

IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS AT  
HOMESTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPLIED RESEARCH STUDY

by

Terrance Walter Siler

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this applied research study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. A multi-method design was used, consisting of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The first approach was semi-structured interviews with administrators. The second approach was to survey with teachers. The third approach was archival data using referral data from Homestead Elementary school. The sample size was 23 Duval County district employees. The site location was Homestead Elementary School. The central research question was: How can the problem of minority male students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeastern Florida? A male mentorship program was the project used to address the problem.

*Keywords:* Minority, discipline, class, intervention.

**Copyright Page**

### **Dedication**

I want to dedicate this dissertation to my beautiful daughter and my gorgeous wife. I would not have made it this far without the support of you two. I know with you two in my corner I can accomplish the hardest tasks possible. I love you both.

## **Acknowledgments**

First, I would like to thank all of the people who participated in this study. You all were selfless and made it possible for me to complete this paper. The administrators and teachers were able to respond promptly. I want to thank the school district of my study and the state of Florida.

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**List of Abbreviations**

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Professional Development (PD)

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this applied research study was to examine how to improve Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. Hence, the problem is that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School have misbehavior issues that affect their education. On average, Black students are at a disparity when it comes to discipline (Gregory, 2018). This study investigated the background of Black male students' disciplinary actions from a social, historical, theoretical point of view and explored the problems that hindered Black male students. This study is significant for schools that have a high population of Black students with behavioral problems and could be used as a potential solution to issues faced in many Title I schools. Therefore, the central research question is: "How can the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeastern Florida?"

### **Background**

The proposed research study was built on the historical, social, and theoretical context of Black males' behavior in the classroom. A pseudonym is being used—Homestead Elementary School—for the name of the school and district to protect the privacy of school, students, and district. Hilberth (2014) highlighted that there is an overrepresentation of Black male students in disciplinary consequences such as suspension and expulsion. Godfrey (2019) had noted research findings and statistics that support the need for the proposed study and identify solutions to address the problem. Godfrey (2019) conducted a study in which African-American male participants felt that the discipline system is not made to see them succeed. Additionally, Kennedy (2019) noted that the premise of the theoretical concept—critical race theory—suggests

that there are disadvantages of injustice for Black male students in educational systems.

Homestead Elementary School is a public school that has over 1300 students. Based on school and district data, the student population at the school consists of 40% Black, 39% Hispanic, 18% White, and 1% other. Based on school disciplinary reports given by the school district, there has been a high rate of referrals for Black male students, which has caused the district to send out representatives to help with discipline.

### **Historical**

There was a correlation between Black students' educational accomplishments and instructor expectations that showed among instructors, both with and without continuous contact with Black students. Those instructors had lower auxiliary desires for minority students. They assumed them more troublesome, more oblivious, and less likely to finish homework than White students, which altered their expectations when grading assignments of Black students (Weiner, 2016). The researcher also noted that secondary schools regularly highlighted a culture of discipline that found instructors subjecting minority students to upgraded disciplinary measures such as expulsion and suspension, regardless of gender. Characteristics such as minority status and ethnicity affected teachers' judgment of minority students' behavior and their achievement in the classroom (Kaiser, 2017).

School discipline has been a concern for many parents (Young, 2018). Research on normal classroom processes that will modify directions for students at-risk has its establishments within the process. Day (2016) noted evidence of the direct impact of student classroom behaviors on the results for at-risk children. The researcher investigated whether educator affectability anticipated minority children's behavior for groups of socially strong and wary children; the strong children illustrated extreme levels of off-task behavior and negative

interactions with instructors and peers.

Parents specified that school discipline procedures were usually lenient for students who were not Black (Golaan, 2019). Golaan asserted these procedures had not progressed any further in schools today for Black students as they have for non-Black students. Furthermore, students have been continuously learning their identity, and when they see a classmate that they can identify with, they begin to look for that student's approval on their classroom behavior (Thijs, 2016).

Previous research conducted showed an overrepresentation of Black male students in disciplinary consequences such as expulsion and suspension (Bottiani, 2017). There has been more recent research showing minority students, with an emphasis on Black boys, as more likely to misbehave in the classroom than White students (Severini, 2018). According to Severini (2018), Black males are three times more likely to be reprimanded and suspended for the same misconduct as their fellow White classmates. For years, scholars have called for more attention to school records that show how minority youth are being treated for disruptive behavior and how marginalization influenced their development (Godfrey, 2019). Understanding that students being expelled and suspended for certain infractions is not beneficial to the student or the school.

## **Social**

Jagers (2017) noted concerns that civically-behaved and engaged students are critical to improving local, national, and global communities. Furthermore, Jagers asserted that there is a growing achievement gap in which minority youth are at a lower level of civic knowledge, political participation, and political attitude when they are not in the classroom because of behavioral issues when compared to White youth. Students with behavior issues lose important time in scholarly lessons, are a diversion for classmates, and frustrate their instructors. Toste

(2019) noted that to have a quality education, there must be quality instruction from the start of class until it is time for students to be dismissed. According to Toste, approximately 60% of students in low-income schools with expansive minority populations found that disturbances by minority male students get in the way of learning.

Minority students received disproportionately more referrals for nonviolent offenses, such as insubordination and classroom noise compared to their White classmates (Hilberth, 2014). Gage (2016) noted that the higher the frequency of student discipline referrals in middle school, the greater the chances that students would be suspended in high school. Furthermore, Black male students believe the laws are against them, which causes depression and low self-esteem in and out of the classroom. According to Girvan (2017), for nonviolent offenses, Black male students observed they were given stricter punishments, which caused them to act out and rebel. Black male students in secondary schools believe that discipline is stricter for them compared to White students (Godfrey, 2019).

Mitchell (2018) asserted that minority students are exposed to aggression, and other negatives factor away from school and exhibit aggression when faced with adversity in the classroom. This extra aggression is viewed as unsafe for surrounding students (Mitchell, 2018). An introduction to nearby neighborhood violence correlates with a decrease in test scores and elevation of stress, sadness, and hostility—all of which can lead to troublesome and diverting behavior within the classroom (Burdick, 2018). The researcher asserted that when students come to the classroom defensive and suspicious, they are more likely to revolt and disturb the classroom. Burdick (2018) conveyed that being suspended frequently and put in detention can deter students from wanting to attend class, while also noting that disruptive classroom behavior has been recognized for years as a massive impediment to teaching and learning.



## Theoretical

The theory that is the foundation of this study is the critical race theory. Other theories that support this study are B.F Skinner's operant conditioning theory and John Watson's behaviorism theory.

**Critical Race Theory.** Before the appearance of critical race theory, Derrick Bell wrote extensively on activities planned to advance the lives of African Americans (Hughes, 2013). Hughes (2013) explained that working through the subtle elements of racial remediation techniques, and Professor Bell realized that there is a common theme of negative influences on African American students since the implementation of the *Brown v. The Board of Education* law. Hughes (2013) stated what can be learned from Derrick Bell's arguments is that Black males and families continue to face negative classroom assessments through unfair resources. Discourse for safety should be universal and not disproportionately negative for one demographic because it can lead to the critical race theory (Simson, 2014).

Critical race theory challenged historicism by pushing the necessity to comprehend prejudice inside its social, historical, and economic setting (Gillborn, 2015). Educators justified harsh disciplinary actions against minority students as safety measures, though the numbers suggested the disproportionately negative impact such actions had on minority students (Kennedy, 2019). School disciplinary outcomes are linked to critical race theory. Concerning the critical race theory, Kennedy's presumed that all institutions have some form of racial oppression and people in those institutions subconsciously and consciously enact it.

**B.F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory.** Starting in the 1950s, B.F. Skinner made expanding reference to a relationship between natural selection and operant conditioning (Smith, 2019). Smith explained that Skinner's first breakthrough research article centered on

subjective marvels such as the involvement of pain and advertised a translation of verbal behavior about them. Smith (2019) noted that Skinner translates this truth as standard verbal behavior, which he depicted as behavior under stimulus control.

If minority students are still repeating the same offense, then they are missing out on valuable class time. From a behavioral perspective, the theorist, B.F. Skinner, discussed that punishment strategies do not produce proper outcomes, i.e., minimizing poor behavior in the future (Sprague, 2018). If the behavior is repeated, then the punishment was unsuccessful. Punishment should never be considered as a single event, such as having minority students removed from the classroom (Sprague, 2018).

**John Watson's Behaviorism Theory.** In 1942, John Watson had concluded that the physical nature of humanity is a result of environmental influences (Amouroux, 2019). However, Watson's goal was not to reduce the normal functioning of behavior. According to Amouroux (2019), Watson's behaviorism was the leading hypothetical alternative to understand aesthetic forms of creation.

John Watson labeled behaviorism as the term for a normal scientific approach to psychology (Malone, 2014). Individuals looking to make schools better serve minority students and destitute children regularly discover that their endeavors are met with solid, quick, and well-organized resistance (Pollack, 2013). According to Pollack (2013), educational leaders are regularly blindsided by the fierce resistance that frequently comes from advantaged middle and upper-income, transcendentally White parents. This resistance sometimes negates open expressions for schools to better serve "all" students and decrease or eliminate the so-called educational gap that minority students experience. In theory, disciplinary actions are meant to keep students from repeating an offense.

## **Problem Statement**

The problem was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School have a high rate of disciplinary issues in the classroom that cause them to be removed from class, suspended, and expelled. Based on personal observations, discussions addressing this problem during faculty and intervention meetings are needed at Homestead Elementary School or HES. Based on school disciplinary and referral records, Black male students at Homestead Elementary School are at a disparity when it comes to disciplinary referrals when compared to non-Black students.

Microaggression indignities are damaging to a student's self-confidence and belief of fairness in the discipline process (Suarez, 2015). Black male students are subject to referrals, detention, and suspensions when their behavior impedes the learning environment. Furthermore, they begin to view the classroom as a threat and see the classroom environment with prejudice (Stark, 2015). Hence, when Black male students are disciplined for their disruptions, they miss out on valuable instructional time, which leaves them struggling to make up for the lost instructional time when compared to their peers.

Disruption becomes normative when the classroom environment is surrounded by a high rate of negative behavior (Pas, 2015). This behavior can lead to Black students underperforming and creates a strain on the teacher because they must find time to reteach a lesson (Gregory, 2016). Time does not always permit reteaching to a handful of students (Stone, 2018). As a result, this causes an achievement gap between these disruptive students and their peers. When Black male students see that their race is represented negatively in the classroom, they find it difficult to envision themselves being top-performing students (Cvencek, 2018). Discipline should not be one of the main reasons why there is an achievement gap between minority students and White students.

The utilization of different strategies can assist Black male students at Homestead Elementary School in coping with their anger and classroom behavior. A few of the reasons why minority students displayed negative classroom behavior include rough neighborhoods, poverty, and single-parent households (Bowman, 2018). Understanding the underlying root behind classroom behavior can help with acknowledging and creating a solution. Having minority students in the class will expose them to more instructional time and increase their chances for academic success in the classroom (Yull, 2018). Current research falls short of addressing the problem because they have not found a solution to minority students' behavioral issues in the classroom. In addition to multi-method research design, conducting surveys, examining archival data, and conducting interviews to collect data can bring some clarity in understanding how administrators and teachers would solve minority students' behavioral issues at Homestead Elementary School.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this applied study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. A multi-method research design was used, consisting of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The first approach consisted of conducting semi-structured interviews with administrators asking open-ended questions, which allowed the opportunity for discussion. The second approach consisted of surveys received from teachers. The third approach consisted of reviewing archival data using referral data from Homestead Elementary School.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the proposed study was to provide solutions in reducing discipline referrals for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School. An analyst explored the

association between school failure and its relationship to behavioral characteristics and noticed a clear link between the two (Stevenson, 2017). For the past five years, the school had a current accountability grade of C, meaning there has been minimal growth for students' learning gains (Florida Department of Education, 2019). Teachers are judged based on how their students score on state-mandated assessments. Principals are rated on their school grades and the improvements they make to the school; therefore, creating a solution to keep students in the classroom can increase the chances of raising the school's grade, which is given by the Florida Department of Education. An improvement in the school's grade benefits all stakeholders in education, such as teachers, administrators, students, and parents.

Title I schools that service a low socio-economic student population could benefit from the findings and solutions presented in the study. Also, Title 1 schools are those schools that have most of their students' families living below the poverty line (Anthony, 2016). School districts across the country can benefit from the study by acquiring strategies to help those teachers who are having a difficult time dealing with minority students. There is little but developing evidence proposing that instructors are differentially successful depending on their subgroup of students (Cohen, 2016). According to Cohen, instructors change in both their instructional approaches and their impact on achievement gains when instructing the same lessons to different ethnicities.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this study.

**Central Research Question:** How can the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 1:** How would administrators in interviews solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 2:** How would teachers in surveys solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 3:** How would archival data inform the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

### **Definitions**

1. *Minority* – Non-White students (Kaiser, 2017).
2. *Socioeconomic status* (SES) – a societal classification that families are rated by their income (Demir, 2016).
3. *Behavior* - The functioning of an organism that interacts with the environmental circumstances (Moore, 2011).
4. *Critical race theory* – a theory that examines the disadvantages of minority male students in education (Kennedy, 2019).
5. *Low-income urban communities* (LUC) – the classification assigned to poor neighborhoods (Day, 2016).
6. *Behaviorism* - models changing the environment and fulfilling craved behavior (Kaplan, 2018)
7. *Operant conditioning* - controlling behavior through reinforcement and fulfillment (Clark, 2018)

### **Summary**

In this chapter, it was discussed how Black male students had been documented as having classroom behavior issues. The problem was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary

Schools have a high rate of disciplinary issues in the classroom that cause them to be removed from class, suspended, and expelled. The purpose of this study was to solve the problem of Black male students' behavior in the classroom. These students deserve the opportunity of having a quality education. To have this opportunity, Black male students must have equity over equality. Schools across the country are under pressure to address the abuse of discipline practices, as Black male students get suspended and receive referrals at rates higher than White students (Cook, 2018). Hoglund (2014) asserted that Black male students are most in need of quality educational involvement as they appear to be getting the worst quality education. Critical race theory, behaviorism, and operant conditioning provided a framework to examine Black male students' behavior from a theoretical point of view. This study was designed to solve the research questions of how Black male students' behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School from various educational stakeholders' points of view. This chapter concluded with the significance of the study, as it pertains to reducing the discipline referrals of Black male students at Homestead Elementary School.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this applied study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. The problem that had arisen was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School were having a plethora of discipline issues that resulted in missed instructional time. Disruption in the classroom can interfere with teacher instruction and hurt the academic achievement of all students in the classroom (Karve, 2015). The contents of this chapter include the theoretical framework, literature review, and a summary of the chapter. The theoretical framework is centered around critical race theory, BF Skinner's operant conditioning, and John Watson's behaviorism theory.

Challenging behaviors may lead to impeded social connections with peers and grown-ups, and concerning within-school and post-school outcomes (McDaniel, 2017). Teachers should be able to teach in an environment that is free from behavior issues and full of student engagement. McDaniel also noted that analysts have talked about the directional nature of this relationship by attempting to build up whether behavior issues lead to educational issues or vice versa. In recent years, there has been expanded consideration on educator assessment and the relations between instruction, classroom management, and student results (Owens, 2018). The literature review discusses minority classroom behavior, classroom management, student engagement, the impact of student misbehavior, students with disabilities, restorative justice, the benefit of positive student behavior, school to prison pipeline, neighborhood's effect on minority student behavior, areas of concern, and Student-teacher relationship with minority discipline.

### **Theoretical Framework**



For this study, the researcher utilized critical race theory, BF Skinner's operant conditioning, and John Watson's behaviorism theory by exploring the cause behind minority students' classroom behavior. In conjunction, both frameworks analyzed behavior from a unique perspective. One must understand the aspects of behavior and how it correlates to the classroom.

### **Critical Race Theory**

Critical race theory grasps a development by researchers, most of these researchers of color, whose research challenged how race and racial control are developed and represented in American culture and society (Gillborn, 2006). According to Gillborn (2006), critical race theory contends that racism is rooted in US society, profoundly imbued lawfully, socially, and even mentally, and seeing that racism is an imbued highlight of our landscape, it looks standard and common to people within the culture. Gillborn (2006) asserted that legal equal opportunity laws that demand on treating Blacks and Whites similar could cure extraordinary forms of injustice. Even though much has changed globally since 1994, the unique nature of race in education continues, especially in urban schools (Donnor, 2016). Donnor (2016) also conveyed that critical race theory has been connected in academics to contextualize and comprehend the beneficial relationship between instruction, race, and racial disparity.

Critical race theory is utilized to find why race and prejudice manifest themselves in the K-12 pipeline, and more critically, this research offers teachers strategies that permit teachers to discuss these issues (Ledesma, 2015). Critical race theory recommended monitoring regular practices, designs of inequality, and results of the battles for racial equity (Su, 2007). While analyzing instructional policy, Su (2007) proclaimed that researchers have proposed that critical race theory may well be valuable in articulating how incremental change, such as expanding school financing in this year's government budget, regularly represses anti-racist social change,

like changing the national financing equation in a way that ensures satisfactory assets for impoverished communities of color.

### **B.F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning**

BF Skinner, a theorist, working within the United States in the 1930s, set up the theory of operant conditioning: a way of strengthening a deliberate behavior by fulfilling it (as cited in Clark, 2018). Skinner's utilization of the word control to depict the relationship between behavior and environment lead to the freely held idea of conditioning as manipulative intellect control; also, the theorist recognized that the controlling connections were reciprocal (as cited in Krapfl, 2016). Skinner expressed that people's perception of the world and their knowledge of it is their behavior about the world (as cited in Schoneberger, 2016). According to Schoneberger (2016), Skinner's clear realist estimations were on full show when he clarified that the errand of science is to find the laws which oversee a portion of the world around us. Schoneberger (2016) asserted that Skinner credited other sections in which he shows up eager to support behaviorist adaptation of the practical hypothesis of truth in behavior where a person's behavior is genuine.

Operant conditioning is a critical frame of cognitive learning and, in some cases, called operant learning, amid which people and animals learn to relate their behaviors with the results (Ruan, 2013). Ruan (2013) theorized that operant conditioning might be a shape of the mental and physiological dynamic process of life people, which makes an affiliation between behaviors and results. Ruan (2013) affirmed that Skinner accepted that people locked in with their environments effectively and intentionally. Operant reinforcement and discipline are a fitting way to bargain with behaviors that have a non-zero operant level, things the kids as of now do, like sitting still and not moving around, talking to one another amid lesson, and bullying - disciplinary matters (Staddon, 2017).

## **John Watson's Behaviorism Theory**

The thoughts of behaviorism date back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries when John Watson, an American theorist, accepted the general public would acknowledge and recognize the modern logic of psychology as a genuine science if it included forms of objective perception and logical measurement (Clark, 2018). Behavior changes, a variation that is contiguous with compensation, is fortified and hence increases in frequency (Staddon, 2017). With the rise of behaviorism in brain research, there came to be a struggle between those who see that behavior controls the environment and those who accept that environment controls behavior (Krapfl, 2016). Strategies from the theories that emerged as useful to educating included (a) making a positive environment with positive stimuli and lessening negative stimuli, (b) analyzing the environment and social elements for positive and negative boosts, (c) fulfilling craved behavior, (d) debilitating undesired behavior with negative results or being disregarded, (e) lauding craved behavior, and (f) repetition (Kaplan, 2018).

The key components of behaviorism are the reaction and the affiliation between the two, as well as behaviorism partners learning with changes in either the shape or recurrence of discernible performance (Park, 2014). Watson believed that our continuous adjustment to changing circumstances continuously comprises pattern reactions, concurrent combinations of verbal, manual, and emotional reactions, with one being overwhelming (Malone, 2014). Malone (2014) justified that Watson proposed three subdivisions of thought, consisting of (a) the loosening of verbal habits, which incorporates psalm-singing, recounting quotations, and daydreaming; (b) issues requiring trial behavior that includes the modifying of already-learned parts; and (c) managing with genuine issues in grave situations, where career or riches has been misplaced, or a moral–social issue exists.

Kaplan (2018) noted that behaviorism theories of psychology are of advantage to back instruction and learning. Behavior, it appears, proceeds to be a key portion of understanding and creating the learning handle, both in people and machines (Knox, 2019). Knox (2019) conveyed that the development of attitude and character has provided the mental grounding for the development of conduct changing and enhancement programs in instruction, motivating designers of analytics bundles and applications to insert behavioral plan approaches in their items and to make emotionally-sensitive and possibly powerful machine learning systems.

### **Related Literature**

A plethora of sources explored the various aspects of behavior and discipline. Problem behavior is defined by the disruption of the classroom environment (Ozturk, 2015). The existing literature also provided perspective on minority students, classroom management, student engagement, the impact of misbehavior, and how it affects the culture of the classroom. Student behavior can have a lasting effect on teachers, like how it affects other students (Tsouloupas, 2010). Several scholars discussed how minority student behavior is addressed and the consequences of such behaviors.

### **Minority Classroom Behavior**

Despite the expanding dependence on office discipline referrals as a degree of student behavior issues, a few analysts have addressed the legitimacy of office discipline referrals, since restraining hones can change depending on preexisting school organization hones and usage of school rules (Bradshaw, 2010). For students to have success in the classroom, there must be a non-disruptive classroom environment so students can concentrate on instructional material (Black, 2014). Black also suggested that public school's mindfulness training may benefit teacher-based perception of improved classroom behavior, which can improve the classroom

learning environment for minority and low-socioeconomic students. Black (2014) believed that non-disruptive classrooms were better by professional development. Problem behavior is defined as behavior that is chaotic to both a student's environment and themselves. It causes a student to (a) be excluded from all classroom activities as the behavior does not conform to the classroom values, (b) prevents the student from having a role in the classroom, and (c) endangers the safety of the student and his/her peers (Ozturk, 2015). Externalizing behaviors are defined as aggressive, adverse, and rebellious behaviors that encompass resistance and disobedience, aggression, hyperactivity, and poor impulse control (Ozturk, 2015). Whereas, internalizing behaviors consist of troubles such as anxiety, social phobia, shyness, introversion, despair, and psychosomatic problems.

Minority students were more likely to receive office discipline referrals than White students. However, the rates of significant varieties of school violence have declined over the past decade, and tumultuous behavior issues continue to be a deep concern within the classroom (Bradshaw, 2010). Furthermore, Bradshaw expressed that young people who show troublesome and forceful behaviors are suspended from school and, as a result, are ordinarily isolated with other reprobate adolescents upon their return, which can increase difficult behavior. Ozturk (2015) stated the deficiencies in obtaining emotional skills play a vital role in the behavioral issues displayed particularly for students in their preschool years through middle adolescence.

Students from specific minority ethnic backgrounds endure proportionately higher expulsion rates than others as a result of conduct seen as challenging or undermining social diversity in schools (Wearmouth, 2012). According to Wearmouth, there is a pattern of contrast within the extent of students in specific minority ethnic groups who are suspended or expelled from school and those within the majority population within the United States. A study

done by Wearmouth (2008) showed that minority Caribbean students were two times more likely to be prohibited from schools indefinitely than the entire school population and given a fixed-period exclusion at twice the rate. Instructors are given an interesting challenge to adjust to the different learning needs of children as well as overseeing the troublesome behaviors that happen within the classroom (Black, 2014). Disrespectful behaviors in classrooms, according to Black (2014), increase the mental stress of instructors, which could be the main reason for work disappointment and instructor retention.

The alarming overrepresentation of minority students specifically relates to value and equality in the instructional system (Tajalli, 2014). Since the 1970s, the majority of the school districts within the United States depended on changing forms of suspension; and, in uncommon cases, expulsion, to deal with insubordinate students. Tajalli (2014) determined the subjective nature of these expulsions and suspensions by about 99,000 public schools has researchers questioning the decency and soundness of the educational system. Exploring how levels of school commitment, connection, association, conviction, participation, and other perspectives of students' social bonds impact students' behaviors at school is critical since teenagers spend a vast amount of time in the classroom and, in turn, schools play an indispensably part of their socialization (Latimore, 2018). According to Lattimore, combined with the negative results of school-based discipline, the ethnic and racial disproportionality in school discipline may marginalize the same students who appear to confront a critical number of other educational obstructions within the United States public school system.

### **Classroom Management**

The results appear to explain that instructors who see themselves as more controlling of students' behaviors tend to see less misbehavior within the class; that teacher's self-efficacy

adequacy and time going over classroom misbehavior are superior indicators of classroom misbehavior than the fashion of classroom behavior management (Lopes, 2017). Ineffectively overseen classrooms have the potential to form devastating school situations with restricted learning environments (Clair, 2018). The researcher also noted that classroom interventions are centering on how teachers' direct behavior is appealing to interventionists since they can emphatically affect instructing and learning for all students, not solely those with actual behavior issues. Clair (2018) explained when instructors of students with an enthusiastic unsettling influence expanded the rate of behavior support, the sum of student scholarly engagement expanded as well.

Instructors must, subsequently, learn the particular behaviors that, more than likely, optimizes the available instructional time and diminish time and vitality squandered with students' misbehavior (Lopes, 2017). The researcher suggested that teacher's behaviors and activities within the classroom and how the teacher's self-efficacy beliefs may intervene the instructor bargains with classroom misbehavior. With restricted assets and preparing, numerous instructors depend on responsive, reformatory reactions to classroom issue behaviors, coming about in 3.8 million school suspensions every year, drastically higher in elementary and middle schools (Wills, 2019). To plan clear desires for classroom behaviors, instructors must recognize both craved and undesired behaviors; as they fortify desires, understudy engagement in craved behaviors will increase. Wills (2019) noted that teaching desires might begin with a clear level of backing for all students, with behavior-specific laud prescribed for students who have met all expectations.

Many state-level instructors' execution assessment frameworks have endeavored to formalize assessment of teachers' guidelines, behaviors, and classroom administration practices

(Owens, 2018). After presenting a desire through a lesson, the educator starts academic instruction with a quick update or correction of the desires. Owens (2018) illustrated that lessons incorporate a basis, dialog, student practice, and instructor feedback. The passionate effect on instructors who are not satisfactorily prepared with classroom behavior administration aptitudes may result in a negative effect on their mental wellbeing (Teoh, 2018). In a documented a pilot study conducted inside a rustic private instructive institution in Chennai, India, Teoh (2018) observed that it is generally common for middle school students to act in troublesome ways within the classroom, especially when their educator is female. Teoh concluded that challenging practices within the classroom extended from a consideration of diverting practices challenging teachers' authority.

Working with young students in urban settings, while being great and imperative, can display interesting instructional challenges to instructors, especially given the behavioral and scholarly issues confronting many urban schools (Back, 2016). Instructors in urban schools constantly report more behavioral challenges and exploitation than do instructors in rural or suburban schools. Back (2016) explained that information on classroom management procedures is particularly vital in urban environments where instructors can have bigger class sizes and experience specific instructional needs based on the differences of the population. Students who constantly illustrate relevant social skills in school are better situated to take advantage of academic instruction (Mitchell, 2017). Children with challenging behavior are at more risk for exclusionary discipline practices that hinder their education. These are factors in them being both scholastically and socially behind. Mitchell (2017) communicated that given the constrained planning and training most teachers get on effective classroom management to meet the requirements of diverse learners, there is a want for a solid framework of evidence-based in-



service professional improvement.

African-American students in urban areas encounter many oppressive structures that impact their behavior in the classroom, and instructors in these schools regularly confront student behavior challenges to which they are not prepared to address (Caldera, 2019). Caldera proclaimed that it had been prescribed that pre-service instructors who decide to instruct in urban schools should be required to consider relevant and social influences on student behavior as part of their instructor planning coursework.

Various studies show racial discipline aberrations that likely start at the classroom level, noticing that classroom management is especially challenging for instructors in urban schools because of basic conditions inside those schools and the recurrence with which instructors see low-income students of color through shortfall lenses (Graham, 2018). As noted, classroom management is challenging and impactful; it is vital that educational analysts and teacher-educators more completely lock-in with issues of classroom administration and classroom administration for educational value. Graham (2018) asserted to combat the negative impacts of structural and social prejudice in schools, and numerous researchers draw from both basic and progressive educational scholars to contend for the significance of equitable classrooms in which students share authority.

### **Student Engagement**

Collins (2016) asserted the main objective for educational stakeholders is to empower more on-task classroom engagement utilizing various strategies to maintain a strategic distance from corrective action, which will weaken teachers' connections with certain students and impact the culture of the classroom long-term. Results from a study illustrated how there was not much support for the attention to student engagement over time and shown that both

instructors and students have seen the student engagement to be feasible (Collins, 2016). An objective for students who often display off-task and troublesome classroom behavior and miss out on educational opportunities is to modify lessons and keep up the student's engagement in the lesson and scholarly tasks (Collins, 2016). Inda-Caro (2019) noted a few studies that illustrated that students' discernments of their teachers' conduct towards a lesson could predict their scholarly engagement, recommending that the better students see the teaching conduct, the better behaved they are in class. Furthermore, Inda-Caro recognized a plethora of studies that have reported the benefits of teaching behavior domains that contribute to good learning situations.

Student engagement was noteworthy for teachers' positive relationship with students than the students' accomplishment level in the classroom (Hagenauer, 2015). According to Hagenauer, positive classroom relations are related to student engagement and adversely with no classroom structure. Teachers seem to have more negative instances such as reprimands and mediation with uninterested students or students showing challenging behaviors, which can grow into negative teacher-student connections and, more universally, a negative classroom environment affecting all students in the classroom (Nagro, 2019). Students who are withdrawn and show the foremost challenging learning and behavioral needs frequently have (a) lower scholastic accomplishment, (b) expanded absenteeism, (c) more office referrals, (d) fewer companions, (e) higher rates of school dropout, and imprisonment, (f) less chance of work, and (g) destitute social adjustment (Nagro, 2019).

Although teachers' utilization of behavioral administration techniques was negligible, it was altogether related to the sort of instructional setting in which it occurred (Baker, 2008). The researcher explained that engagement is the item of an interaction between the person and the environment, and the instructional setting can have a direct impact on student behavior. Students

who are scholastically locked in are better able to take advantage of classroom instruction and have on-task behavior at a higher rate. Many students receive an advantage from instructors who execute class-wide, evidence-based classroom administration techniques, but a few students require extra bolsters to benefit completely within the learning process (Nagro, 2019). While behavior administration techniques are centered on advancing students' adherence to behavioral desires, instructional procedures are centered on creating students' scholastic information and skills (Lekwa, 2019). Lekwa speculated that teachers' instructional techniques, moreover, advance and keep up designs of understudy behavior within the classroom, counting high rates of reaction openings for students.

### **Impact of Student Misbehavior**

The foremost predominant driver of burnout in instructors at work stems from their regular dealings with the classroom conduct of students. Teacher burnout is related to instructor recognitions of student mischief since instructors frequently create negative sentiments and end up debilitated around their capacity to oversee and instruct their students (Tsouloupas, 2010). One of the main reasons for instructor demoralization is work disappointment, with nearly 25% due to issues related to student misbehavior (Aloe, 2014). The researcher highlighted how teachers demonstrate that student misbehavior meddling with their educating activities has a relationship between educator burnout and review level instruction, such that secondary school instructors tend to encounter higher levels of depersonalization and diminished individual achievement than basic school teachers.

Supporting students' social improvement and diminishing behaviors that meddled with learning are basic results of the schooling process (Diperna, 2016). Diperna asserted that if a teacher loses a positive rapport with a student, in the beginning, it will be hard to keep them

motivated throughout the year. A teacher's positive sense of viability in a classroom is connected to positive encounters and results, counting the utilization of more formatively suitable instructing practices, like positive classroom administration skills (Antiles, 2017). Teachers who do not accept their capacities to direct a classroom successfully are challenged by their incapability every day and encounter trouble coming to students and making a difference in their instructive goals. Antiles (2017) emphasized that a teacher's reaction to students' misbehavior may be characterized by thinking, re-directing, interceding, or may incorporate undermining and shouting, and at times referrals to the principal's office. According to Antiles, teachers regularly deliver an account of encountering teaching-related stress when attempting to oversee children's misbehavior.

In the United Kingdom, destitute classroom conduct is seen to affect the life chances of numerous students and drives an instructor's absenteeism from the profession (Crawshaw, 2015). The undermining of instruction and learning, as well as the obstruction with the learning process, appear to result in the same thing: decreased openings for students to learn. A classroom climate characterized by an instructor's and classmates' solid scholarly support seems to reinforce these socially important results (Wentzel, 2018).

Misbehavior could be a student's intended or unintended behavior that avoids any instructive exertion, undermines the teaching-learning handle, genuinely prevents schools' standard forms, and ignores and abuses the common rights of understudies and instructors in schools and classrooms (Coban, 2015). The researcher also noted that students' misbehavior makes a difference in the classroom as instructors will spend less time deciphering students' behavior reasons. There is an open question of whether behavior issues are recognizable to others, such as understudies, that decrease instructor well-being, or issues solely seen by the

instructors themselves (Aldrup, 2018). Emotional fatigue has negative suggestions for student results since it decreases student participation, achievement, and school fulfillment. Aldrup (2018) further explained that understudy misbehavior had been connected to sentiments of outrage, uneasiness, and emotional depletion, as well as diminished delight, work fulfillment, and work engagement.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with a serious developmental disability are likely to show classroom behaviors that are defiant towards teachers or to distance themselves from instructional tasks; teachers must be aware of the signs that students with disabilities possess (Moore, 2016). Developmental disabilities are typically recognized in childhood and may affect different ranges of development, including scholarly, behavioral, communication, and social abilities; individuals with formative disabilities habitually require behavioral mediation, with analysts evaluating that 48% to 82% of people with formative disabilities show issue behavior (Dart, 2018). Common issue behaviors in school settings incorporate mood fits, contending, and resistance, with behaviors such as self-injury and denying the conversation happening in a significant number of individuals.

Furthermore, Dart (2018) explained that occurrences where a student with a formative incapacity illustrates issue behavior that places them at the chance for suspension or a more prohibitive situation, schools should be required to conduct a functional behavior assessment.

Many students with disabilities who have behavior issues have a behavior intervention plan that teachers must follow, and a plethora of teachers have stated that they do not follow a student's plan or are unaware of a behavior intervention plan (Clarke, 2016). Paying attention to the behavioral and social needs of students with and without disabilities puts them within the most suitable position to create academically (Shuster, 2017). According to Schuster, the past

two decades have been assigned by burgeoning intrigue within the execution of more proactive and comprehensive approaches for assisting the behavior and learning of students with disabilities. Shuster (2017) explained that understanding how teachers include their understudies with disabilities in numerous perspectives of this system. Potential boundaries related to student support might illuminate endeavors to guarantee that each understudy in a school benefits maximally from school-wide positive behavior intervention support.

Children characterized as having troubles in socioemotional alteration characterize learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with positive connections with instructors are especially critical for their versatile school functioning (Granot, 2016). Also, Granot explained it was revealed that among school children with high-incidence incapacities, students who have built a positive relationship with their instructors appeared to have a lower propensity towards reprobate behaviors. Granot (2016) asserted that children who experienced more prominent discontent in their connections with instructors felt higher levels of uneasiness and appeared to have a more noteworthy propensity towards issue behavior. According to Granot, ADHD children detailed, lower intrigued, or inspiration in academic schoolwork. These children experience different scholarly issues, such as challenges in-class support, low attention span, and unseemly behaviors, which ruin their capacity in instructive activities (Matin, 2017). Matin observed that these students often encounter disillusionment in instructive advancement with normal mediation strategies since these methodologies don't bargain with real issues, which will reduce the problematic behavior.

### **Restorative Justice**

Restorative justice strategies utilized to address student misbehavior in schools are comparable to the approaches utilized within the criminal justice framework that center on

repairing the hurt caused by wrongdoing, including guilty parties, casualties, and the community, through conferences that frequently endorse community service or compensation instead of with disciplines that energize recidivism (Payne, 2015). Payne stated restorative justice practices permit schools to make individualized arrangements that are sensible for the insulting students to fulfill, permit casualties to get closure and repair the hurt caused by the misbehavior. Given these negative results for both schools and their students, it is obvious that schools have to reevaluate their reactions to student misbehavior (Payne, 2018). Payne revealed that restorative programs in many schools center intensely on relationship building and repairing the hurt caused by student misbehavior, wrongdoing, and crime.

As restricted to student prohibition, therapeutic approaches center on connections, moving from the goals of discipline and confinement to compromise and community (Payne, 2018). Payne asserted that restorative practices were, to begin with, actualized in schools in Australia within the early 1990s. A few defenders contend that restorative justice is best connected to the school setting because of the structure of these schools, where community individuals see each other every day, and circumstances can turn perilous if not enough is addressed. The researcher noted that within the United States, schools in New York, Maine, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, California, Texas, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, and Connecticut are currently using restorative practices. Restorative justice, characterized by a modest bunch of pilot programs, has ended up a comprehensive hypothesis and assorted set of practices that have moved from the edges to the standard of instruction policy (Gonzales, 2019).

According to the U.S. Department of Education's latest Civil Rights Information, 6%, or 2.8 million, of all K-12 students have received a minimum of one out-of-school suspension amid

the 2011-12 school year, and for minority boys, the rate is 18%, indicating a racial disparity in school discipline (Shaw, 2017). In a 2016 report by the nonprofit organization WestEd, Shaw noted that national information on restorative justice is still up and coming. Specialists are attempting to reach a set definition of restorative justice so they can analyze what results can be credited to its use. Gonzales (2019) asserted that restorative approaches have been adjusted, embraced, and deciphered in a differing set of ways to reply to the wants of the school community.

According to Mayworm (2016), restorative justice approaches got to be executed reliably with constancy before they can be thoroughly assessed, requiring compelling instructor and staff professional development (PD) as a first following step in building an evidence base for the restorative justice method. Wearmouth (2012) revealed restorative approaches had been utilized in numerous countries as an elective to a retributive equity approach in an assortment of settings, both in schools and societal. Also, Wearmouth explained that restoration requires that a hurt relationship is recognized, and that exertion is made to repair what was broken. Schools are presently reacting to student violations like they are criminal infractions, with different disciplines and expulsions that can be compared to those experienced within the criminal justice framework (Payne, 2018). The researchers theorized when it comes to school-based misbehavior, and research reflects that these impacts are indeed more articulated for Black and Hispanic students in schools with relatively more minority students.

### **Benefits of Positive Behavior in Students**

The most grounded relationships with positive classroom behavior were found for tirelessness, self-regulation, judiciousness, social insights, and hope (Wagner, 2015). Evidence-based widespread mediations that bolster students' social and scholastic competence speaks to



one promising approach to advancing students' school success (Diperna, 2016). Furthermore, Diperna (2016) revealed that positive social and emotional aptitudes moreover had been found to bolster students' capacity to form and support positive learning environments. Diperna noted children with interpersonal aptitudes, the capacity for social issue tackling, and the capacity to enroll academic or social support are more likely to succeed in both the academic and social setting of the classroom.

Student co-created classroom rules reflect the capacity and readiness to utilize socially appropriate management techniques, expanded mindfulness of control structures, and the advancement of community and sense of family within the classroom (Hollingshead, 2016). The researcher disputed that behavior support systems are steady with the advancement of caring connections and the setting of stronger desires and can be related to openings for significant participation. Although educator behavior and consideration can be given all through the school day, the investigation has shown it to be especially successful when utilized properly and intentioned amid educational time (Cook, 2017). Cook (2017) established that positive classroom behavior looks to optimize scholarly engagement as a way of avoiding improper behaviors that meddled with learning. The Positive Behavior Support (PBS), one of the evidence-based programs, was demonstrated upon inquiries about being a viable approach in lessening and avoiding issue behaviors in -instructive settings (Atbaşı, 2019). According to Atbaşı, positive behavior support covers all the abilities that improve social interaction and advances social victory in work and family environments.

Students behave better when they see their instructors be caring, supportive, and responsive (Perle, 2016). Perle elaborated that teachers can make a culture of regard in which all individuals of the class-teachers and students-treat each other with respect, reasonableness, and

wonder; students' on-task behaviors made strides when the teacher's behavior-specific positive attending expanded, with consequent student-related decreases in positive behavior when the instructor declined in attending. Perle (2016) asserted that delivering unexpected positive attending (i.e., positive fortification in reaction to particular activities) when students lock in craved behaviors can lead to an expanded probability that they will display comparative positive behaviors within the future. Evidence-based widespread intercessions that bolster students' social and scholastic competence speaks to one promising approach to advancing students' school success (Diperna, 2016).

Mentoring minority students can have long-lasting effects on ensuring that they reach academic achievement, and mentoring is a new strategy that has not been tapped into and can be used as a restorative practice (Chan, 2015). Promoting students' social-emotional improvement utilizing such approaches has appeared to progress scholastic accomplishment and students' inspiration to achieve (Diperna, 2016). According to Diperna, a considerable and developing body of investigation has illustrated that a direct positive relationship exists between prosocial behaviors and academic achievement.

### **School to Prison Pipeline**

There is a large body of research uncovering that minorities—in specific Black citizens—are overrepresented within the criminal justice framework (Barnes, 2018). Barnes documented that school-to-prison pipeline research proposes disparities in school disciplinary practices that have a greater chance to create disparities in arrest prevalence. Students who are suspended by age 12 are twice as likely to report justice system inclusion at age 18; indirectly, these students' chances are increased to associate with mischievous peers in youth, expanding their chances of justice system association (Novak, 2019). Novak (2019) disputed that analysts contend that this

broad utilization of school exclusion has contributed to the presence of a school-to-prison pipeline, driving students out of schools and into the juvenile justice system. Novak (2019) asserted investigations looking into the relationship between experiences of exclusionary discipline and consequent justice system inclusion finds a noteworthy affiliation between suspension/expulsion and a student's chances of justice system contact.

Barnes (2018) explained that the school-to-prison pipeline has started to get national consideration, and numerous researchers are presently pointing to the overrepresentation of Black students. They get caught in the pipeline as a potential reason for the overrepresentation of Black students within the criminal justice framework. Barnes has discussed that research has reported racial imbalances within the predominance of school-based disciplines, and theory recommends these disparities may causally affect arrest and imprisonment rates later in life, driving to racial imbalances in criminal justice system contact. Furthermore, Novak (2019) noted that going past creating a low commitment to school, young students with a history of suspension have a higher chance of getting involved in introverted and delinquent behavior after their suspension encounter.

School's zero-tolerance policies can play a part in the school-to-prison pipeline for minority male students. Zero resistance approaches are those utilized to provide a foreordained set of results, regularly punitive, without thought of offense seriousness, moderating circumstances, or setting (McCarter, 2017). According to McCarter, despite the nonappearance of evidence to propose that they are viable in decreasing school-based offenses, around 94 percent of U.S. public schools have received zero-tolerance approaches, with significant effect. McCarter (2017) stated that in 1995, after executing zero tolerance for a few offenses in Chicago, the number of students expelled expanded from 81 to 1,000 by 1998. The researcher

also noted that a study showed that 43 percent of Black students in secondary school had been suspended compared to 22 percent Hispanic and 16 percent White students. When physical hostility towards Black students is freely condoned and energized, it should come as no shock that schools over the nation double-down on reformatory practices such as contributing considerable budgetary assets to utilize more police officers, officers whose activities have been found to have an unbalanced and unfavorable effect on students of color (Washington, 2018). Washington debated that this is doubling-down on correctional disciplinary activity, which is especially common in urban schools with overwhelmingly Black and Brown students, incites a school climate where aversion and mental, emotional, and physical neglect are commonplace.

There is an overrepresentation of racial and ethnic minority students, particularly in urban regions, who are disciplined in schools and have contact with the juvenile justice system (Trey, 2018). Trey detailed that a few contend that unbalanced racial and ethnic minority adolescent contact, as well as unbalanced school discipline, is a mirror of the method of criminalization that minority students persevere inside United States social institutions such as the instructive and adolescent justice systems. Trey (2018) asserted that schools with extreme levels of minorities are like prisons since these schools maintain expanded police presence, surveillance, security measures, and strict discipline approaches. The researcher discussed how there are a few who consolidate the conceptualization of the school-to-prison pipeline as an instrument that replicates racial and ethnic imbalances by funneling young students out of school and into the adolescent and criminal justice framework. Barnes (2018) noted that researchers had created a few theoretical arguments to clarify the connection between accepting a suspension or an expulsion amid the school years and an expanded risk for arrest a few years later. Barnes disputed that the encounter of a school-based discipline of suspension or expulsion modifies the course of

behavioral advancement by subsequently driving to an aggregation of consequences that further increase a punished individual's probability of confronting inconvenience with the criminal justice framework later.

### **Neighborhood's Effect on Minority Student Behavior**

Research on the lived encounters of young Black male students is imperative to consider as well since it illustrates the need to express their encounters over the crossing points of their race, sexual orientation, and class. Brooms (2015) established that the social conditions in their neighborhoods require Black students to create an assortment of coping styles and methodologies in efforts to relieve a few of the risk factors they confront that move into the classroom. Brooms asserted that researchers argued that young Black male students in America are in trouble and contend, the stereotypes, pressure, and designs of failure that young Black students encounter frequently start in school. Furthermore, the researcher identified a need to consider how Black boys are troubled, particularly in urban neighborhoods. The school's community has to realize that schools and communities can play meaningful roles in making a difference to decrease some of the dangers they confront and empowering how they engage while they are not in school. Concerning developmental settings outside of the home, an expansion to the neighborhood variables previously noted, affiliation with deviant peers has been connected repeatedly to poorer results, especially those including issue behavior association, among youth in low-income urban communities (Day, 2016).

Students in low-income urban communities (LUC), compared to students from established communities, have higher rates of mental trouble, such as anxiety and sadness (Day, 2016). Day illustrated that a variety of components are related to substandard emotional and behavioral results among low-income urban community students. The environment in which

individuals grow up has an enduring effect on their personal and social personalities, which impacts both how they feel and think about their social environment and key perspectives of their social behavior (Manstead, 2018). Manstead communicated that if low socioeconomic students are more empathic than their wealthy partners and are therefore superior at recognizing the trouble or need of others, this is likely to impact their behavior in settings where individuals are troubled or in need.

Around 14% to 20% of the children display challenging behaviors at both home and school settings and noting that home and school are two of the foremost effective influences in children's lives (Ohmstede, 2015). Children spend nearly all their time within the home and school settings, where guardians and school faculty are essentially responsible for observing their behavior. Ohmstede asserted that there must be a bridge between what happens at home and school when setting objectives to address student's instructive and behavioral needs. Past research proposed that lower socioeconomic status (SES) students bully more than other students (Dietrich, 2019). Dietrich determined that results recommend a contrast in aggression-related mindsets, such as (a) sentiments of educational adequacy, (b) sentiments of purpose, (c) worldwide self-esteem, (d) academic-status uncertainty, (e) school-related outrage, and (f) school-related joy account for nearly half of the relationship between SES and bullying.

### **Educator Preparedness**

Numerous teachers have detailed feeling underprepared in successful classroom administration practices; the need for these skills has been cited as a reason that instructors do not come back to teaching (Caldarella, 2017). Caldarella estimated time spent overseeing misbehavior has been found to diminish instructional time and student engagement, influencing all students that are in the classroom. Caldarella (2017) stated that numerous schools have

restricted resources to mediate with classroom behavioral troubles; hence numerous classroom instructors may not have the support they require for successful classroom management. Despite the abundance of research by advocacy groups of concerns for progressively negative school climates and increased levels of problematic behaviors, there has not been much done to supply instructors with the instruments they need to be of service to students in the classroom (MacSuga, 2018). MacSuga claimed that the data surrounding the minimal support is multiplied by the well-documented absence of planning of both preservice and new instructors about classroom and behavior management. MacSuga (2018) asserted to support the disruptive behavior of students effectively, instructors must first guarantee that a viable core of research-supported classroom administration techniques is available.

Various studies have uncovered that numerous starting elementary- and secondary-level instructors realize that the issues they confront are more noteworthy than expected promptly after beginning instruction, with classroom administration being the foremost challenging angle of their job (Akdağ, 2016). Akdağ examined that comprehending the classroom administration concerns of new teachers becomes vital in supporting their instructional practice, as well as making strides to improve instructional programs. The part of lacking early behavior abilities for younger grades is a zone of specific intrigued concerning minority children living in low socioeconomic areas (Hartman, 2017). Hartman highlighted that Black children in destitution display higher rates of behavioral issues than children with more prominent financial assets. They are well reported to be at risk for destitute school results, partially due to lower cognitive and language abilities upon entering school. Numerous instructors are not prepared to oversee classroom behavior from students who display these characteristics.

Koskela (2016) documented the concern lies in confusion, which is viewed as good

behavior and acceptable behavior. If a teacher is not addressing negative behavior due to tolerance and or lack thereof, it is setting a precedent to the student that certain behaviors are acceptable in the classroom. Clinically raised levels of externalizing and internalizing behaviors in elementary and middle school children frequently foreshadow underachievement, bullying, substance abuse, and even death (Abry, 2017). As time goes on, student's behavioral reactions help mold the classroom elements, and if one student is constantly disrupting the classroom, the culture of the classroom can shift.

In the classroom, troublesome student behavior can have lasting effects on the encounter and emotional state of both students and instructors, ruining the accomplishment of teaching objectives and lessening the overall viability of learning for one or everyone in the classroom (Lugrin, 2016). According to Lugrin, controlling and moderating troublesome behavior are imperative abilities for anyone hoping to instruct in face-to-face effectively and one-to-many educating circumstances. Aggravating, risky, or challenging student behavior is said to be one of the most significant challenges confronting today's educational system (Lanas, 2019). Lanas claimed about one in three instructors reported losing a substantial amount of instructional time due to behavioral issues in the classroom, and challenging or exasperating student behavior is said to be among the most prominent challenges right now confronting schools. Lanas (2019) asserted that numerous studies have found that behavioral desires vary between various classrooms, between various schools, from one circumstance to another inside classroom and between the classroom and the play area.

### **Student-Teacher Relationship with Minority Discipline**

Research has shown that the impacts of student-teacher relationship elements on achievement are more grounded for African American and low SES students than for majority



children and students from wealthy backgrounds (Hughes, 2005). Hughes also noted that students who have strong, positive connections with their instructors have a more positive demeanor toward school are more scholastically successful, and appreciate higher levels of peer acknowledgment. Hughes (2005) asserted that the quality of a student-teacher relationship could be more proactive in future school directions for Black male students than for majority students and children who are from other minority groups and are more frequently seen by instructors as least competent may be most influenced by instructor expectations. Black male students may require support from their instructors to bridge the gap between their home life and the classroom, and instructors can recognize Black male students' ethnic backgrounds and make them feel comfortable in their classroom so they can create psychological connections (Thijs, 2018). Thijs revealed negative peer relationships could weaken the identity of the classroom, as the student-teacher relationship has extraordinary noteworthiness for Black male students.

There has been news coverage drawing attention to the public of a persistent demographic design of White instructors working with a larger part of the Black student body (Cherng, 2016). Cherng detailed looking past the matter of demographic mismatch, many arguments have been raised to clarify why the divide is hurtful to Black male students. The researcher explained a study of 452 6th graders, student perceptions that instructors had high goals and desires of them were emphatically related to students' objectives and interests. Black male students seem to be aware of their group's poor socioeconomic status in society and contact, which can strengthen instead of weakening existing stereotypes (Thijs, 2018). Furthermore, Thijs also noted that cross-ethnic relationships with instructors give Black male students numerous critical opportunities for positive inter-group communication.

Instructors who dodge or dismiss negative attitudes and stereotypes can confront low

socioeconomic status minority students with a sort of regard that allows them to anticipate and accomplish success with Black male students (Payne, 1994). Payne (1994) stated that the degree to which instructors believe they can influence Black male student performance might be a very effective educator trait related to learning results. Payne (1994) also noted instructors with a heightened sense of individual adequacy are confident and relaxed in their classrooms, which they illustrate effective positive communications with Black male students. Inaccurate desires on the part of instructors can trigger the Pygmalion effect, which shows itself within the truth that the behavior of students appears to relate to educator desires and students begin to perform the way that instructors anticipate (Akifyeva, 2018). Akifyeva (2018) proclaimed that numerous studies have explained that educator perceptions may result in Black male students having lower scholarly accomplishments than their peers belonging to the majority ethnic group. Akifyeva (2018) asserted that one of the biggest reasons behind the low desires of instructors toward Black male students is that teachers' perceptions and desires can be linked to inaccurate stereotypes of Black male students.

### **Minority Cultural Awareness by Teachers**

There must be a change in cultural sensitivity for teachers to be able to effectively teach students from different ethnicities and cultures (Vincent, 2015). According to Vincent, the discoveries from how student's cultural awareness suggests that students can recognize an instructor who is multicultural competent. Demographic shifts in America have come about incomparable demographic shifts between all instructional staff and their students, resulting in critical implications for the behavioral and educational results of customarily marginalized students and educators' cultural awareness required in instructing classrooms that are diverse (Mahatmya, 2016). Mahatmya explained that for minority male students, teachers' cultural

awareness weakened this affiliation; that is, instructors were likely to have higher recognitions of educational achievement for minority students when they detailed higher experience in cultural awareness. Mahatmya (2016) states that when students are from low socioeconomic status and racial minority, a conceptual system must recognize the large scale and miniaturized scale components that influence teachers' and students' perceptions of behavior and academic success. Mahatmya (2016) went on further to describe that past their genuine classroom practices and behaviors, instructors' discernments of their cultural awareness may contribute to how they interact with students.

Even though various researchers, activists, and teachers are excited about a real multicultural world, social wonders like segregation, disparity, injustice, and poverty still adversely influence the goals of minorities (Sarraj, 2015). According to Sarraj, as the talks around multicultural instruction and awareness develop, a few analysts raise concern around how to equip instructors and students for the challenge that comes with cultural awareness. Sarraj (2015) explains that the instructor planning curriculum, school educational programs, the school's hidden educational programs, and school policies would need to change to align with local, regional, and national diversity. Research looking to comprehend minority social characteristics related to scholarly results and success centers on family work, noticing a need for parental advice when working with non-minority teachers (Becton, 2016). Becton noted that the need for mindfulness about culture among school teachers, principals, and staff had been cited as a major hindrance to academic success for Black male students. According to Becton, the quality of faculty-to-student interactions comes from the staff state of mind and ideology, which can weaken students' behavior and academic improvement.

The research proposes that the execution of particular activities centered on helping students improve the comprehensiveness, and empowering students to take part in instructive

programs or extracurricular activities will improve cultural awareness between teachers and minority students (Becton, 2016). Research recommends that progressing educators' use of socially responsive classroom management procedures may diminish the unbalanced number of minority students who get exclusionary disciplinary actions and are distinguished as requiring special instruction, especially for behavioral students (Pas, 2016). Pas noted that coaching instructors on different cultures are a way to endorse teachers' advancement of such socially responsive classroom administration techniques. Pas explained further that developing research recommends that culturally responsive classroom administration techniques may help with teacher's classroom concerns before they result in unbalanced classroom discipline referrals.

The lack of enhancements in instructor cultural capability and systemic disproportionality can date back to conventional educator training models, which regularly offer restricted exposure to or important input concerning culturally responsive instruction (Pas, 2016). With the focus being on what happens within the classroom, analysts argue that minority students are regularly taught by instructors who do not understand the social setting of classroom behavior and how culture plays on the learning process (Siwatu, 2017). Siwatu described that research suggests that minority students are frequent beneficiaries of pointless discipline for behaviors that will be fitting when seen through a cultural lens. According to Siwatu, instructors regularly misinterpret the relationship between classroom behavior and culture and are not prepared to fully commit to the practices related to socially responsive instruction.

Cultural responsiveness suggests that instructors should be responsive to their students by building on students' cultural strengths and capacities to advance student learning and behavior in the classroom (Lew, 2016). Lew proclaims that as the amount of culturally diverse students continues to rise, all teachers must be alert on the ways to model their instruction to meet the

needs of all students in the classroom. Lew states that even though there are some cultural differences, specific cultures must be considered when a teacher is planning classroom administration procedures. Even though classroom administration research has assisted instructors in understanding how to sculpt a classroom environment to maximize learning, analysts have not correctly addressed issues-particularly dealing with a filled with diverse cultures (Siwatu, 2017). Systems for culturally responsive classroom administration have developed. Still, little consideration has been made to efficiently measure and looking at these practices, especially in conjunction with more conventional spaces of classroom management (Gaias, 2019).

### **Summary**

As evidenced, investigation in teachers' discernments of undesirable classroom behaviors could be a conventional subject in educational psychology since pupils' misbehavior regularly presents a major concern to instructors endeavoring to supply effective learning (Castelli, 2015). A review of the benefits of having a positive classroom environment, as well as the challenges expressed by teachers alike, gave full voice to the various related issues. The research has shown that interventions are needed to assist minority male students with their behavior and referrals. Schools must formulate a strategic plan to deal with challenging behavior before the outcome affects the entire school (Butler, 2016). The theoretical framework guiding this study is Skinner's operant conditioning and Watson's behaviorism. This chapter has outlined the current literature on minority classroom behavior, classroom management, student engagement, the impact of student misbehavior, students with disabilities, restorative justice, the benefit of positive student behavior, and the cultural awareness of minority students by teachers.

## **CHAPTER THREE: PROPOSED METHODS**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this applied study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. The problem was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School have a high rate of disciplinary issues in the classroom that cause them to be removed from class, suspended, and expelled. Administrators and teachers were interviewed and surveyed to gather information concerning Black male students' behavior at their Title I school. Archival data that looks into the student's referral types will be analyzed. There is a gap between Black male students and White students when it comes to discipline referrals, and Black male students are at a disparity (Cook, 2018). There is a pattern of differential treatment, in which Black students are overrepresented in office referrals (Bottiani, 2017). Unethical school practices continue to play a role in disproportionate racial outcomes of Black male students (Young, 2018). The design, research questions, setting, participants, the role of the researcher, procedures, and data analysis will be discussed in this chapter.

### **Design**

An applied research multimethod design was used in this study; the purpose of this study was to solve Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. There is a need for multi-methodical approaches in educational research (Holtz, 2017). An applied research multimethod objective is to solve a problem (Bickman, 2008). According to Bickman (2008), an applied research multimethod design uses qualitative and quantitative approaches. Furthermore, Bickman (2008) indicated that

the utilization of quantitative and qualitative approaches and strategies must be assessed in terms of the quality of potential solutions. Bickman (2008) also noted that the adaptability to utilize both the qualitative and quantitative approaches permits the applied analyst or evaluator to answer his or her investigation questions within the most viable way.

The first investigative approach in this study was semi-structured interviews with administrators. The objective of the interviews was to identify the experiences of the administrators with Black male students. The second approach was to survey with teachers. The third approach was archival data using referral data from Homestead Elementary School.

### **Research Questions**

**Central Research Question:** How can the problem of Black males' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 1:** How would administrators in interviews solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 2:** How would teachers in surveys solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

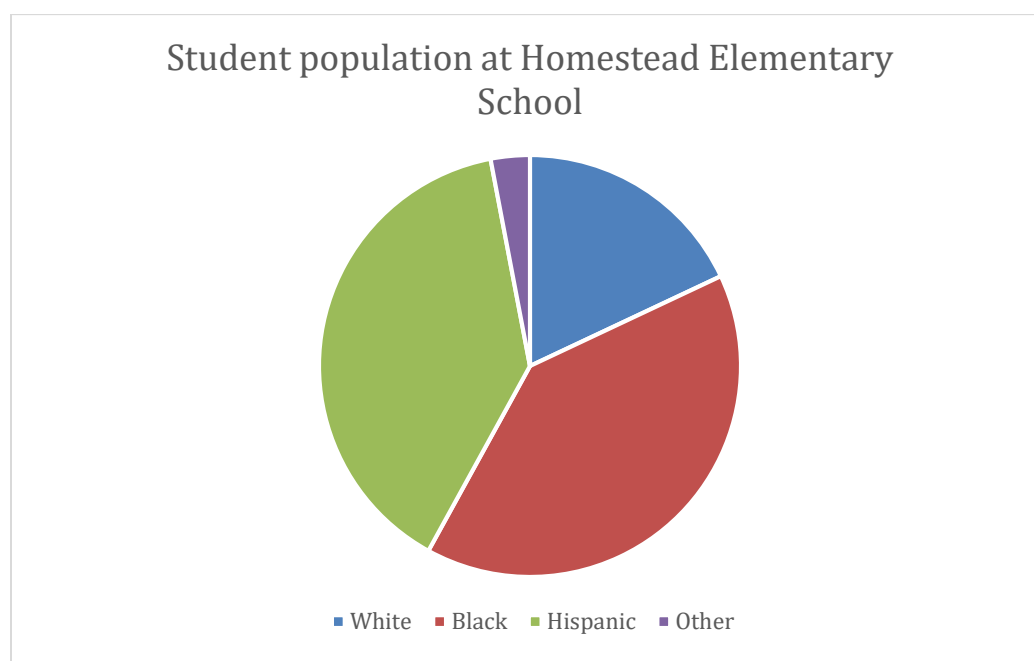
**Sub-question 3:** How would archival data inform the problem of Black males' classroom behavior be at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

### **Setting**

This study was conducted at Homestead Elementary School. Homestead Elementary School is used as a pseudonym to protect the integrity of the site school. This is a Title 1 school where 100% of the students are on a free lunch program. The school is in northeast Florida. Homestead Elementary School is part of the Duval County School District. Homestead Elementary School is one of two elementary schools out of 20 elementary schools that are

considered hard to staff schools by Duval County School District (Holmes, 2019). The teacher turnover rate of 55% for Homestead Elementary School has put it as one of two schools with staffing issues. This means that more than half of the teachers that start the year at Homestead Elementary School are not there at the beginning of the following school year. Schools that have a high teacher turnover rate see their school's academic performance drop significantly (Papay, 2017). Figure 1 shows the demographic break down of the student population in percentages.

Figure 1. *Student Population at Homestead Elementary School*



Homestead Elementary School is a public school with an enrollment of over 1300 students. The ethnic composition of students at Homestead Elementary School is 40% Black, 39% Hispanic, 18% White, and 3% other. The staff population at Homestead Elementary School is 80% White, 10% Black, and 10% Hispanic. The rationale behind picking this site location was the fact that Black male students are receiving the majority of the discipline referrals, it is a Title 1 school, it has a high faculty turnover rate, and the population of minority students in the school is appropriate for the requirements of data needed for this study.



Additionally, this school was chosen for this study due to the surrounding community. The school is settled in the middle of a low socioeconomic neighborhood that is riddled with violence. The culture of the neighborhood is similar to the culture of the school. The community provides a backdrop for the challenges that children endure.

### **Participants**

For the qualitative portion of the study, five colleagues from Homestead Elementary School were interviewed. The five colleagues were chosen using convenience sampling, as, by definition, are subjects that are more readily available (Suen, 2014). These participants were a principal, three assistant principals, and one dean of students. The principal is Black, the three assistant principals are White, and the dean of students is Black. The participants for the interviews were selected due to their proximity to the students whose behavior needs improving. Utilizing effective recruitment methods such as email invitation and convenience sampling to gather research enables the well-timed collection of data and avoids disruption to critical timelines (Brewis, 2014). Being near the participants makes it easier to collect the data under convenience sampling (Emerson, 2015).

For the quantitative portion of the study, surveys were sent out to twenty teachers from Homestead Elementary School for this research study. Eighteen certified teachers, who are all over 18 years old, completed the survey. The quality of information from a survey depends on the measure and representativeness of the test from which information is collected; the procedures utilized for collecting the information; the quality of the interviewing, on the off chance that interviewers are utilized; and the degree to which the questions are great measures (Bickman, 2008). The conclusion of survey research should be a set of questions that create answers that are substantial measures of what is being measured (Bickman, 2009). This is

relevant to this study because it is looking to produce answers to Black male student behavior in the classroom.

The criteria for the archival data were seven Black male students with high discipline referrals. These seven students were selected because they are participating in a mentorship program. The selected students informed this study seeing that these are the students who have the highest rate of referrals at Homestead Elementary School. The mentorship program was put in place to assist Black male students who have a high rate of referrals and absenteeism. These students were chosen based on their closeness to the study (Martinez, 2016). The archival data looked at the amount and classification of the referrals. The timeframe for data inspected will be one calendar school year.

### **The Researcher's Role**

The role of the researcher was to collect and analyze data to solve the problem of Black male students' behavior at Homestead Elementary School. The researcher's experience working in a Title I school for six years has been an eye-opening experience. Being employed at Homestead Elementary School and seeing how many of the African-American male students are not taking education seriously is concerning. As an African American and an educator, the researcher felt a duty to investigate the discipline issues at the site location. The participants in the interviews and surveys are current employees in the same school as the researcher. The researcher has no authority over the participants.

Knowing two of the teachers on a personal level could create a bias in getting quality responses. On most occasions, a solid research plan is one that maximizes validity—it gives a clear clarification of the marvel understudy and controls all potential biases or perplexes that may mutilate the research discoveries (Bickman, 2008). The researcher is a current ESE Life

Skills teacher at Homestead Elementary School. My experiences will not be discussed with teachers and administrators to shift their personal views during data collection (Bickman, 2008)

### **Procedures**

Permission from Liberty University's IRB was secured (see Appendix A). Written permission was obtained from the principal of the site school (see Appendix B). Files were kept in a personal file cabinet that only the researcher controls the access. The file cabinet has a lock and a single key and is locked in the home of the researcher. This information will be stored until the final dissertation has been successfully defended. After a successful final defense, files will be taken to a local bank where they will be shredded for free. Those files will then be taken to the local Waste Management plant to be burned.

The first data collection method was to interview. Administrators were sent a consent form agreeing or disagreeing with an interview (see Appendix C). When an administrator agreed to an interview, they were sent a calendar invite for an interview. Once participants had accepted the interview, they were directed to a phone interview. Administrators were asked open-ended questions (See Appendix D). By asking the participants open-ended questions, the researcher's relation to the research-subject is more intimate, whereby researchers become neophytes with disinterested-interest in their respondents' knowledge (Brinkmann, 2017). The interviews were recorded and transcribed for accuracy.

Interview questions grounded in research. Data was collected over the phone when the administrators had free time. Interviews were conducted between Monday and Friday until all participants were interviewed.

The second data collection method was surveying. Teachers were sent a consent form through email accepting or declining to participate in the survey (see Appendix E). The teachers

that had agreed to participate in the survey were sent a Google Forms link that will direct them to the survey. The survey consisted of nine questions utilizing a Likert scale (see Appendix F). The survey had taken about three to four minutes to complete. The survey was on a static single-page. The simplicity of single-page static delivery minimizes download times and is consistent with a wide assortment of browsers (Bickman, 2009). Teachers were given a two-week window to complete the survey before the Google Forms link closed. A calendar reminder was sent out at the one-week mark to remind teachers of the survey. Once the link closed and surveys had been completed, the survey had then gone on a USB drive that was locked in a filing cabinet. There was a single key used to open the filing cabinet.

The third data collection method was archival data, which is a quantitative approach. Archival data was a quantitative approach in this study because it is looking at the number of referrals on a student's referral records (Bickman, 2009). Archival records incorporate composed open and private records, archived databases from research investigations conducted already, and data put away in different non-written formats (Bickman, 2008). The archival data that was analyzed were the amount, frequency, and type of discipline referrals that are written on Black male students in an entire calendar year. Looking to see if the referral rate decreased for Black male students as the year went on. For an example of Archival Data (see Appendix G).

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

### **Data Collection**

The three data collection methods that were used for this study were interviews, surveys, and archival data. The first data collection approach was to interview, which is a qualitative approach. The second and third data collection approaches were surveys and archival data, which are quantitative approaches in this study.

**Interviews.** The first sub-question for this study explored how administrators participating in interviews would solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida. The interviews were semi-structured and over the phone (Bickman, 2008). All interviews were recorded and transcribed for accuracy (Bickman, 2008). The interviews were conducted in the morning and the afternoon. Administrators had the option to be interviewed on the phone or in an isolated area. Interviews were conducted on Monday through Friday. I will be the only person conducting the interviews and notating the responses. The interview questions were:

1. How would you define student misbehavior?
2. What are your thoughts and feedback on how student misbehavior affects the classroom?
3. How would you describe your experience with Black males' classroom misbehavior?
4. How has Black male students' behavior contributed to the culture of your teachers' classroom?
5. If students are missing out on instructional time due to misbehaving, how has that affected their academic success?
6. What feeling comes to mind when you see Black males misbehaving at a higher rate than their peers?
7. What factors positively impact Black males' classroom behavior?
8. What can be done to fix Black male behavior at Homestead Elementary School?
9. What will Black male students behaving well do for the culture of your classroom?

Questions one through four of the interview questions align with sub-question one because it addresses the problem that is going on in the classroom (Skiba, 2011). Questions five

through seven discuss the causes and feelings of Black male students' behavior in the classroom (Vincent, 2012). Questions eight and nine discusses how to solve the issue of Black male misbehavior in the classroom and how it would benefit the classroom (Hosp, 2003). Interview data were analyzed using data coding. Data coding is useful in research because it looks at the patterns of the transcriptions and organizational structure (Auerbach, 2003). Coding looks at the common themes of similar words or phrases throughout the interview (Creswell, 2015).

**Survey.** The second sub-question for this study explored how teachers participating in a survey would solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida. The survey was sent out through email to the teachers of Homestead Elementary School in the format of Google Forms. Teachers answered the questions that came to their email by clicking the Google Forms link, which had the survey in a Likert scale format. Using Google Forms, teachers selected the question that they strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. The survey was sent at the beginning of the week so teachers can find the email when their workweek starts. The survey questions were:

1. Black male students in my classroom have more behavior issues than non-minority male students.
2. Black males in my classroom have a high rate of referrals.
3. Black male students in my classroom have higher academic issues compared to their peers.
4. I feel the Black male students in my classroom act out because they have no role-models.
5. I feel all students have the right to a fair education.

6. I feel all students should have access to the resources available to ensure they are successful.
7. I believe mentoring is a great option for Black males at my school.
8. Mentoring has shown to be beneficial for Black male students' academics in my classroom.
9. Mentoring has shown to be beneficial for Black male students' behavior in my classroom.

Questions one through four are relevant to the research question because it addresses their feelings towards Black males' influx of referrals (Gravois, 2006). Questions five and six discuss students' rights in education (Scott, 2012). Questions seven through nine discusses a solution to Black males' misbehavior in the classroom (Goldner, 2017). Survey data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive methods include presentations of the results through graphic displays (Bickman, 2009).

**Archival Data.** The third sub-question for this study explored how archival data would inform the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida. This is a quantitative approach for this study because it looked at the number of referrals on a student's referral records (Bickman, 2009). Archival data was pulled electronically from Homestead Elementary School. The data was utilized to look at the trends of the seven Black males' behavior at Homestead Elementary School. Archival data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive methods include graphic displays that show a view of trends (Bickman, 2009).

### **Ethical Considerations**

To ensure ethical considerations, research was not done until IRB approval was given. Once IRB approval was finalized, I made sure each person had given their full consent before conducting the interviews. All participants had full disclosure of the purpose of this study. I had taken steps to ensure the confidentiality of all participants (Bickman, 2008). There are pseudonyms for the geographical area, the name of the school, and the name of the school district. Participants were notified that they could withdraw from their interviews at any time (Bickman, 2008). Data was stored in a filing cabinet at my home. The filing cabinet had a single key entry, and I was the only one with a key for the duration of the study. Once the study was over, the documents were shredded and thrown away in two separate trashcans.

### **Summary**

The pattern of discipline referrals and differential treatment of Black male students at Homestead Elementary School harms the culture of the classroom. This is based on Homestead Elementary School being labeled a Hard to Staff school by the Duval County School District. Utilized surveys and interviews are looking at the behavior of Black male students from the teachers' and administrators' point of view. The problem is that Black male students' classroom behavior needs improving. The research question was, "How can the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be improved at a school in northeast Florida?" The purpose of this study was to determine what factors impact Black male students' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida and to formulate a solution to the problem.



## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### Overview

The purpose of this applied study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. The problem was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School have a high rate of disciplinary issues in the classroom that cause them to be removed from class, suspended, and expelled. The contents of this chapter include the results and themes of interviews, surveys, and archival data. The three sets of data explored and answered the following research questions:

**Central Research Question:** How can the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 1:** How would administrators in interviews solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 2:** How would teachers in surveys solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

**Sub-question 3:** How would archival data inform the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?

### Participants

This applied study utilized participants from Homestead Elementary, which is located in northeast Florida. Participants included five administrators, 18 teachers, and seven students. These five administrators (See Table 1) were interviewed on their thoughts of discipline at Homestead Elementary. Two of the administrators were females, and the other three administrators were males. These five administrators represented the Duval County School

District.

As Table 1 indicates, there are five administrators (one Caucasian woman, one African American woman, and three African-American men).

Table 1

*Administrators Demographics*

Position	Gender	Age	Race
Principal 1	F	57	Caucasian
Assistant Principal 1	F	32	African-American
Assistant Principal 2	M	50	African-American
Assistant Principal 3	M	48	African-American
Dean 1	M	36	African-American

Principal 1 has been a principal for seven years. She has worked in the Duval County School District for 21 years. She has spent 11 years as an ESE teacher before becoming an Assistant Principal for the District. She had two sons who went to school in the district before going on to college and the military. She stated she lives by the motto that “every student can learn.”

Assistant Principal 1 has just completed her first year as an Assistant Principal. She stated that “being an administrator brings on a new experience every day.” She has been in the Duval County School District for 12 years. Before her position as an administrator, she spent her time as a reading coach assisting teachers with implementing new reading strategies in the classroom. She was also an ESE teacher in South Carolina before moving down to Florida. She has one son who attends Homestead Elementary School.

Assistant Principal 2 is a six-year assistant principal from the Duval County School District. He has been in the school district for 26 years. He boasts that “if it was a subject to be taught, I taught it.” Explaining how he has taught history, language arts, math, reading, science, and various electives. He has a daughter who graduated five years ago and has a daughter who is in elementary school.

Assistant Principal 3 has just got back to being an administrator this past year after spending some time away from education. He was a career changer and left the field of business to go into education. He has been in education for nine years. He has a daughter and a son who are both in middle school. He said he eventually wants to be an administrator in high school at whatever school his children attend.

Dean 1 is in his second year as a dean. Before becoming a dean, he spent five years as a middle school math teacher. He has goals of being a principal for a few years before working at the school district’s office. He stated, “being a dean has opened my eyes to a whole new perspective of being an administrator. He has a daughter who is currently in elementary school.

Table 2 provides details on the demographics of each grade level for the 18 teachers who participated in the survey.

Table 2

*Demographics of Teachers of Participating in Survey*

Grade	Average Age	Average Years of Experience
Kindergarten	38.4	11.8
First	40.6	12.2
Second	48.8	13.2
Third	34.8	11.6

Fourth	46.2	12.4
Fifth	40.0	12.2

Table 3 provides insight into the demographics of the seven students who were part of the archival data.

Table 3

*Demographics of Students*

Cohort Class	Number of Students	Ethnicity
2030	2	Black
2028	3	Black
2027	2	Black

As noted in Table 3, all seven male students are Black and represent the graduating cohort class of 2027, 2028, and 2030. The cohort class of 2028 has an extra student compared to 2027 and 2030.

## Results

Three underlying research sub-questions have analyzed the results of this applied study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five administrators from Homestead Elementary School about the themes related to Black male students' behavior in the classroom. A plethora of themes had risen from these interviews. Second, a quantitative survey was conducted with 18 teachers to find a theme on how teachers view Black male students' behavior and resources. Third, a look into archival data of seven Black male students was conducted to find themes related to the amount and type of referrals that were received in a calendar school year.

### Sub-question 1

Sub-question, one for this applied study, was, “How would administrators participating in interviews solve the problem of Black males’ classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?” Interviews were only conducted over the phone with five administrators from Homestead Elementary School to find themes concerning Black male students’ behavior at Homestead Elementary School. Interviews were conducted over the phone due to COVID-19 in-person restrictions. The researcher used data coding to identify possible themes from administrators’ answers (see Table 4)

Table 4

#### *Frequency of Codes*

Codes	Frequency
Black role models	8
Disruptions	8
Black male students are leaders	6
Mentorship program	4
Classroom management	4
Black students’ behavior is the same as others	4
Attention	4
Low learning level	4
Sets Black students back academically	4
Needs more chances	4
Not following directions	3
Good teacher	3
Are misunderstood	3
Family involvement	2
Class clown	2
Severe punishment	2
Not learning	2
Girls are more disruptive	2
Prejudice/Racists thinking by teachers	2

Next, these codes were then separated in either positive, neutral, or negative feelings by the administrators addressing Black males' classroom behavior (see Table 5). This can assist in solving the problem of Black male students at Homestead Elementary.

Table 5

*Positive, Neutral, or Negative Codes*

Codes	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Black role models	X		
Disruptions			X
Black male students are leaders	X		
Mentorship program	X		
Classroom management	X		
Black students' behavior is the same as others		X	
Attention		X	
Low learning level			X
Sets Black students back academically			X
Needs more chances	X		
Not following directions			X
Good teacher	X		
Are misunderstood		X	
Family involvement	X		
Class clown			X
Severe punishment			X
Not learning			X
Girls are more disruptive		X	
Prejudice/racists thinking by teachers			X

Several themes had arisen from the interviews with the administrators that may guide a solution to the classroom behavior of Black male students at Homestead Elementary.

**Theme #1.** The need for Black male role models seems to be the focus of administrators during the interviews. All of the administrators suggested that there is a lack of Black male role models for students in the education setting. Assistant Principal 1 explained, "I think we need a lot more Black male role models, whether it's teachers or staff. So, at our school, it's kind of limited. Like this past school year, we did not have many Black male role models. We had one

support staff, but that was it. We need more Black men to come into the role of academics, and it does not have to be as a teacher. It can be a security officer or something”. Assistant Principal 3 went on to state, “One of the best things for a Black male is a Black male,” touching on points that Black male students would gravitate more to Black male teachers as role models. All administrators addressed the fact that there are no Black male teachers who students can look up to.

**Theme #2.** Administrators felt that disruptions seemed to be the driving force behind why many of the Black male students at Homestead Elementary School are getting in trouble. Dean 1 stated in the interview, “If we are going by the numbers, then I would say that I see that they are written up more than students of other demographics. A lot of their referrals are due to insubordination or disruption of a classroom”. This goes into what Assistant Principal 3 stated when he said, “Disrupting learning is stopping other people who are trying to learn, and with the demographics we got, these kids need to be able to focus.” Having these students disrupt the classroom is not only harming them but also their peers who need to be able to focus. All administrators discussed how disruption of the learning environment brings a negative culture to the classroom.

**Theme #3.** One of the things that came up, whether talking about the negative side or the positive side of Black male students’ behaviors, was that these students were seen as leaders by their peers. Assistant Principal 2 stated, “If Black male students behaved well in the classroom, that changes the whole culture of the classroom. Seeing how they are seen as the leaders in the classroom, if they behave well, other students will follow, and if they begin to act out, you would see that a few students would do the same to fit in”. Even though Black male students are seen as leaders, a few of the administrators stated that the reason that a few of the Black male students

get in trouble is that they are trying to be the leader of the classroom. Assistant Principal 1 stated, “So with the Black males, it seems like, with them a lot of the misbehavior that we get is them trying to be the leader or the class clown. They want people to follow them, to get that attention to them and them only so they can be on top. They will do whatever they can to get that attention at times”. Principal 1 stated that while trying to be the leader, “these students try to get other students involved.

**Theme #4.** A male mentorship program seemed to be the answer to address Black male students’ behavior by the administrators. Dean 1 stated, “Creating a mentorship program that reaches a larger amount of students. Having something in place that will provide students with a leader to emulate.” Assistant Principal 2 stated, “A mentorship program will be great for these students. Giving these students someone they can go to when they are having problems. Students can go on trips with their mentors and do things that would not typically do when they are at home”. The administrators expressed multiple times that positive experiences with a mentor are beneficial for the students. Having a structured program can teach Black male students how to control their behavior and ways that they can be a model for other students to follow.

### **Sub-question 2**

Sub-question two explored how a survey of teachers would solve the problem of Black males’ classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida. Although the survey discusses one method to address Black male behavior in the classroom, the survey does address four possible themes surrounding Black male behaviors in the classroom. The survey was delivered in a nine-question Likert-scale model that contained close-ended questions. The survey was completed by 18 teachers who taught grades ranging from kindergarten to fifth-grade. The answers from each teacher are presented in Appendix H.



Answers from the survey ranged from one to five, with one being strongly disagreed and five being strongly agreed. As Table 6 displays, the scores ranged from 2.78 (Question 2) to a high of 4.5 (Question 5 and 6). The answers given by the teacher helped formulate possible themes surround Black male students' classroom behavior. The results in Table 6 display the analyzed trends, which may lead to the reasoning of teachers' attitudes towards Black male students' behavior in the classroom and what may be used to solve it.

Table 6

*Quantitative Survey Standard Deviations*

Question	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	2.89	1.02
2	2.78	1.22
3	2.83	1.25
4	3.44	1.04
5	4.5	1.29
6	4.5	1.29
7	4.28	1.32
8	3.89	1.08
9	3.83	1.15

The average Likert score on the nine questions was a 3.66, so analyzing the questions that showed scores with a higher and lower score might create a solution to the behavior of Black male students at Homestead Elementary School.

**Theme #1.** The Black male student having a high rate of referrals scored the lowest

among the teachers, which may show that teachers feel that Black male students in their class do not have a high rate of referrals

**Theme #2.** Two questions were tied for the highest score on the survey. The two survey questions discussed teacher's feelings towards all students having the right to a fair education and all students having access to the resources available to ensure that they are successful. The teachers strongly agreed that all students deserve the right to a fair education and resources.

**Theme #3.** The question asking teachers do they believe mentoring is a great option for the Black male students in their class scored a higher than average score, which indicates that teachers see mentoring as an effective option for the Black male students in their classroom.

**Theme #4.** Survey question eight was asked to see if mentoring has been beneficial for Black male students in the teachers' classroom. Twelve out of 18 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that mentoring has been beneficial for Black male students in their classrooms; the mean score on this question was 3.8. Mentoring is beneficial for Black male students with behavior problems in teachers' classrooms had a higher than average score, which indicates that mentoring is a possible solution for Black male students in the classroom.

### **Sub-question 3**

Sub-question three for this study explored how archival data of Black male students' referrals inform the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida. The researcher used descriptive statistics to identify the number of referrals the seven students in the three cohorts have received. This data is in a year that these students did not have mentors. See Table 7.

Table 7

*Referral Amounts for Targeted Students 2018-2019*

Cohort	Fall 2018	Fall	Fall SY	Spring	Spring 2019	2018-2019 Full
Class	1st 9 weeks	2018	2018-2019	2019 3rd	4th 9 weeks	Year Total
of		2nd 9	Total for	9 weeks		
		weeks	Semester			
2030	8	17	25	11	11	47
2028	13	14	27	15	11	53
2027	9	15	24	14	8	46
Total	30	46	76	40	30	146

In Table 8, The type of referrals that these students received during the 2018-2019 school year is displayed.

Table 8

*Type of Referrals for the 2018-2019 School Year*

Referral Category	Cohort Year 2030	Cohort Year 2028	Cohort Year 2027
Insubordination	11	15	19
Classroom Disruption	19	15	9
Fighting	1	4	3
Profanity	0	4	2
Safety Violation	7	3	3
Off Task Behavior	9	12	10
Total	47	53	46

Students began to receive a small amount of mentoring in the 2019-2020 school year.

Table 9 shows the number of referrals the same three cohorts received in 2019-2020, with mentoring being a factor.

Table 9

*Referral Amounts for Targeted Students 2019-2020*

Cohort Class of	Fall 2019 1 <sup>st</sup> 9 weeks	Fall 2019 2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 weeks	Fall SY 2019-2020 Total for Semester	Spring 2020 3 <sup>rd</sup> 9 weeks	Spring 2020 4 <sup>th</sup> 9 weeks	2019-2020 Full Year Total
2030	3	8	11	5	1	17
2028	5	9	14	9	1	24
2027	5	5	10	6	3	19
Total	13	22	35	20	5	60

Table 10 shows the type of referrals three cohorts received during the 2019-2020 school year.

Table 10

*Type of Referrals for the 2019-2020 School Year*

Referral Category	Cohort Year 2030	Cohort Year 2028	Cohort Year 2027
Insubordination	3	4	5
Classroom Disruption	7	8	4
Fighting	1	0	1
Profanity	0	0	2

Safety Violation	3	3	0
Off Task Behavior	3	9	7
Total	17	24	19

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Comparing the number of referrals by the three cohort classes for the two school years is displayed below. The percent decrease in referrals is displayed in Table 11.

Table 11

*Percent Decrease of Referral Totals for the 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 School Year*

Cohort Class of	2018-2019 Referral Totals	2019-2020 Referral Totals	Percent Decrease
2030	47	17	63.83%
2028	53	24	54.72%
2027	46	19	58.69%

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**Theme #1.** As stated in Table 7, a total of 146 discipline referrals were written during the 2018-2019 school year. There were three cohort classes involved in this data. The cohort class of 2028 had the highest number of referrals out of the three cohort classes. In all three cohorts, students received more referrals in the first semester than they did in the second semester. This data shows the severity of the discipline problem at Homestead Elementary. A total of seven students totaled a total of 146 referrals.

**Theme #2.** In the 2018-2019 school year, students received the majority of their referrals for insubordination and classroom disruption. This data is prevalent because it shows that defiant behavior led to most of the referrals. The identifiable theme of this data is that students might

have a problem with following directions. This school year was the year before these seven students received mentoring.

**Theme #3.** In the 2019-2020 school year, when mentoring was implemented, insubordination referrals decreased to one of the lowest totals out of all of the various types of referrals. This may show that the presence of a mentor can assist these students in respecting their teachers.

**Theme #4.** All three cohort classes had seen a decrease of 50% or more in the number of referrals they received from 2018-2019 to the 2019-2020 school year, which is an indicator that mentoring is effective.

### **Discussion**

This study is intertwined with a plethora of topics from the literature review. Administrators, teachers, and archival data showed a focus on mentoring. Chan (2015) indicated that mentoring minority students will have a lasting effect on the behavior and academic achievement inside and outside of the classroom and that mentoring can turn troubled students into model citizens. Administrators discussed various topics regarding behavior. A few of the things that the administrators addressed in their interviews aligned with many teachers' views on discipline. The survey questions that were given to teachers discussed their viewpoints on discipline and mentoring in their classroom.

One thing that administrators valued was fewer disruptions, and this was one of the referral types that many Black male students received in abundance. The culture of the classroom can shift with constant disruptions in the classroom. Abry (2017) disputed that as the school year goes on, students' behavioral reactions begin to mold the classroom elements and if one student is continuously disrupting the classroom, the culture of the classroom can negatively shift.

Collins (2016) explained the goal is to empower a positive classroom environment by utilizing various strategies to maintain connections with students and positively impact the culture of the classroom long-term.

Another topic that administrators addressed was Black male role models and the ability to relate to Black male students. Administrators feel that teachers have to be culturally aware of the students that are in their class. Lew (2016) attested that as classrooms begin to be more culturally diverse, it is important that teachers be educated on ways to instruct their students to meet the needs of all cultures in the classroom. Akifyeva (2018) asserted that one of the discrepancies of instructors toward Black male students is that their perceptions can be linked to inaccurate stereotypes of Black male students in their classroom. Having more Black male teachers as role-models can decrease the prejudice that Black male students face in the classroom.

One thing that stood out in the teacher survey was the majority of the teachers felt that students have the right to the necessary resources that will make them successful. In the literature review, Hughes (2013) stated that Black males and families continue to face negative classroom assessments through inadequate resources. Caldarella (2017) stated that a plethora of schools have limited resources to mediate with classroom behavioral troubles; hence many classroom teachers may not have the support they require to implement successful classroom management. Even though these teachers feel that students deserve the right to resources, the research discussing resources shows that many schools have limited in this area.

A trend that showed with all cohorts, who were examined, was the decrease in the number of discipline referrals when mentoring was implemented. Insubordination and classroom disruptions went down dramatically. The strategies mentors are giving students to cope with their behavior include knowing how to respond to being upset and when to speak in class. Pas (2016)

discussed that developing research suggests that culturally responsive classroom administration procedures may assist with teacher's classroom worries before they result in unbalanced classroom referrals. Building a relationship with the students showed to be valuable to how they work in the classroom. Payne (2018) discovered that restorative programs in a plethora of schools center severely on relationship building and repairing the harm caused by student misbehavior and distractions. Mentors explaining to students how valuable they are to the culture of the classroom and how their misbehavior can slow learning for everyone.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this applied research study was to answer the central research question: How can the problem of Black male students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida? Five administrators were interviewed to get a better understanding of their thoughts on the classroom behavior of Black male students. Sub-question 1, "How would administrators participating in interviews solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?" one Principal, three Assistant Principals, and one Dean gave their input on Black male students' behavior. Four themes were identified as being Black male mentors, disruption, Black male students being leaders, and mentorship program. Sub-question 2, "How would teachers participating in surveys solve the problem of Black males' classroom behavior at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?" eighteen teachers were surveyed on how Black male students behave in their class, and do they see interventions being a solution.

The four emerging themes from the study were: (a) Black male students having a high rate of referrals scoring the lowest, (b) the right to a fair education and resources, (c) mentoring being an option, and (d) mentoring being a beneficial tool for Black male students. Sub-question



3, “How would archival data inform the problem of Black male students’ classroom behavior be at Homestead Elementary School in northeast Florida?” archival data was used for seven students to see their amount the type, and several referrals that were given. The data led to four emerging themes: (a) the number of referrals, (b) the type of referrals, (c) the type of referrals that decreased when mentoring was implemented, and (d) the percentage of decrease in the number of referrals that were given. All of these themes can be used to solve the problem of Black male students in the classroom. The themes were referenced to the related literature. Strategies from these themes will be explained in Chapter Five.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this applied study was to solve the problem of classroom behavior for Black male students at Homestead Elementary School and to formulate a solution to address the problem. The problem that guided this study was that many Black male students were getting a high rate of referrals due to various classroom behaviors. The rest of chapter five explains and discusses the resources necessary to solve the problem of Black male students' behavior, focusing on resources, funds that are needed, the roles and responsibility of various stakeholders, and the timeline that should be implemented.

### **Restatement of the Problem**

The problem was that Black male students at Homestead Elementary School have a high rate of disciplinary issues in the classroom that cause them to be removed from class, suspended, and expelled. In regards to these students, elementary schools may have a lack of positive role models and mentors at the beginning of the school year; thus, as students go through the school year, the rate of referrals starts to increase. For a few of the students at Homestead Elementary, a new mentoring program was characterized as serving students who have a high rate of referrals and absenteeism. A multimethod approach was utilized to collect data regarding Black males' classroom behavior and how to solve it. A qualitative interview was conducted of educational administrators to get their viewpoint on Black male students' behavior and how they would address it. A quantitative survey was collected from 18 elementary school teachers. Archival data were collected to convey the benefit of mentoring for Black male students in the classroom.

### **Proposed Solution to the Central Question**

The central question for this applied study that asked how can the problem of Black male

students' classroom behavior be improved at Homestead Elementary School was addressed by looking at different strategies and themes.

By having a mentorship program, Homestead Elementary could see the classroom behavior of Black male students improve in regards to those students who would typically have frequent behavior issues. Having all stakeholders, such as students, mentors, mentor advisors, teachers, and parents engaged, will play an important part in success. The main goal is decreasing the negative classroom behavior of Black male students who previously had a high rate of referrals and needs to be acknowledged by everyone involved. Everyone must understand the process of mentoring and the amount of time it takes to address the problem.

One of the themes that came from administrators and teachers is that mentoring is a beneficial tool for Black male students. Administrators and teachers contest that not only is mentoring good for Black male students' behavior, but it is also beneficial for their academics. Currently, Homestead Elementary School only offers a small mentoring program that targets Black male students. Yet, there is a vast number of Black male students who fit the criteria to be mentored. The objective of youth mentoring development is to increase the number of youthful individuals who have at least one strong mentoring relationship with their mentors (Schwartz, 2016). The relationship that happens between mentors and students have to go deeper than education and focus more on coping mechanisms, which shows a more honest relationship. Natural mentoring connections shows signs of being stronger and harvest more substantial benefits than formal mentoring connections (Schwartz, 2016). The goals of the mentoring program are to provide students with a listening ear and someone who can guide them in the correct ways to act in the classroom, improving in all aspects as a student. Mentoring relationships have been connected to advancements in student's discernment of their teacher and

peer connections, counting levels of trust, closeness, and communication, and these social changes, in turn, are related to positive changes in a wide cluster of formative results (Raposa, 2017).

The second step will be scheduling time for mentors and students to meet. Homestead Elementary is on a seven-day rotating schedule, which means that the type of classes that students are in specials each day. It is not beneficial for students to miss out on core subjects or to be absent from the same specials (art, music, PE, interventions) class every mentor session. Currently, mentors are coming to schools at the same time each week, which is fifteen minutes before lunch. This means that students are pulled from their core class and spends time with their mentors transitioning into their lunch period. Now, students will meet with their mentors during alternate specials days to ensure that students are not missing out on core their core classes or missing the subject of the same special. If mentors want to have lunch with their mentees, they will have to come back during their lunchtime.

The third step will be tracking discipline data each quarter. The mentor advisor will analyze the discipline data at the end of each quarter, looking for the number of referrals and the type of referrals the mentees are receiving. This will let the mentor advisor know what things to look for, the adjustments that need to be made, and the things the mentor can address with the student. Data is one of the most vital parts of this program. Instead of incapable approaches, such as approaches commanding equity in the discipline at schools or training in social sensitivity, a great approach is to utilize data to recognize particular situations in which disparities are most grounded as well as situations with equity in making decisions and execute interventions that are custom-fitted to enhance equity in those circumstances (McIntosh, 2017).

Lastly, all stakeholders involved in the mentoring process will be interviewed at the end

of the year, asking about their thoughts on the program. This will give the mentor advisor some direction on if teachers, parents, mentors, and students feel that the mentoring program was effective. The quantitative survey data will also be used to see if any students will exit the program or continue for another year. Mentor advisors can then see if any new students will be added to the mentorship program.

### **Resources Needed**

One of the main resources needed for this plan is discipline logs. These discipline logs will describe the type of behaviors that students are displaying and the frequency of these behaviors. This will allow teachers and mentors to know which behaviors need to be addressed. School buses are needed to take students to various educational establishments, and requiring money to pay for the bus and the driver. The bus and the driver would be obtained through the school district's transportation services. It will be up to the mentor advisor to work with the school's bookkeeper to send funds to transportation services.

### **Funds Needed**

There is a need for funds to implement a solid mentorship program. These allocations of funds would go towards enlisting mentors, purchasing food for students and mentors, taking field trips to various educational places, and collaboration efforts with parents. It can hard for teachers to dedicate time to mentoring students when their workload is filled with multiple things to be an effective teacher. Adding mentoring on top of that is another duty on top of the things that they are already doing. So, paying for mentors seems like a feasible option because these mentors can be paid for their services.

Funds are needed to pay for food that will serve students and mentors during the students' lunch break. Mentors can sit with the students during lunchtime and build a rapport

with the students. Funds used to go on field trips will show students' education being used in the real world. Funds have to be used to bring in parents to build a strong support system for parents, students, and mentors.

One of the barriers that can be present for these solutions will be finding funding for these initiatives. If a school district is short on money, they will have to result in measures such as fundraising to generate funds. This can be done in school or outside of school. Fundraising outside of school will require permission from parents. The school could reach out to businesses and see if they can financially sponsor students.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

There are a plethora of roles and responsibilities when implementing this plan. First, there must be an advisor to monitor the mentorship program. This advisor must be trained in the aspects of mentoring so they can guide those individuals who have enlisted to be mentors. The advisor is the go-to person for inquiries and plans. They create the activities that the mentors and students will partake in inside and outside of school.

An important component of this program is having qualified mentors. Mentors should clear a background check and work well with children. A mentor's job will revolve around being a trusted voice of reasoning for the students. Mentors will do daily check-ins with students. Mentors will spend time with students outside of the classroom. With the parent's permission, mentors will take students to educational places that were selected by the mentor advisor. Mentors can get updates from teachers on the progress of student's behavior.

Teachers are valuable in ensuring that this mentorship program is effective. Teachers are the liaison between mentors and students. They will communicate with the mentors as far as the progression of the student's behavior and the things to consider. Teachers will track the data of

the student's behavior throughout the school year.

Parents play a major role in implementing this plan. Parents have to give their permission for the child to be mentored and be receptive to the idea of mentoring. Parents can communicate with mentors about their concerns and certain triggers about their child. This gives the mentor an idea of some things they can address while they are mentoring.

### **Timeline**

This project can be completed in ten months (see Appendix I), starting from selecting a mentor advisor for the school to when the last day of the school year. The mentor advisor then sends out letters to parents about a mentoring possibility for their child. The next step is to hire mentors to spend time with selected students who have a high rate of referrals. Hiring mentors will make them feel obligated to attend the mentor sessions. Volunteering is free and has fewer obligations for mentors. Mentors then do a preliminary meeting with their mentees to build a rapport before the official mentoring starts. Mentors will begin to mentor students inside of school and outside of school on educational trips. In the last week of school, the mentor advisor will compare the data from the current calendar school year.

### **Solution Implications**

One of the positive implications of this study is that Black male students who have a high rate of referrals will see a decrease in the number of referrals they receive. Spending less time out of the classroom due to behavior means these students will be able to spend more instructional time in the classroom, therefore, allowing these students the opportunity to grow academically. Having fewer behavioral distractions in the classroom means that teachers will be able to get through their lessons more effectively. This not only benefits the teachers but other students who are trying to learn. Having fewer students receive referrals will benefit a school's

discipline data. A school with fewer referrals can see their administrators focus more on academics. Administrators do not have to spend as much time processing referrals and calling parents. They utilize their time going into classrooms and offering professional development.

Possible negative implications of this study focus on the funds and time that goes into this plan. This plan means that schools will have to fundraise to supplement the activities that mentors and students will engage. If a school's budget is low, that means that fundraising will be essential. The time that will go into this plan can be tedious for teachers. Teachers have to dedicate their time tracking behavior data. This data has to be tracked from the beginning of the school year to the last week of school.

### **Evaluation Plan**

To accurately gauge the effectiveness of the plan, Homestead Elementary should have the mentor advisor survey teachers at the end of each quarter to find out if mentoring is working. Towards the end of each quarter, the mentor advisor should look at discipline data to see if the number of referrals that Black male students are receiving is decreasing. Comparing the summative data to the quantitative survey will allow the mentor advisor to look at the mentorship program in a clear perspective.

One of the limitations of this study was the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic. This made the second half of the fourth quarter limited. Depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic alters education in the future, the number of students in the classroom and how teachers interact with students can distort discipline data. Future studies would be more accurately prepared for their school district's situational plan in case school is out for some time and understanding how referrals are written while in virtual learning and who processes discipline referrals for students in a virtual setting. The type of referrals that students receive and the type of consequences that



students receive are different in a virtual setting. Future studies could produce more data if they focus on schools that have a higher number of Black male students.

### **Summary**

School discipline is not just a problem that needs to be addressed at Homestead Elementary; it is a problem that needs to be addressed nationally (Severini, 2018). Solutions to the problem of school discipline will not only benefit the students, but it will also benefit the schools. By fixing a school's discipline problems, a school is not only making the classroom environment comfortable for everyone, but it is also providing an opportunity for improvements in academics. Whether discipline is stemmed from classroom management, parent involvement, student engagement, disabilities, or violence in the neighborhood, there are opportunities for elementary schools around the nation to tackle the problem head-on to decrease the number of discipline referrals of Black male students in school. Data indicated that the implementation of a mentor program at Homestead Elementary was impactful for their Black male students, which also benefited the entire school (Goldner, 2017).

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: IRB Approval Form

# LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 15, 2020

Terrance Siler  
[REDACTED]

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY19-20-266 IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS AT HOMESTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPLIED RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Terrance Siler, [REDACTED]

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the date of the IRB meeting at which the protocol was approved: May 15, 2020. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make modifications in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update submission to the IRB.

These submissions can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent forms can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. These forms should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent documents should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*  
Research Ethics Office

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## Appendix B: Administrator Approval Form

April 23, 2020

Dear Terrance Siler:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS AT HOMESTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPLIED RESEARCH STUDY, I have decided to grant you permission to contact our faculty and invite them to participate in your study and conduct your study at Allen Park Elementary School. You have permission to receive and utilize the student discipline referrals for your research study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

- The requested data WILL BE STRIPPED of identifying information before it is provided to the researcher.
- I am requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,



Principal



*Reading Renaissance Master School*

## Appendix C: Administrator Consent Form

### Consent

**Title of the Project:** IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS AT HOMESTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPLIED RESEARCH STUDY

**Principal Investigator:** Terrance Siler, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18-65 years of age and an elementary school administrator for the School District of Lee County. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

#### What is the study about and why is it being done?

Research shows that minority students receive disproportionately more referrals for nonviolent offenses, such as insubordination and classroom noise compared to their white classmates (Hilberth, 2014). Gage (2016) noted that the higher the frequency of student discipline referrals in elementary school, the greater the chances that students would be suspended in middle school. The purpose of the study is to solve the problem of classroom behavior for black male students; analyzing how administrators would solve the problem of black male students' behavior in the classroom.

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in a recorded phone interview. The interview should take around 30 minutes to complete.

#### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Society may benefit from this study by using this study as insight on how black males' behavior can be improved in the classroom.

#### What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

#### How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

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Due to COVID-19, interviews will take place over the phone for the protection of both parties' health and safety.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

#### Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

#### What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

#### Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Terrance Siler. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [tsiler1914@gmail.com]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Sharon Michael-Chadwell, at [sdmichaelchadwell@liberty.edu].

#### Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu)

#### Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

- The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Date

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### **Appendix D: Interview Questions**

1. How would you define student misbehavior?
2. What are your thoughts and feedback on how student misbehavior affects the classroom?
3. How would you describe your experience with Black males' classroom misbehavior?
4. How has Black male students' behavior contributed to the culture of your teachers' classroom?
5. If students are missing out on instructional time due to misbehaving, how has that affected their academic success?
6. What feeling comes to mind when you see Black males misbehaving at a higher rate than their peers?
7. What factors positively impact Black males' classroom behavior?
8. What can be done to fix Black male behavior at Homestead Elementary School?

## Appendix E: Teacher Consent Forms

### Consent

**Title of the Project:** IMPROVING THE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS AT HOMESTEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPLIED RESEARCH STUDY

**Principal Investigator:** Terrance Siler, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, must be at least 18-65 years old. Employed by the School District of Lee County. Participants will be will elementary school teachers. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

#### What is the study about and why is it being done?

Research shows that minority students receive disproportionately more referrals for nonviolent offenses, such as insubordination and classroom noise compared to their white classmates (Hilberth, 2014). Gage (2016) noted that the higher the frequency of student discipline referrals in middle school, the greater the chances that students would be suspended in high school. The purpose of the study is to solve the problem of classroom behavior for black male students; analyzing how teachers would solve the problem of Black male students' behavior in the classroom.

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things

1. Complete an anonymous survey. This will take about 5 minutes to complete.

#### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Society may benefit from this study by using this study as insight on how black males' behavior can be improved in the classroom.

#### What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

#### How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant survey responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

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Approved on 5-15-2020

**Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting these relationships.

**What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Terrance Siler. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [tsiler1914@gmail.com]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]liberty.edu].

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu)

**Your Consent**

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

### Appendix F: Survey Questions

1. Black male students in my classroom have more behavior issues than non-minority male students. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
2. Black males in my classroom have a high rate of referrals. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
3. Black male students in my classroom have higher academic issues compared to their peers. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
4. I feel the Black male students in my classroom act out because they have no role-models. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
5. I feel all students have the right to fair education. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
6. I feel all students should have access to the resources available to ensure they are successful. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
7. I believe mentoring is a great option for Black males at my school. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
8. Mentoring has shown to be beneficial for Black male students' academics in my classroom. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree
9. Mentoring has shown to be beneficial for Black male students' behavior in my classroom. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree



**Appendix G: Archival Data Example**

Student	Cohort Year	Race	Amount of Referrals for 2018-2019	Amount of Referrals for 2019-2020
Student A	2030	Black	22	8
Student B	2030	Black	25	9
Student C	2028	Black	18	7
Student D	2028	Black	18	9
Student E	2028	Black	17	8
Student F	2027	Black	20	8
Student G	2027	Black	26	11

## Appendix H: Survey Responses

Black male students in my	Black males in my classr	Black male students in my	I feel the Black male stud	I feel all student have the	I feel all students should	I believe mentoring is a g	Mentoring has shown to b	Mentoring has shown to b
Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Agree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree
Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Neutral
Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	Neutral
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral
Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree
Neutral	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree
Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree
Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree
Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree
Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree
Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral

### **Appendix I: Timeline**

- August 2020- School's mentor advisor is chosen.
- August 2020- Mentor Advisor sends letters out to parents about the mentorship program.
- August 2020- The Mentor Advisor selected mentors
- September 2020- Mentors have a preliminary meeting with mentees
- September 2020- May 2021, Mentors begin mentoring students.
- May 2021- Mentor Advisor analyzes discipline data