frame equally privileging teachers and students. This was impossible without the use of multiple cameras. For these reasons, and to reduce the identification of focal students, at times the choice of where to place the camera was complicated. Future research would include a video team and the synching of multiple video and audio outlets.

To break new ground into teachers' and students' conceptualizations of misbehavior, we need to examine models that could better explain the social performance that are absent of stigmatizing labels. Siebers (2008) suggests that one needs to think with flexibility about those things that constitute an identity or group. We need to rethink what is social deviance. As a society we need to rethink ways schools can become places of social, emotional, and academic learning and positive change for all students.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Although the present study provided insights into the perspectives of students regarding misbehavior, it had several limitations that included sample size and location of the study being a small charter school in the southwestern United States. In addition, the students included in this study were only male and teacher participants were administratively nominated. Administrative nominations of teacher participants can be seen as a deliberate effort to include some teachers while excluding others.

Another limitation is that the focus of my analysis took place on the moment-to-moment level of interactions, privileging classroom interactions over institutional influences. I also had different roles at the school changing from volunteer, to substitute teacher, to researcher. The varying roles could have led to some confusion for the students regarding my purpose for being at IDA.

### **Implications for Studying Classroom Disciplinary Moments**

The study findings suggest there is a need to understand misbehavior from a situated perspective. If teachers were to have a situated perspective of classroom misbehavior, it would allow for the confrontation of classroom tension between teachers and students rather than to only interpret certain behaviors as misbehavior, but instead as a form of transformational resistance (Soloranzo & Bernal, 2001). Teachers can lead this makeover by (a) becoming socioculturally conscientious; (b) affirming perspectives and experiences of African American and Latino; (c) seeing themselves as responsible for and capable of spearheading changes required to make school disciplinary practices equitable, fair and just; (d) understanding how students from diverse back grounds construct knowledge; (e) believing students are capable of promoting knowledge construction and engaging in positive relational interactions; and (f) designing instruction and engaging in communicative acts that builds on students' existing capital while stretching them beyond the familiar (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

These changes will enable teachers to transcend traditional understandings of disproportionate disciplinary representation that simplistically blame either students or teachers and develop future pathways leading to teachers and students' shared classroom success (Klingner et al., 2005). In addition, soliciting the opinions of students and

engaging them in the new creation of school spaces that involves their insight is a critical component in reducing the representation of African American males and Latino students in school discipline. In this way, teachers can serve as a starting point for easing into a new conversation about the perception of student misbehavior among all learners, especially, African American male and Latino learners.

Teacher preparation should include training that prepares new and experienced teachers to become aware of their own contribution to classroom misbehavior. Training needs to include teachers becoming aware that many classroom disciplinary moments are birthed out of teacher and students interactions. The interpretations of these interactions play out in racial and ethnic, gender and sex, and the like. Teachers must be aware they have a role in the co-construction of classroom disciplinary moments. Training must also include teaching learning how their presence and behavior contributes to the production of behavior in the lives of the children they are working with in classrooms. In a nutshell, there are implications for teachers having an increased awareness, training in understand self-bias and perceptions, and self-monitoring of one's own behavior and thinking.

Other implications include programs that teach how to manage student behaviors that cause discomfort or interpret as provoking. I would recommend preparation in the area of specific unlearning oppression models that strengthen alliances and work toward unarming racism and bias (Albrecht & Brewer, 1990; Anzaldúa, 1983; Kumashiro, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2010) and anti-oppressive education learning models (Ayers, et. al, 2010; Kumashiro, 2009; Kumashiro & Ngo, 2007). With respect to understanding behaviors that appear aberrant, I would encourage programs and professional development trainings to include exposure to social psychological models (e.g. cool pose, stereotype threat,

microaggression, racial battle fatigue, transformational resistance) used to explain education performance. Exposure to understanding the differences in self-expression could help to reduce teacher bias toward students.

Dispelling the myth that members of the same minority group represent a monolithic population, by showing that Mr. Abraham and Ms. Esther had varying conceptualizations of misbehavior also has implications for how classroom misbehavior and classroom disciplinary moments are co-constructed within and across racial groups. Even though I was not examining race, it played a pertinent role in teacher to student interactions and conceptualizations of misbehavior. Given that the social construction of race particularly for African American males and Latino students has been traditionally stigmatizing, implications for teacher preparation and professional development should include asking practitioners how and to what extent does race enter into the conversation.

In the findings, Mr. Abraham at times embodied some of the negative baggage that surrounds certain students of color. This suggests clear racial implications. Questions to ask teachers should center on their racial notions of African American male and Latino students. Doing so would provide added insight into teachers' conceptualizations of race and an opportunity to deconstruct potentially internalized notions of oppression.

Finally Bryk and Gomez (2008) suggest that larger societal problems play out over time and through people's interactions with one another. Penuel, Fishman, and Cheng's (2011) work on design-based implementation research involves teachers examining records of their practice over time as an iterative form of professional development to improve practice. Similar approaches that examine student teacher interactions over time as an iterative form of their own development would also benefit

teachers in learning how they come to understand student misbehaviors and deal with classroom disciplinary moments.

## References

- Abrahams, R. (1962). Playing the dozens. *Journal of American Folklore*, 75, 209-220.
- Adediwura, A.A. & Tayo, B. (2007). Perception of Teachers' knowledge, attitudes and teaching skills as predictor of academic performance in Nigerian Secondary Schools *Educational Research and Review*, 2, 165-171.
- Albrecht, L. D., & Brewer, R. M. (1990). *Bridges of power: Women's multicultural alliances*. New Society Publishers.
- Allen, B. A., & Boykin, A. W. (1992). African-American children and the educational process: Alleviating cultural discontinuity through prescriptive pedagogy. *School Psychology Review*, 21, 586-596.
- Anzaldúa, G., & Moraga, C. (1983). *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color*. New York: Kitchen Table Press.
- Anyon, J. (2005). *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education, and a new social movement*. New York: Routledge.
- Arcia, E. (2007a). Variability in schools' suspension rates of Black students. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 76, 597-608.
- Arcia, E. (2007). A comparison of elementary/k-8 and middle schools' suspension rates. *Urban Education*, 42, 456-469.
- Atkins, M. S., McKay, M. M., Frazier, S. L., Jakobsons, L. J., Arvanitis, P., Cunningham, T., et al. (2002). Suspensions and detentions in an urban, low-income school: Punishment or reward? *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 30, 361-371.
- Artiles, A. J. (1998). The dilemma of difference: Enriching the disproportionality discourse with theory and context. *The Journal of Special Education*, 32, 32-36.
- Artiles, A. J. (2003). Special education's changing identity: Paradoxes and dilemmas in views of culture and space. *Harvard Educational Review*, 73, 164-202.
- Artiles, A. J., & Kozleski, E. B. (2007). Beyond convictions: Interrogating culture, history, and power in inclusive education. *Language Arts*, 84, 357.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Artiles, A. J. (2011). Toward an interdisciplinary understanding of educational equity and difference: The case of the racialization of ability. *Educational Researcher*, 40, 431-445.



- Artiles, A. J. (in press). Beyond responsiveness to identity badges: Future research on culture in disability and implications for RTI. *Educational Review*.
- Artiles, A. J., Barreto, R., Peña, L., & McClafferty, K. (1998). Pathways to teacher learning in multicultural contexts: A longitudinal case study of two novice bilingual teachers in urban schools. *Remedial and Special Education, 19*, 70-90.
- Artiles, A. J., Rueda, R., Salazar, J. J., & Higareda, I. (2005). Within-group diversity in minority disproportionate representation: English language learners in urban school districts. *Exceptional Children, 71*, 283-300.
- Artiles, A. J., Trent, S. C., & Palmer, J. (2004). Culturally diverse students in special education: Legacies and prospects. In J. A. Banks & C. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; pp. 716-735). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Ayers, W., Kumashiro, K.K., Quinn, T., Stovall, D., Meiners, E. (2010). *Teaching Toward democracy: Educators as agents of change*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Arzubiaga, A. E., Artiles, A. J., King, K. A., & Harris-Murri, N. (2008). Beyond research on cultural minorities: Challenges and implications of research as situated cultural practice. *Exceptional Children, 74*, 309-327.
- Bandura, A. (2000). Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 9*, 75-78.
- Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. *Review of Research in Education, 19*, 3-49.
- Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (Eds.). (2009). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Baker, P. (2005). The impact of cultural biases on African American students' education. *Education and Urban Society, 37*, 243-256.
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
- Barth, F. (2000). Boundaries and connections. In A. P. Cohen (Ed.), *Signifying identities: Anthropological perspectives on boundaries and contested values* (pp.17-36). London: Routledge.
- Batthey, D. (2012). "Good" mathematics teaching for students of color and those in poverty: The importance of relational interactions within instruction. *Educational Studies in Mathematics, 1*, 1-20.

- Bathey, D. (2013). "Good" mathematics teaching for students of color and those in poverty: the importance of relational interactions within instruction. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 82, 125-144.
- Becker, H. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. New York: Free Press.
- Becker, H. (1964). *The other side: Perspectives on deviance*. New York: Free Press.
- Beers, P., Boshuizen, H., Kirschner, P. A., Gijsselaers, W., & Westendorp, J. (2008). Cognitive load measurements and stimulated recall interviews for studying the effects of information and communications technology. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 56, 309-328.
- Berger, R. R. (2002). Expansion of police power in public schools and the vanishing rights of students. *Social Justice*, 29, 119-130.
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bem, D. J. (1970). *Beliefs, attitudes, and human affairs*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Blanchett, W. (2006). Disproportionate representation of African American students in special education: Acknowledging the role of White privilege and racism. *Educational Researcher*, 35, 24-28.
- Bloom, B.S. (1953). Thought process in lectures and discussions. *The Journal of General Education*, 7, 160-169.
- Blumer, H. (1969) *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bondy, E., Ross, D. D., Galligan, C., & Hambacher, E. (2007). Creating environments of success and resilience culturally responsive classroom management and more. *Urban Education*, 42, 326-348.
- Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., O'Brennan, L. M., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Multilevel exploration of factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black students in office disciplinary referrals. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102, 508-520.
- Brownstein, R. (2010). Pushed out. *The Education Digest*, 75, 23-27.
- Bryk, A. S., & Gomez, L. M. (2008). Ruminations on reinventing an R&D capacity for educational improvement. In F. M. Hess (Ed.), *The future of educational entrepreneurship: Possibilities of school reform* (pp. 181-206). Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

- Cantor, D., Crosse, S., Hagen, C. A., Mason, M. J., Siler, A. J., & Von Glatz, A. (2002). *A closer look at drug and violence prevention efforts in American schools: Report on the study on school violence and prevention*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/studies-school-violence/closer-look.pdf>
- Cameron, M. (2006.) Managing school discipline and implications for school social workers: A review of literature. *National Association of Social Workers*, 28, 219-228.
- Carmichael, D., Whitten, G., & Voloudakis, M. (2005). *Study of minority over-representation in the Texas juvenile justice system final report October 2005*. College Station, TX: The Public Policy Research Institute.
- Cerecer, P. D. Q., Ek, L. D., Alanis, I., & Murakami-Ramalho, E. (2011). Transformative resistance as agency: Chicanas/Latinas (re)creating academic spaces. *Journal of the Professoriate*, 5, 70-98.
- Charles, C. M., Senter, G., & Barr, K.M. (1999). *Building classroom discipline*. New York: Longman.
- Charon, J. M. (2007). *Symbolic interactionism: An introduction, an interpretation, integration*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Children's Defense Fund. (1975). *School suspensions: Are they helping children?* Cambridge, MA: Washington Research Project.
- Christle, C. A., Nelson, C. M., & Jolivette, K. (2004). School characteristics related to the use of suspension. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 27, 509-526.
- Cole, M. (1985). *The zone of proximal development: Where culture and cognition create each other*.
- Cole, M. (1990). Cognitive development and formal schooling: The evidence from cross-cultural research. *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*, 89-110.
- Cole, M. (1997). Cultural mechanisms of cognitive development. In E. Amsel, & K. Rinninger (Eds.), *Change and development: Issues of theory, method, and application* (pp. 245-263). Psychology Press.
- Cole, M. (2003). *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cole, J., & Boykin, W. (2008). Examining culturally structured learning environments with different types of music-linked movement opportunity. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 34, 331-335.

- Coleman, M. C., & Gilliam, J. E. (1983). Disturbing behaviors in the classroom: survey of teacher attitudes. *The Journal of Special Education*, 2, 121-129.
- Conner, I. I., & Timothy, W. (2013). *The cultural discontinuity hypothesis: An Appalachian American perspective in Eastern Kentucky*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky.
- Cooper, H. (1998). *Synthesizing research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 139-167.
- Day-Vines, N. L., & Terriquez, V. (2008). A strengths-based approach to promoting prosocial behavior among African American and Latino Students. *Professional School Counseling*, 12, 170-175.
- Demaret, J., & Van Houtte, M. (2012). Teachers' attitudes and students' opposition. School misconduct as a reaction to teachers' diminished effort and affect. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28, 860-869.
- Denzin, M. (1989). *Interpretive interactionism*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Dinkes, R., Kemp, J., & Baum, K. (2009). Indicators of school crime and safety: 2009 (NCES 2010-012/NCJ 228478). *National Center for Educational Statistics*.
- Donovan, S., & Cross, C. (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press
- Dole, J. A., & Sinatra, G. M. (1998). Reconceptualizing change in the cognitive construction of knowledge. *Educational Psychologist*, 33, 109-128.
- Dunbar, C., & Villarruel, F.A. (2004). What a difference the community makes: Zero tolerance policy interpretation and implementation. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 37, 351-359.
- Duncan, G. A. (2000). Urban pedagogies and the ceiling of adolescents of color. *Social Justice*, 27, 29-42.
- Dupper, D. R. (1994). Reducing out-of-school suspensions: A survey of attitudes and barriers. *Social Work in Education*, 16, 115-123.
- Dupper, D. R., Theriot, M. T., & Craun, S. W. (2009). Reducing out-of-school suspensions: Practice guidelines for school social workers. *Children & Schools*, 31, 6-14.

- Duranti, A., & Goodwin, C. (1992). *Rethinking context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eagly, A., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Eamon, M. K. , & Altshuler, S. J. (2004). Can we predict disruptive school behavior? *Children & Schools*, 26, 23-37.
- Eitle, T. M., & Eitle, D. J. (2004). Inequality, segregation, and the overrepresentation of African Americans in school suspensions. *Sociological Perspectives*, 47, 269-287.
- Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.
- Erickson, F. (1979). Talking down: Some cultural sources of miscommunication in interracial interviews. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), *Nonverbal communication: Applications and cultural implications* (pp. 99-126). New York: Academic Press.
- Erickson, F. (1984). Linguistics: Conversational organization. Interaction between speakers and hearers. *Charles Goodwin. American Anthropologist*, 86, 748-751.
- Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative methods in research on teaching. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; pp. 119-161). New York: MacMillan.
- Erickson, F. (1996) Ethnographic microanalysis. In S. McKay & N. Hornberger (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language teaching* (pp. 283-306). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Erickson, F., & Shultz, J. (1982). *The counselor as gatekeeper: Social interactions in interviews*. New York: Academic Press.
- Erickson, T. (1963). Notes on the sociology of deviance. In H. Becker (Ed.), *The other side: Perspectives on deviance* (pp. 78-82). New York: The Free Press.
- Erikson, T. (2004). *Wayward puritans: A study in the sociology of deviance*. Revised Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline. *Urban Education*, 42, 536-559.
- Ferguson, A. A. (2001). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of black masculinity*. University of Michigan Press.
- Fromm, E. (1947). *Man for himself: An inquiry into the psychology of ethics*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Premier.

- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*, 106-116.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Giroux, H. (2003). Racial injustice and disposable youth in the age of zero tolerance. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 16*, 553-565.
- Glaser, B. (1967). *Basics of grounded theory analysis*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Piscataway, NJ: Aldine Transaction.
- Gobo, G. (2008). *Doing ethnography*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publication.
- Goodwin, C., & Goodwin, M. H. (2004). Participation. In A. Duranti (Ed.), *A companion to linguistic anthropology* (pp. 222-244). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Goodwin, C., & Heritage, J. (1990). Conversation analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 19*, 283-307.
- Gregory, A., Allen, J. P., Mikami, A. Y., Hafen, C. A., & Pianta, R. C. (2014). Effects of a professional development program on behavioral engagement of students in middle and high school. *Psychology in the Schools, 51*, 143-163.
- Gregory, A., & Mosely, P. (2004). The discipline gap: Teachers' view on the over-Representation of African American Students in the discipline System. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 37*, 18-30.
- Gregory, A., Skiba, R., & Noguera, P. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher, 39*, 59-68.
- Gregory, A., & Weinstein, A. (2008). The discipline gap and African Americans: Defiance or cooperation in the high school classroom. *Journal of School Psychology, 45*, 455-475.
- Hall, A. (2007). Vygotsky goes online: Learning design from a socio-cultural perspective. *Learning and Socio-cultural Theory: Exploring Modern Vygotskian Perspectives International Workshop 2007, 1*. Available at: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/llrg/vol1/iss1/6>
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1983). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Hinojosa, M. S. (2008). Black-White differences in school suspension: Effect on student beliefs about teachers. *Sociological Spectrum, 28*, 175-193.

- Hirschfield, P. (2008). The declining significance of delinquent labels in disadvantaged urban communities. *Sociological Forum*, 23, 575-601.
- Howard, T.C. (2001). Telling their side of the story: African American students' perception of culturally relevant teaching. *The Urban Review*, 33, 131-149.
- Howard, T. C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into practice*, 42, 195-202.
- Howard, T.C. (2008). Who really cares? The disenfranchisement of African American males in preK-12 schools: A critical race theory perspective. *Teachers College Record*, 110, 954-985.
- Howard, T. C. (2010). *Why race and culture matter in schools: Closing the achievement gap in America's classrooms*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Howard, T.C. (2014). *Black male(d): Peril and promise in the education of African American males*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Intelligently Designed Handbook*. (2010). Southwest, United States.
- John-Steiner, V., & Mahn, H. (1996). Sociocultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist*, 31, 191-206.
- Johnson, T., Boyden, J. E. & Pittz, W. J. (2001) *Racial profiling and punishment in U.S. public schools. (Report No. EA 031513)*. Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED461921)
- Jones, C., Caravaca, L., Cizek, S., Horner, R. H., & Vincent, C. G. (2006). Culturally responsive schoolwide positive behavior support: A case study in one school with a high proportion of Native American Students. *Multiple Voices*, 9, 108-119.
- Kelly, S. (2010). A crisis in authority in predominantly Black schools? *Teachers College Record*, 112, 1247-1274.
- Klingner, J., Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E., Harry, B., Zion, S., Tate, W., et al. (2005). Addressing the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education through culturally responsive educational systems. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 13. Available at <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n38/>
- Kozleski, E., Artiles, A., & Waitoller, F. (2013). Equity in inclusive education: A cultural historical comparative perspective. *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education: Two Volume Set*, 231-250.
- Kupchik, A., & Ellis, N. (2008). School discipline and security: Fair for all students? *Youth and Society*, 39, 549-574.

- Kumashiro, K. K. (2000). Toward a theory of anti-oppressive education. *Review of Educational Research, 70*, 25-53.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (2001). "Posts" perspectives on anti-oppressive education in social studies: English, mathematics, and science classrooms. *Educational Researcher, 30*, 3-12.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (2002). Against repetition: Addressing resistance to anti-oppressive change in the practices of learning, teaching, supervising, and researching. *Harvard Educational Review, 72*, 67-93.
- Kumashiro, K.K. (2009). *Against common sense: Teaching and learning toward social justice*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (2010). Seeing the bigger picture: Troubling movements to end teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*, 56-65.
- Kumashiro, K. K., & Ngo, B. (Eds.). (2007). *Six lenses for anti-oppressive education: Partial stories, improbable conversations* (Vol. 315). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf, (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. (pp. 1-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: Aka the remix. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*, 74-84.
- Laws, K., & McLeod, R. (2004). Case study and grounded theory: Sharing some alternative qualitative research methodologies with systems professionals. In *Proceedings of the 22nd International Conference of the Systems Dynamics Society*.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research* (2nd ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Lee, C. D. (2007). *Culture, literacy, and learning*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lee, C. D. (2003). Why we need to rethink race and ethnicity in educational research. *Educational Researcher, 32*, 3-5.
- Lewis, C., Butler, B., Bonner III, F., & Joubert, M. (2010). African American male discipline patterns and school district responses resulting impact on academic achievement: Implications for urban educators and policy makers. *Journal of African American Males in Education, 1*, 7-25.
- Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic enquiry*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.



- Lorde, A. (2012). Complex identities: Future developments in multicultural research. *Researcher Race: Social Constructions in the Research Process*, 71-77.
- Lorde, A. (2013) Intersectionalities. In M. A. Gibson, D. T. Meem, & J. Alexander (2013). *Finding out: An introduction to LGBT studies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 201-230.
- Losen, D. J. (2011). *Good discipline: Legislation for education reform*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved December 11, 2011 from <http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/discipline-policies-legislation>
- Losen, D. J., & Martinez, T. E. (2013). Out of school and off track: The overuse of suspensions in American middle and high schools. *Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles*.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: methodology and design*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Marzano, R. J., Marzano, J. S., & Pickering, D. J. (2003). *Classroom management that works*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50, 370.
- Maslow, A. (1962). *Toward a psychology of being*. New York: Van Nostrand.
- Mathur, S. R., & Rutherford, R. B. (1991). Peer-mediated interventions promoting social skills of children and youth with behavioral disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 14, p. 227-242.
- Mathur, S. R. (2007). Understanding emotional and behavioral disorders: Are we paying the cost of borderline ethics? *Education and Treatment of Children*, 30, 11-26.
- McDermott, R. (1976). *Kids make sense: An ethnographic account of the interactional management of success and failure in one first grade classroom*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University.
- McDermott, R. (1977). Social relations as contexts for learning in school. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47, 198-213.
- McDermott, R. P., & Gospodinoff, K. (1979). Social contexts for ethnic borders and school failure. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), *Nonverbal behavior: Applications and cultural implications* (pp. 175-196). New York: Academic Press.
- McDermott, R., & Gospodinoff, K. (1981). Social contexts for ethnic borders and school failure. In H. Trueba, G. Guthrie, & K. Au (Eds.), *Culture and the bilingual classroom* (pp. 212-230). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

- Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Meehan, B., Hugesh, J., & Cavell, T. (2003). Teacher-student relationships as compensatory resources for aggressive children. *Child Development, 74*, 1145-1157.
- Mehan, H. (1979). *Learning lessons*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Meichenbaum, D. (1977). *Cognitive-behavior modification: An integrative approach*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Mendez, L. (2003). Predictors of suspension and negative school outcomes: A longitudinal investigation. *New Directions for Youth Development, 99*, 17-33.
- Mendez, L., & Knoff, H. (2003). Who gets suspended from school and why: A demographic analysis of schools and disciplinary infractions in a large school district. *Education and Treatment of Children, 26*, 30-51.
- Mendez, L., Knoff, H., & Ferron, J. M. (2002). School demographic variables and out-of-school suspension rates: A quantitative and qualitative analysis of a large, ethnically diverse school district Source. *Psychology in the Schools, 39*, 259-277.
- Mercer, N., & Howe, C. (2012). Explaining the dialogic processes of teaching and learning: The value and potential of sociocultural theory. *Learning, Culture, and Social Interaction, 1*, 12-21.
- Mercer, N., Littleton, K., & Wegerif, R. (2009). Methods for studying the process of interactions and collaborative activity in computer based educational activities. In K.Kumpulainen, C. Hmelo-Silver, & M. Cesar (Eds.), *Investigating classroom interaction* (pp. 27-24). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study application in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Data management and analysis. In N. K. Denzin & Lincoln Y. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 428-444). London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Milner, R. (2007). African American males in urban schools: No excuses-teach and empower. *Theory Into Practice, 46*, 239-246.
- Monroe, C. R., (2005). Why are "bad boys" always Black? Causes of disproportionality in school discipline and recommendations for change, *The Clearing House, 79*, 45-50.
- Moore, J., Henfield, M., & Owens, D. (2008). African American males in Special Education. *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*, 907-927.

- Monroe, C. R. (2006). Misbehavior or misinterpretation? Closing the discipline gap through cultural synchronization. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 42, 161-165.
- Monroe, C. R., & Obidah, J. E. (2004). The influence of cultural synchronization on a teacher's perceptions of disruption a case study of an African American middle-school classroom. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55, 256-268.
- Morine, C., & Vallance, E. (1975). *Special study B: A study of teacher and pupil perceptions of classroom interaction* (Tech. Rep. No. 75-11-6). San Francisco, CA: Far West Laboratory.
- Morris, E. W. (2005). "Tuck in that shirt!" Race, class, gender, and discipline in an urban school. *Sociological Perspectives*, 48, 25-48.
- Morrison, G. M., Redding, M., Fisher, E., & Peterson, R. (2006). Assessing school discipline. In S. R. Jimerson & M. J. Furlong (Eds.), *Handbook of school violence and school safety: From research to practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Neal, L. I., McCray, A. D., Webb-Johnson, G., & Bridgest, S. T. (2003). The effects of African American movement styles on teachers' perceptions and reactions. *Journal of Special Education*, 37, 49-57.
- Newcomb, M., Abbott, R., Catalano, R., Hawkins, D., Battin-Pearson, S., & Hill, K. (2002). Mediation and deviance theories of late high school failure: Process roles of structural strains, academic competence, and general versus specific problem behavior. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 49, 172-186.
- Nichols, J. D. (2004). An exploration of discipline and suspension data. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 73, 408-423.
- Nieto, S. (1999). *The light in their eyes*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Nieto, S. (2004). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural Education*. New York: Longman Publishing Group.
- Noguera, P. (2003). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education*, 38, 431-459.
- Ogbu, J. U. (1982). Cultural discontinuities and schooling. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 13, 290-307.

- Osher, D., Sprague, J., Weissberg, R. P., Axelrod, J., Keenan, S., Kendziora, K., et al. (2007). A comprehensive approach to promoting social, emotional, and academic growth in contemporary schools. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology* (Vol. 5, 5th ed., pp. 1263–1278). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Payne, A. W., & Welch, K. (2010). Modeling the effects of racial threat on punitive and restorative school discipline practices, *Criminology*, 48, 1019-1062.
- Penuel, W. R., Fishman, B. J., & Cheng, B. (2011). *Developing the area of design-based implementation research*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.
- Peräkylä, A., Ruusuvuori, J., & Vehviläinen, S. (2005). Introduction: Professional theories and institutional interaction. *Communication & medicine*, 2, 105-109.
- Philips, S. (1972). Participant structures and communicative competence: Warm springs children in community and classroom. In C. B. Cazden, V. T. John, and D. Hymes (Eds.), *Functions of language in the classroom* (pp. 370-394). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Piaget, J. (1932). *The moral judgment of the child*. London: Routledge.
- Piaget, J. (1967). Development and learning. In E. Victor, & M. S. Lerner (Eds.), *Readings in science education for the elementary school*. New York: Macmillan.
- Pintrich, P. R., Marx, R. W., & Boyle, R. A. (1993). Beyond cold conceptual change: The role of motivational beliefs and classroom contextual factors in the process of conceptual change. *Review of Educational Research*, 63, 167-199.
- Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Kena, G., Kewal Ramani, A., Kemp, J., et al. (2009). *The Condition of Education 2009* (NCES 2009-081). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S.
- Plaut, S. (2006). "I just don't get it": Teachers' and students' conceptions of confusion and implications for teaching and learning in the high school English classroom. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 36, 391-421.
- Prochaska, J. O., Redding, C., & Evers, K. (2013). Transtheoretical model of behavior change. In K. Glanz, B. K. Rimer, & K. Viswanath (Eds.), *Health behavior and health education theory, research, and practice* (p. 97-148). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Psycharis, S., Chalatzoglidis, G., & Kalogiannakis, M. (2013). Moodle as a learning environment in promoting conceptual understanding for secondary school students. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science & Technology Education*, 9, 11-21.

- Prus, R. C. (1996). *Symbolic interaction and ethnographic research: Intersubjectivity and the study of human lived experience*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Reagle, C. (2006). Creating effective schools where all students can learn. *Rural Educator*, 27, 24-33.
- Richards, H., Brown, A., & Forde. (2007). Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 39, 64-68.
- Richart, D., Brooks, K., & Soler, M. (2003) *Unintended consequences: The impact of "zero tolerance" and other exclusionary policies on Kentucky students*. Washington, DC: Building Blocks for Youth; Youth Law Center.
- Ridder, (2007). Microanalysis on selected video clips with focus on communicative response in music therapy. In T. Wosch & T. Wigram (Eds.), *Microanalysis in music therapy*, (pp. 54-66). Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Rocque, M. (2010). Office discipline and student behavior: Does race matter? *American Journal of Education*, 116, 557-581.
- Rogers, C. (1951). *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications, and theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rubovits, C., & Maehr, L. (1971). Pygmalion analyzed: Toward an explanation of the Rosenthal-Jacobson findings. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 19, 197-203.
- Russell, M. M. (1991). Entering great America: Reflections on race and the convergence of progressive legal theory and practice. *Hastings Law Journal*, 43, 749-767.
- Ruusuvuori, J. (2012) Emotion, affect, and conversation. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Sampson, R., & Lauristen, J. (1994). Violent victimization and offending: Individual, situational, and community-level risk factors. In A. J. Reiss, Jr., & J. Roth (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing violence: Social influences* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; pp. 1-114). Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Saunders, J., Davis, L., Williams, T., & Williams, J. H. (2004). Gender differences in self-perceptions and academic outcomes: A study of African American high school students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 33, 81-90.
- Schnell, J. & Wagner, R. (1983). *The symbolic interactionist use of participant observation: A study of conflict resolution communication in countercultural setting*. (ED 240632).

- Self, E., & Milner, H. (2012). Cultural discontinuities and education. In J. Banks (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of diversity in education*. (pp. 513-517). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Sen, R. (2006). *A positive future for Black boys: Building the movement*. Cambridge, MA: The Schott Foundation for Public Education.
- Seidman, A. (2005). The learning killer: Disruptive student behavior in the classroom. *Reading Improvement, 42*, 40-46.
- Sime, D. (2006). What do learners make of teachers' gestures in the language classroom? *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 44*, 211-230.
- Singleman, P. (1972). Exchange as symbolic interaction: Convergences between two theoretical perspectives. *American Sociological Review, 37*, 414-424.
- Skiba, R.J. (2002). Special education and school discipline: A precarious balance. *Behavioral Disorders, 27*, 81-97.
- Skiba, R. J. (2008). Are zero tolerance policies effective in the schools? An evidentiary review and recommendations. *American Psychologist, 63*, 852-862.
- 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*.
- Skiba, R. J., & Leone, P. E. (2001). Zero tolerance and school security measures: A failed experiment. In T. Johnson, J. E. Boyden, & W. J. Pittz (Eds.), *Racial profiling and punishment in U. S. public schools: How zero tolerance policies and high stakes testing subvert academic excellence and racial equity* (pp. 34-38). Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center.
- Skiba, R. J., Michael, R., Nardo, A., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review, 34*, 317-342.
- Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. L. (2000). School discipline at a crossroads: From zero tolerance to early response. *Exceptional Children, 66*, 335-346.
- Skiba, R. J., Peterson, R. L., & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension: Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education & Treatment of Children, 20*, 295-316.
- Slough, L. (2001). *Using stimulated recall in classroom observation and professional development*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

- Solórzano, D. (1998). Critical race theory, racial and gender microaggressions, and the experiences of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11, 121-136.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, 36, 308-342.
- Solórzano, D.G, & Bernal, D. (2001). Critical race theory, transformational resistance, and social justice: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, 36, 308-342.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 8, 23-44.
- Sprague, J., & Horner, R. (2006). School wide positive behavioral supports. In S. Jimerson & M. Furlong (Eds.) *The handbook of school violence and school safety: From research to practice* (pp. 413-428). New York: Routledge.
- Sprague, J., & Walker, H. (2000). Early identification and intervention for youth with antisocial and violent behavior. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 367-379.
- Stearns, E., & Glennie, E. J. (2006). When and why dropouts leave high school. *Youth & Society*, 38, 29-57.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Supaporn, S., Dodds, P., & Griffin, L. (2003). An ecological analysis of middle school misbehavior through student and teacher perspectives. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 22, 328-349.
- Swadener, E., & O'Brien, L. (2009). Social responsibility and teaching young children: An education for living in ethical and caring ways. In J.Andrzjewski, M. Baltodano, & L. Symcox Routledge (Eds.), *Social Justice, Peace, Environmental Education* (pp. 121-135). New York: Routledge.
- The Civil Rights Project/Advancement Project. (2000). Opportunities suspended: The devastating consequences of zero tolerance and school discipline. *Proceedings of a National Summit on Zero Tolerance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Civil Rights Project.
- Thornton, C. H., & Trent, W. (1988). School desegregation and suspension in East Baton Rouge Parish: A preliminary report. *Journal of Negro Education*, 57, 482-501.

- Toldson, I. A. (2008). *Breaking barriers: Plotting the path to academic success for school-age African-American males*. Washington, DC: Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.
- Toldson, I. A. (2011). *Breaking barriers 2: Plotting the path away from juvenile detention ad toward academic success for school-age African American males*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.
- Townsend, B. L. (2000). The disproportionate discipline of African American learners: Reducing school suspensions and expulsions. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 381-391.
- Valencia, R. (1991). The plight of Chicano students: An overview of schooling conditions and outcomes. In R. Valencia (Ed.), *Chicano school failure and success: Past, present, and future* (pp. 3-41). New York: Routledge.
- Valencia, R. (2010). *Chicano school failure and success: Past, present, and future* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Vavrus, F., & Cole, K. (2002). I didn't do nothin': The discursive construction of school suspension. *The Urban Review*, 34, 87-111.
- Villegas, A., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53, 20-32.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Interaction between learning and development (M. Lopez-Morillas, Trans.). In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.), *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (pp. 79-91). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1981). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (pp.144-188). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Wald, J., & Losen, D. (2003). Defining and redirecting a school-to-prison pipeline. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 99, 9-15.
- Wallace, J., Goodkind, S., Wallace, C., & Bachman, J. (2008). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in school discipline among U.S. high school students: 1991-2005. *The Negro Educational Review*, 59, 47-62.
- Watts, I., & Everelles, N. (2004). These deadly times: Reconceptualizing school violence by using critical theory and disability studies. *American Educational Research Journal*, 41, 271-299.



- Welch, K. & Payne, A.A. (2010). Racial threat and punitive school discipline. *Social Problems*, 57, 25-48.
- Wertsch, J. (1990). The voice of rationality in a sociocultural approach to mind. *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*, 111-126.
- Wlodkowski, R. J., & Ginsberg, M. B. (1995). A framework for culturally responsive teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 53, 17-21.
- Wu, S. C., Pink, W. T., Crain, R. L., & Moles, O. (1982). Student suspension: A critical reappraisal. *The Urban Review*, 14, 245-303.
- Yogan, L. (2000). School tracking and student violence. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 567, 108-122.
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8, 69-91.
- Yosso, T. J., & Garcia, D. G. (2007). "This is no slum!" A critical race theory analysis of community cultural wealth in culture clash's Chavez Ravine. *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, 32, 145-179.
- Zhang, D., & Katsiyannis, A. (2002). Minority representation in special education: A persistent challenge. *Remedial and Special Education*, 23, 180-187.

APPENDIX A

COMPLETE LIST OF THE ARTICLES INCLUDED IN LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Quantitative Methodical Studies by Author and Year**

Arcia, E. (2007a)  
Arcia, E. (2007b)  
Atkins, McKay, Frazier, Jakobsons, Arvanitis, Cunningham, et al. (2002)  
Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, and Leaf (2010)  
Eamon and Altshuler (2004)  
Eitle and Eitle (2004)  
Gregory and Thompson (2010)  
Gregory and Weinstein (2008)  
Hinojosa (2008)  
Krezmien, Leone, and Achilles (2006)  
Kupchik, A. and Ellis (2008)  
Lewis, Butler, Bonner III, and Joubert (2010)  
Mendez, and Knoff (2003)  
Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, and Bridgest (2003)  
Nichols (2004)  
Payne and Welch (2010)  
Rocque (2010)  
Skiba, Michael, Nardo, and Peterson (2002)  
Thomas et al. (2009)  
Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, and Bachman (2008)  
Welch and Payne (2010)

### **Qualitative Methodical Studies by Author and Year**

Dunbar and Villarruel (2004)  
Gregory and Mosely (2004)  
Morris (2005)  
Vavrus and Cole (2002)

### **Mixed Methodological Studies by Author and Year**

Mendez, Knoff, and Ferron (2002)

APPENDIX B

COMPLETE LIST OF JOURNALS BY TYPE

**Sociological Journals**

*Sociological Spectrum* – 2008

*Social Problems* – 2010

*Sociological Perspectives* – 2004

*Sociological Perspectives* – 2005

*Youth & Society* – 2008

**Education of Black/African American Journals**

*Journal of Negro Education* – 2004

*Journal of Negro Education* – 2007

*Negro Educational Review* – 2008

*Journal of African American Males in Education* – 2010

**General Education Journals**

*Peabody Journal of Education* – 2002

*American Journal of Education* – 2010

*Equity and Excellence in Education* – 2004

**Special Education Journals**

*Education & Treatment of Children* – 2003

*Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders* – 2006

*Journal of Special Education* – 2003

**Other**

*Criminology* – 2010

*Children & Schools* – 2004

**Urban Journals**

*Urban Review* – 2002

*Urban Review* – 2002

*Urban Education* – 2007

**Psychology Journals**

*Journal of School Psychology* 2008

*Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* – 2002

*Journal of Community Psychology* – 2010

*Psychology in the Schools* – 2002

*Psychology in the Schools* – 2009

*Journal of Educational Psychology* – 2010

APPENDIX C

COMPLETE LIST OF ARTICLES CATEGORIZED BY THEMATIC FOCI

**Perceptions:**

**Impression of Discipline and Others**

Dunbar and Villarruel (2002)	<i>Peabody Journal of Education</i>
Gregory and Mosely (2004)	<i>Equity and Excellence in Education</i>
Gregory and Weinstein (2008)	<i>Journal of School Psychology</i>
Gregory and Thompson (2010)	<i>Journal of Community Psychology</i>
Hinojosa (2008)	<i>Sociological Spectrum</i>
Kupchik and Ellis (2008)	<i>Youth &amp; Society</i>
Neal et al. (2004)	<i>Journal of Special Education</i>
Morris (2005)	<i>Sociological Perspectives</i>
Thomas et al. (2009)	<i>Psychology in the Schools</i>
Vavrus and Cole (2002)	<i>Urban Review</i>

**Profiles:**

**School Demographics**

Eitle and Eitle (2004)	<i>Sociological Perspectives</i>
Mendez, Knoff and Ferron (2002)	<i>Psychology in the Schools</i>
Payne and Welch (2010)	<i>Criminology</i>

**Student Demographics**

Bradshaw et al. (2010)	<i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>
Eamon and Altshuler (2004)	<i>Children &amp; Schools</i>
Welch and Payne (2010)	<i>Social Problems</i>
Skiba et al. (2002)	<i>Urban Review</i>
Lewis et al. (2010)	<i>Journal of African American Males in Education</i>

**School Disciplinary Sanction Patterns:**

**Office Referrals, Suspensions, and Expulsions**

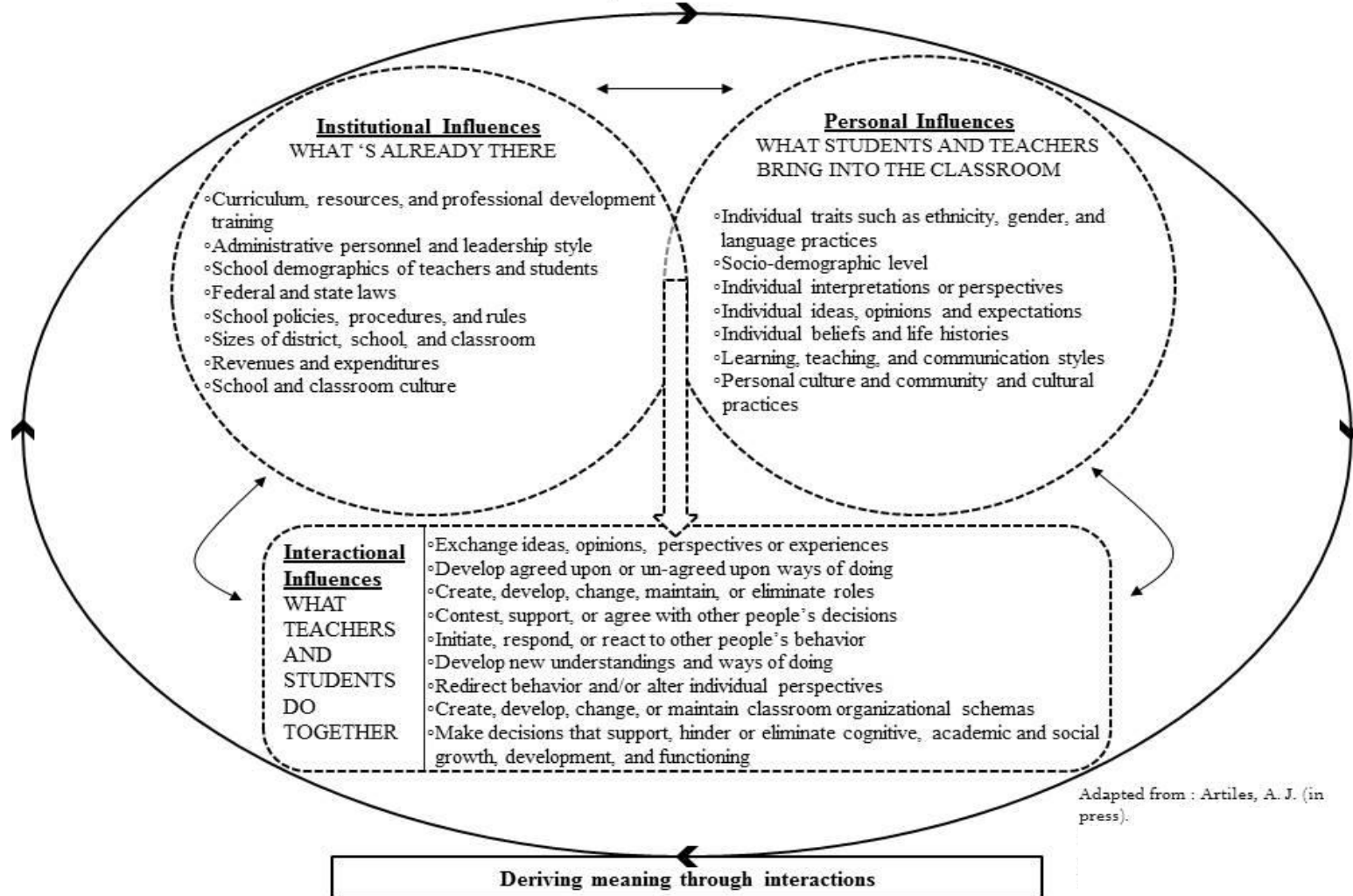
Arcia (2007a)	<i>Urban Education</i>
Arcia (2007b)	<i>Journal of Negro Education</i>
Atkins et al. (2002)	<i>Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology</i>
Krezmien, Leone and Achilles (2006)	<i>Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</i>
Mendez and Knoff (2003)	<i>Education &amp; Treatment of Children</i>
Nichols (2004)	<i>Journal of Negro Education</i>
Rocque (2010)	<i>American Journal of Education</i>
Wallace et al. (2008)	<i>Negro Educational Review</i>

APPENDIX D

FIGURE: THE COMPLEXITIES OF CULTURE



## The Complexities of Culture



Adapted from : Artiles, A. J. (in press).

APPENDIX E

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

**To:** Alfredo Artiles  
1120 S. Ca

**From:** Mark Roosa, Chair  
Soc Beh IRB

**Date:** 12/07/2012

**Committee Action:** Renewal

**Renewal Date:** 12/07/2012

**Review Type:** Expedited F7

**IRB Protocol #:** 0902003703

**Study Title:** Listening to Student Voices

**Expiration Date:** 12/06/2013



The above-referenced protocol was given renewed approval following Expedited Review by the Institutional Review Board.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval of ongoing research before the expiration noted above. Please allow sufficient time for reapproval. Research activity of any sort may not continue beyond the expiration date without committee approval. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol on the expiration date. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study termination.

This approval by the Soc Beh IRB does not replace or supersede any departmental or oversight committee review that may be required by institutional policy.

**Adverse Reactions:** If any untoward incidents or severe reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to notify the Soc Beh IRB immediately. If necessary a member of the IRB will be assigned to look into the matter. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending IRB review.

**Amendments:** If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, or the investigators, please communicate your requested changes to the Soc Beh IRB. The new procedure is not to be initiated until the IRB approval has been given.

Please retain a copy of this letter with your approved protocol.

APPENDIX F  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- 1) What are some examples of how students misbehave?
- 2) If a student is being quiet but not participating or following directions, is that student misbehaving? Why or Why not?
- 3) What can happen when a student misbehaves?
- 4) What does it mean when a student misbehaves?
- 5) How would you describe a teacher being fair?
- 6) How would you describe a teacher being unfair?
- 7) How are you expected to behave in class?
- 8) How do you behave in class? Please describe the things you do. What it looks like. How it feels when you behave certain ways.
- 9) Who gets to decide when a student is misbehaving?
- 10) How do students break class rules?
- 11) If there was a time that you misbehaved in class, what were you thinking about?
- 12) Describe what expectations you think your teacher has for you.
- 13) Describe what expectations you have for students.
- 14) If a teacher or student were to demonstrate respect how would they act? What would they do?
- 15) If a teacher or student were to demonstrate disrespect how would they act? What would they do?
- 16) What is disrespect?
- 17) What does disrespect (disobedience, insubordination, opposition, defiance) sound like? When people act this way, what are things they say?
- 18) What does disrespect look like? When people act this way, what are things they do?
- 19) How do you think it feels to student when he breaks the rules?
- 20) What kinds of expectations do teachers have of students?
- 21) What kinds of expectations do students have of teachers?
- 22) What are the benefits of breaking the rules?
- 23) What are the consequences of breaking the rules?
- 24) What is the purpose of having rules?
- 25) What does it mean to be for the teacher to call on your first, or last?
- 26) How did you learn the classroom rules and expectations?
- 27) How do students decide where to sit in the classroom?
- 28) What do you think about where you sit in class?