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# Impact of Intersectionality of School Discipline and Race on Boys of Color

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MPA, National University, 2011

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Disciplinary practices in California result in minority boys receiving a high rate of disproportionate discipline in the public-school system requiring those students to decide whether to return to school to achieve their high school diploma. The purpose of this case study was to explore what impacts the expelled student's education decisions from the perspective of individuals who have experience with the California disciplinary system and counseling students who were expelled. The theoretical foundation used was critical race theory by Derick Bell and a conceptual framework of intersectionality and race context developed by the Combahee Initiative and Crenshaw. The study used snowball and purposeful sampling to identify school leaders with experience counseling expelled students on completing their education. Eight high school staff from California public high schools completed three researcher-developed questionnaires via a Delphi data collection technique. Three rounds of narrative data synthesizing of responses were coded and categorized for thematic analysis using In Vivo coding. The findings from this study indicated an agreement that an expelled student's decision on whether to return to school was influenced by feelings of racial and leadership inequity in administering discipline. Positive social change may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff teams working together to remodel perceptions about race and its impact on returning to school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color.

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who blessed me with the patience and dedication to accomplish this journey.  To my wife Pamela who has been and continues to be my biggest supporter and the voice that helped me to complete this journey. And to my late father and mother, Johnnie L. Shepard Sr. and Valeria F. Shepard, who I lost just months before completing this journey for their love, inspiring words, and the thought of knowing that they are smiling down on me as I carry their spirit and love with me for the rest of my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Disciplinary policy in public school impacts boys of color disproportionately. During the school year 2011-2012, the state of California rate of expulsion was two times that of the enrollment percentage for African American boys (7% and 14%), and a 5% disproportionate rate over the enrollment rate for Latinos (52%/57%; California Department of Education, 2018). State expulsion statistics from the California Department of Education (CDE) revealed that boys in grades 9-12 for school years ending in 2013, 2014, and 2015 revealed 364 expulsions for African American male youths for the federal offense of violence (with and without injury), while Latino and White boys were primarily expelled for illicit drugs at 2503 expulsions for Latinos and 1049 for White boys (CDE, 2018).

In this dissertation, I investigated the impact of disproportionate expulsion on education decisions of boys of color as compared to their White counterparts. The study used iterative interview questions to generate ideas from the perspective of knowledgeable academic professionals on student perceptions of what impacts why this population decides to or not to return to school to achieve their high school diploma. Social change may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff teams working together to remodel perceptions about race and its impact on returning to school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color.

This study needed to be completed because boys of color are expelled more than their White counterparts, and there was a need to generate reasons regarding how disproportionate discipline impacts this population's decision to return or not return to

school to achieve their high school diploma or GED. The social implication for not collecting the thoughts and opinions from knowledgeable academic professionals on this problem is a continuation of maintaining the status quo of disproportionately expelling boys of color without having discourse about the perceptions of those students about their experience.

Research addresses the disproportionality of school discipline results for boys of color. Skiba (2014) and Skiba and Losen (2016) posited that discriminatory and disproportionate disciplinary practices were prevalent in public schools impacting mostly children of color. Rafa (2019) stated that the effects of these policies are more pronounced for students of color who have historically experienced higher rates of suspensions and expulsions, with recent national data showing that Black students in K-12 schools are 3.8 times as likely to be suspended, and twice as likely to be expelled, as White students. EdData.org (2016) provided data that posited disproportionate disciplinary outcomes for students of color providing a perspective on disciplinary outcomes in public schools throughout the country. Okilwa and Robert (2017) described how school policies and practices have historically lent themselves to disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates based on a student's race, gender, and disability. Skiba, Arrendondo, Gray, and Rausch (2016) stated that though expanding research as led to understanding disciplinary disparities for African American students, research has been limited for other groups such as Hispanics and other student groups. The removal of students has been considered normative when behavior conflicts with the rules of discipline postulating that expelling students has resulted in a failure towards student

success (Skiba, 2000). Carter et al. (2016) said that though the Brown vs. Board of Education decision was intended to mitigate the racism of the time, disparities in discipline persist in school discipline today, positing a need to focus on race when developing actions to take on these disparities. Kohli et al. (2017) posited that conceptualizations allude to racial difference but are disconnected from structural analyses and continue to prevail in K–12 education research. The goal of their research was to challenge racism-neutral and racism-evasive approaches to studying racial disparities by centering current research that makes visible the normalized facets of racism in K–12 schools with research questions that garnered experiences of students of color. Freeman and Steidl (2016) described how the administering of discipline to students of color results in disproportionate outcomes while maintaining racial disparity and segregation as the status quo. The research posits a disproportionate outcome for students of color because of staff members and their biases, the normative behavior that is expected of students, and the resulting failure of student success, and that these outcomes posit an environment of exclusion while maintaining the status quo of expulsion disproportionality. The research also posits means to mitigate the expulsion process, but the data presented in this study reveals that a reduction in expulsions does not translate to mitigation of the disproportionate outcomes faced by boys of color as evidenced in California.   Although research supplies a perspective of disproportionality praxis in public schools, this study will also explore ideas and strategies recommended by California public high school knowledgeable academic professionals to mitigate the impact of the disproportionality while proactively mitigating the disproportionate number

of boys of color being expelled from school. In this chapter I provide an overview of the present qualitative Delphi technique research study, in which I include the background, problem statement, purpose, research question, theoretical and conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and deliminations, limitations, significance, and a summary and transition to chapter two.

**Background**

The research literature posits public school discipline in California public schools intersects with race as students are held acccountable for violation of the CA EDC § 48900-65001 (1976). The background of the study will focus on the disproportionate discipline aspect of expulsion for boys of color and the use of the Delphi technique to garner the opinion of California public high school knowledgeable academic professionals to garner thoughts, opinions, and perspectives on the perceptions of the impact of expulsion on this population. Prior research will give a view into the disproportionate impact on this group, but it does not provide the perceived impact on expelled students (Anderson & Ritter, 2017; Owens & McLanahan, 2019). The problem statement for the study gives a research opportunity to garner knowledgeable academic professionals' opinions through conversations with formerly expelled students about how boys of color's experiences and their decision to return or not return to school to achieve their high school diploma using the Delphi technique for analyzing those conversations to explore expulsion's impact (Skiba and Losen et al., 2016). Social change may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff teams working

together to remodel perceptions about race and its impact on returning to school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color.

Current research by Shigeoka and Lolich (2017) described that though expulsions were on the decrease for Black children, the expulsion rate for African Americans remained high over the years of the study from 2007/8 to 2013/14. The critical race theory (CRT) lens theorized by Derrick Bell (1973) was used as the theoretical framework for this study.

Miller et al. (2020) also stated that counter narrative recently emerged in education research as a tool to stimulate educational equity focusing on CRT and discourse, and other approaches to teaching for diversity. This approach would produce a discourse about race that would allow educators to gain a better understanding of how the complexity of race can be introduced in an education setting. The Delphi technique was originally developed by the Rand Corporation to help determine the use of nuclear weapons in future war through the surveying of military professionals on the topic of warfighting (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963).

Current literature revealed a gap of specifically examining the ideas and recommendations that could be garnered from California public school knowledgeable academic professionals through their perspective of the impact and mitigation of disproportionate application of discipline for boys of color expelled from California public high schools. The study is needed to address the impact of disproportionate discipline outcomes for boys of color and their perception of the impact on their decision

to return or not return to achieve a high school diploma as told to knowledgeable academic professionals.

## Problem Statement

It is unknown how or if race, law, and power can explain the disparity in California's disproportionate expulsion rates of minority boys and the impact on the education of those expelled. California school districts disproportionally expel boys of color at a higher rate than White boys excluding them from school through the use of laws and policies meant to treat all students faily within the public school system. Research by the U. S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2016) described disciplinary disparities on a national scale, providing a perspective on race, gender, and type of disciplinary punishment ranging from suspension, expulsion, and arrests by law enforement. The data in the report describes, on a national scale, that African American boys were expelled at a rate of over 2 to 1, garnering 36% of the total expulsions (OCR, 2016). Smith and Harper (2015) said that their study of school discipline revealed Blacks were disproportionately expelled at rates higher than their representation in the student population as compared to their peers and that these racial disparities have been thoroughly documented but remain the status quo for children of color. Latinos were below their rate for expulsions as compared to their enrollment population on a national scale, averaging 22% of expulsions with an enrollment of 24%. But at the state level in California, the Latino population was 52% of public school enrollment; however, their expulsions were 57% of their total enrollment (California Department of Education, 2018).  In 2012, Latino male expulsion in California was 22% and 19% above its total

enrollment population and for a county and school district, respectively (Calfornia DOE, 2018). In 2012, White boys were 28% of the population but only 23% of the total expulsions. The data provides a disproportionate perspective of discipline for African American boys and Latinos in the California public school system for the school year ending in 2012.  Though a pattern of teacher bias in school discipline has been reduced in California, Skiba (2014) posits that children of color are more at risk for exclusion from school. This data also indicates a disproportionate expulsion of students of color under the guise of safety and security in public schools in southern states. Literature reviewed for this study found that others have investigated this problem by looking at race and school discipline. The literature did not specifically examine the ideas and recommendations that could be garnered from California public school knowledgeable academic professionals who have had conversations with previously expelled students about their expulsion experiences and perceptions about those experieinces through the use of a questionnaire instrument on the impact and mitigation of disproportionate discipline for boys of color. This study contributed to the literature by generating ideas on the impact of disproportionate discipline outcomes on boys of color as compared to their White  counterparts and recommendations on how to mitigate the impact for this target population by changing expulsion policy's disproportionate discipline outcomes' impact on boys of color decision to return to California public high schools.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to explore, from the perspective of individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and counseling

students who were expelled, former students' perceptions about the impact of expulsion and retuning to school and obtain recommendations on how to improve the application of the code of conduct.

## Research Questions

The intent of this study is to investigate the perceptions of the impact of disproportionate expulsion on boys of color as compared to their White counterparts and to garner ideas from knowledgeable California public high school knowledgeable academic professionals, through questionnaire feedback, and any recommendations for mitigation of these outcomes in California public high schools. The research will address two central research questions:

1. What perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affected attitudes toward returning to school to continue their education after expulsion?

2. How can the application of race, law, and power explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus White students?

## Theoretical Framework

Bell (1973) developed a view of race stemming from the legal system as CRT. CRT examines the proposition of the phylogenetic relationship of race in the outcome of court cases that claimed to provide a fair trial to Black defendants in the court system congruent with the application of race, law, and power of that system. The analysis provided a perspective of political decision making as the case of Brown vs. Board (1954) was not about desegregation, but the worldview of the United States and their

treatment of the African-American people at the time. CRT also parallels the examination of the racism embedded in the institution of schools and the discrimination and marginalization of African American students. Bell described race as a component of everyday society and could not be ignored due to major civil rights legislation from the 1960's and the privileged White majority tiring of the benefits Blacks were receiving that would infringe on society's normative behavior towards Blacks in American society. Crenshaw (2018) posited that there was blindness in legal cases with laws designed to protect the rights of all citizens still positing de jure racism. The color blindness described by Crenshaw (2019) is visible in the disproportionate disciplinary outcomes in the public school system through the data provided by the CDE (2016).

The theoretical framework espoused in this study is that race is a prevalent factor in the institution of the California public school system that results in the disproportionate expulsion of boys of color. The intersectionality of school discipline and race conceptual framework posits disproportionate outcomes and relate to the research questions in defining the impact of expulsion on the decisions on educational achievement for boys of color and will be further explained in Chapter 2.

### Conceptual Framework: Intersectionality and Race

The conceptual framework posits how school discipline and race come together to form a nexus that results in a disproportionate outcome for boys of color as compared to their White counterparts and the impact on education decisions (Bell, 1973, Crenshaw, 2018). The conceptual framework of this study posits that when school discipline administered by the leadership and race intersect, the result is a disproportionate outcome

for boys of color resulting in discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion. Bell always recommended discourse for the sake of institutions for which race, as in this study, intersects with school discipline resulting in disproportionality in outcomes for boys of color to include racism, exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination in the public-school system and the underlying relationship to race in an implicit versus explicit context to include maintaining the status quo (Bourke, 2016; Brown vs. Board, 1954).

When school discipline traverses the demarcation of normative expectant behavior for a student, the Local Education Agency (LEA) actions form the nexus with race with boys of color experiencing a disproportionate outcome of expulsion. This outcome places these students in the position of making decisions about completing their education based on the choices they have after being expelled from school by using their own perceptions when engaged in discourse with knowledgeable academic professionals about their expulsion experiences.  This posits that race, as postulated by Bell (1973), is intertwined in the intersectionality of school discipline and race, school culture, and society. This design was chosen to study the impact, through qualitative means, on a specific population of expelled boys to understand the perceptions of the impact on their decision to achieve or not achieve a high school education post-expulsion through discourse with knowledgeable academic professionals.

**Nature of the Study**

This study used a qualitative methodology and a case study design to explore the opinions of knowledgeable academic professionals on their conversations with formerly expelled male students on the impact of race and discipline on boys of color as compared

to their White counterparts. The case study design was selected because narrative responses from open ended questions would provide rich, thick data from which the experiences of specific cases can be garnered for analysis and emergent data resulting from analysis of narrative responses of participants on the perceptions of those cases in the research (Yin, 2017) The population for this study was from over 290 public high schools in 12 counties in Southern California public school systems. A snowball sampling technique and purposeful sampling was used to recruit five to 10 participants, resulting in eight participants responding to Questionnaires 1 and 2 and seven participants to Questionnaire 3. The sample of eight participants was based on prior research postiting recruiting a homogeneous sample group with expertise counseling formerly expelled students that provided a diverse cadre of experience for completing the questionnaires (Brady, 2015; Renzi & Freitas, 2015). In purposeful sampling, it is important that the right sample is selected to ensure the research questions can be adequately answered (Luciani et al., 2019). Purposeful sampling involves choosing participants and sites for data collection that will inform understanding of the research problem and phenomenon under study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data was collected using three researcher developed instruments to garner the opinions of knowledgeable academic professionals. I used a Delphi data collection technique framework. The Dephi data colletion technique allowed reaching agreement within the group on themes which impact boys of color, as well as garnering ideas and recommendations on the mitigation of the impact of disproportionate discipline on achieving or not achieving their high school diploma. Knowledgeable academic

professionals that were identified as participants included former and current school staff

personnel from the California public school system who had experience speaking with

formerly expelled students about being expelled and achieving their high school

education (Brady, 2015; Renzi and Freitas, 2015). Recruitment of knowledgeable

academic professionals was conducted through public high schools within 12 counties

located in the southern region of California. Recruitment was supported by working with

local high school district leadership, providing recruitment flyers to these organizations

for posting in common areas within their orgainzations for prospective participants to

decide anonymously if they want to participate by calling or emailing me, and a snowball

technique through social media (LinkedIn; Avella, 2016). The recruitment for

participants was through communicating with local churches, the education and non-

profit community such as the California Teacher's Association, the NAACP, the Urban

League, and the Association of African American Educators (AAAE). Parent teacher

organizations of San Diego and Riverside Counties also supplementing recruitment

efforts by asking other organizations and persons to contact me about anyone that they

know who met the participant criteria that would be willing to participate. I also made

contacts via the Walden University Participant Pool. The data were subsequently coded

for themes and transcribed for review by the participants to garner responses that resulted

in feedback on those results striving for consensus and recommendations and strategies

for mitigating the impact of expulsion that could result in future disproprtionate expulsion

for the target population impacting students' decision to return or not return to achieve

their high school diploma.  The data was coded using the Invivo coding method described

by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018), capturing words or short phrases in the participant's questionnaire responses relating to their description of the former students' percetptions of the impact of expulsion on the decision to return or not return to school to earn a high school diploma. The study's transferability was based on broader applicability to other student groups disproportionately expelled from the public education system (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2018).

## Definitions

*Exclusionary Discipline* – Exclusionary discipline includes out of school suspensions and expulsions (Lindsay & Hart, 2017)

*Expert* – Experts are those people that have knowledge about the topic of concern (McMillan, King, & Tully, 2016). In this study, these include school staff members in the California public high school system in grades 9-12 that have conversed with expelled male students of color and their White counterparts.

*Racial Disproportionality* – Racial/ethnic disproportionality in school discipline refers to a particular racial/ethnic group that shows higher or lower rates of a given school discipline outcome than a comparison racial/ethnic group (Nishioka, 2017).

*School Expulsion* – School expulsion is the act of forcing out someone or something for a determined period of time as a disciplinary action (CA EDC § 48900-65001, 1976).

## Assumptions

The assumptions needed in the context of this study include:

1. Participants will give truthful and candid responses.

2. Expulsion experience from the perspective of formerly expelled students as told to participants will not be identical to other students' experiences.

3. Participants will have the experience speaking with expelled students about their education.

These assumptions were necessary to ensure that data collection was parallel to answering the research questions, but I acknowledge that diverse opinions may emanate from responses and that the assumptions should be taken into consideration when collecting the narrative data.

**Scope and Delimitations**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore formerly expelled students' perceptions of the disproportionate impact of expulsion on boys of color as told by individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and obtain recommendations on how to improve the disproportionate application of the code of conduct. The study addressed the gap in mitigation of outcomes by speaking with students and experienced academic professionals to generate recommendations to the school discipline policy being bounded and limited to the current CA EDC § 48900-65001 that is the policy for school discipline in the state of California. The scope of the study extended to recruitment of participants from a population of over 290 public high schools in 12 Southern California counties, selecting a group of knowledgeable academic professionals by providing flyers to public high school (grades 9-12) leadership via publicly accessible email addresses for schools located in the Southern California regions, and through snowball sampling through social media. I established an open

communication experience screening those prospective participants to ensure they met the criterion as knowledgeable academic professionals  The transferability of the study was based on broader applicability to mitigating disproportionate discipline for other student groups who are also disproportionately expelled from the public education system and mitigating the factors that impact decisions for returning or not returning to school to achieve a high school diploma  (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2018).

## Limitations

Limitations are threats to the validity of a research project (Creswell, 2020). Limitations to this proposed study included knowledgeable academic professionals' personal biases that they brought to the study through their feedback. This limitation was mitigated through the anonymity of group members and by creating an environment that allowed free expression of thoughts and ideas without judgement from other group members. An additional limitation was the time required for each questionnaire and the challenge of providing participants a reasonable timeframe conducive to their schedules to allow a concentrated effort to answer the questions with clarity and sustained interest. Group members were encouraged to complete all questionnaire iterations examining the perception of the impact on boys of color decision to return or not return to school to receive their high school diploma and mitigation of the problem of disproportionate discipline that results.   Because of these limitations, these results will not be able to be generalized beyond the expressed opinions of those who participated in the study. This is because perceptions of formerly expelled individuals and perceptions of other knowledgeable academic professionals who participate in a similar study will vary

dependent upon individual experiences and perceptions and cannot be generalized for each formerly expelled student or knowledgeable academic professional to other public high schools in California.

## Significance

The significance of this study is that it will encourage the use of discourse between students and faculty about student perceptions about expusion experiences, helping school faculty and California communities understand the perceptions of boys of color and the perspectives of academic professionals on the impact of expulsion on boys of color as compared to their White counterparts. Communities may also have the opportunity to receive ideas, recommendations, and strategies based on expert thoughts and opinions who particpated in the study to make policy recommendations for mitigating the disproportionate disciplinary practices in support of future requests to lawmakers to allocate funding and other resources. The potential contributions of the study that will advance the knowledge in the discipline is the analysis of the disproportionate impact on boys of color and their decision to return or not return to school to earn their high school diploma in California public high schools.  Social change may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff working together to remodel perceptions about race and school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color.

## Summary

In Chapter 1, I included the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research question, theoretical framework, nature of the study,

definition of terms, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, significance of the study, and summary. In Chapter 2, I include the literature research strategy, theoretical foundation to ground the research in theory, theoretical framework, factors such as expulsion policy, disproportionate expulsion, exclusion, intersectionality, marginalization, race, and summary. In Chapter 3, I include the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of worthiness, ethical procedures, and summary.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

**Introduction**

A problem in California public schools is it is unknown how or if race, law, and power can explain the disparity in California's disproportionate expulsion rates of minority boys and the impact on the education of those expelled. The purpose of this case study is to explore from the perspective of individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and counseling students who were expelled to understand the former students' perceptions of expulsion and returning to school and to obtain recommendations on how to improve the application of the code of conduct.

In the school year 2011-2012, the state of California rate of expulsion was two times that of the enrollment percentage for African American boys (7% and 14%), and a 5% disproportionate rate over the enrollment rate for Latinos (52%/57%) (California Department of Education, 2018). Disproportionate discipline research addresses the disproportionality of school discipline results for boys of color (Carter et al., 2016; Skiba, 2016, 2000), but not the generation of ideas and recommendations from knowledgeable academic professionals to mitigate future disproportionate disciplinary outcomes for boys of color. The nexus that is formed between school discipline and race lacks prior research. Research also lacks the perspective of knowledgeable academic professionals' in relation to previously expelled students, specifically regarding the factors that impacted expelled students' return to school. This study will add race, law, and power to the academic discourse on this topic.

The major sections of the chapter include the literature search strategy, theoretical foundation, conceptual framework, literature review related to key concepts, and a summary and conclusion of major themes.

**Literature Search Strategy**

I conducted my scholarly research through the Walden University Library by accessing research databases including ProQuest Central, ProQuest Criminal Justice, EBSCO sites such as Thoreau and ERIC, Academic Search Complete, Education Complete, SAGE Premier, SocINDEX, and Political Science Complete. Dissertations, newspaper articles, and studies were also acquired through the Walden Library and Internet searches on Google, Google Scholar, and Bing. The research process provided the means to discover important information on expulsion policy and its disproportionality by race as it possibly impacted children who have been expelled from high school in California and throughout the nation. Research was also conducted using key terms such as *public schools, school discipline, race, disproportionality, California Education Code, zero-tolerance, environmental factors, Derrick Bell, John Creswell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality, impact,* and *critical race theory* to achieve a saturation of information on the topic. The review of articles, publications, manuals, internet resources, libraries, local academic agencies, and public non-profit organizations helped to reveal the information that is available and in such numbers to add to the validity of the research study.

**Theoretical Framework**

**Critical Race**

The theoretical framework for this study is CRT. CRT was used to analyze school discipline and the intersectionality resulting in the disproportionate removal of boys of color from California public school. The origin of CRT is Bell, who in 1973 posited that race is a construct that is imbedded into American society and that it cannot be disregarded as an implicit act. Bell analyzed the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) decision and argued that though this case was won by the NAACP, the purpose for its success was a political gesture to the international community to give the appearance of recognizing Blacks as having not been treated equally in the past (1973). To show that the United States had changed through this court decision that focused on race, law, and the power of the judicial system prior to Brown case, the United States had to prove to the world that there were to be changes to the cultural norms of White superiority over Blacks to include the removal of segregation in public schools which marginalized, discriminated, mistreated, and brutalized Blacks together with other forms of subjugation through de jure laws. Bell postulated that race was interwoven into the justice system and in society and that he did not agree with the integration strategy of the NAACP in Brown vs. Board but believed the strategy should have been to achieve better education, not integration. Historically, the United Stated had laws enacted called the Black Codes and "Jim Crow" laws that kept Blacks in a subordinate, subjugated, semi-slavery posture through a structured legal system that kept Whites economically, legally, and educationally in authority (power) for over 400 years. The postulation by the Collective

(1977) presented an original perspective on race and gender that relates to this study as it posits race and school discipline focusing on a specific population of students and a specific gender intersecting with school discipline. Reading society through the lens of CRT and intersectionality, Crenshaw (2018; 2019) postulated that constructs such as race, intelligence, and courage could result in a nexus of discrimination for Black women. She postulated that women of color who were impacted by the intersectionality of race and gender faced socio-economic, racial, discriminatory, and marginalizing treatment because of the color of their skin, reinforcing the CRT's unearthing of issues of race resulting in negative outcomes for women of color. The nexus of race and gender posited by Crenshaw can also be compared to the intersectionality of school discipline, race, and gender, as these categories overlap to produce a negative outcome for people of color (2018; 2019).

The major theoretical propositions for this study are that race is inexplicably intertwined into the disciplinary outcomes in the California public school system and that race and discipline are inexplicably linked and result in disproportionate outcomes in school discipline for boys of color expelled from public school in California. Quigley and Mitchell (2018) described the benefits of single-gender educational interventions for African American boys as best practice models for the development of schools, classrooms, and out-of-school programs that promote positive racial identities, Critical Race Consciousness, and the emotional and psychological well-being necessary for improved educational and life outcomes. This research approach contrasts to this study because the data collected on expulsion for male students of color continues to be

prevalent for African American boys and Latino boys with no analysis of the impact by garnering expert opinions from California public school knowledgeable academic professionals. The analysis' reliability derives from the application to a homogeneous group posited in this study and supports the analysis using CRT for specific populations by race. However, a weakness of the research is that the population of the participants can only be generalized with a school with the same type of research population. Additionally, the impact of school discipline a posteriori influences the decision process that expelled students use when pondering the impact of expulsion when debating the decision to return to school.

**Literature and Research Based Analysis**

Literature and research-based analysis of how CRT was applied previously in ways similar to this study are having been defined as explaining the long-standing continuity of racial inequality than theories grounded in "progress paradigm," as CRT shows how racism and White supremacy are reproduced though multiple changing mechanisms (Christian et al., 2019). Daftary (2018) stated that CRT is unique in that it aspires to empower voices and perspectives that have been marginalized, and encourages a problem to be placed in social, political, and historical context while considering issues of power, privilege, racism, and other forms of oppression. In California schools, the embedding of race is ubiquitous and represented by disproportionate expulsion outcomes, providing a strong case for CRT's use in this study. CRT has its origin as a theory by Bell (1973), a professor at New York University, concerning the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) court case that established that segregation was illegal and rescinded

segregation in public schools. George and Darling-Hammond (2019) stated the separate but equal doctrine denied education for African Americans and the dismantaling of Jim Crow were to expand  access to a quality education for all.

Bell (1973) later used the theory to prove that race was engranied into the legal system and that race should be a part of that discussion to ensure that the law was made plain regarding race having an impact on the outcome of court cases involving boys of color, such as segregation was a legal power used by Whites to keep Blacks in a socially subordinate position. Bell's analysis of race as a component of everyday society provides a foundation for analysis of school discipline and school leaderships' decisions that result in boys of color being removed disproportionately from California public schools. Wegmann and Smith (2019) recognized the presence of disproportionality in non-exclusionary discipline as well as the evidence that African American students experience escalated consequences (e.g., lower likelihood of receiving a warning) for infractions when they also engage in certain behaviors, even if those behaviors are not the direct cause for discipline. Crenshaw (2019) stated that CRT also derived from the postulation of de facto racism and discrimination in the underpinnings of laws that were enacted to protect the civil rights of African Americans  due to the civil rights movement losing its impact on White society. This theory also suggests that laws did not actually remove the racism and discrimination contained therein and that there should be a focus on the effect of de jure racism because African Americans were considered subordinate. CRT further indicates that the very laws designed to rescind these impacts on African Americans were only successful in symbolically eliminating racism and discrimination

while still allowing the perpetuation of subordination of African Americans (Crenshaw, 2018).

The intersection of different constructs theorized by CRT is conceptually similar to how school disciplne intersects with race, revealing the intersection's impact through conversations with expelled students, garnering their perceptions about race and school discipline and its impact on their education. Intersectionality is an institutional component of the public school system in California, evidenced by the disproportionality in school discipline rates for boys of color. The color blindness to race expressed by Crenshaw (2019) posits a refusal of society to acknowledge race being a constant component in not only the legal system, but in normative societal behavioral, providing a false sense of fair and equal treatment for all students. The intersectionality of the two frameworks, school discipline and race, resemble the same outcomes when analysing the rates of expulsion: boys of color are expelled in greater numbers than their White male counterparts (EdData.org, 2017). In contrast, if a color-blind lens is used to research this phenomenon, eradicating the construct of race, the nexus at the point of intersectionality contradicts the grounding of prior research's acknowledgement that race is pervasive in expulsions in California.

**Rationale for Choice of Theory**

CRT was chosen to analyze race as a component to the a posteriori impact of expulsion policy, as race is prevalent in the data that reflects the disproportionality of discipline for boys of color. The theory posits that race is intertwined in processes of legal adjudication and society and should be extrapolated from these hidden venues to the

levels of accountablity for race as a perpetuator of unfair use as a means to discriminate against people of color to maintain the status quo. There is an implicit, hidden acceptance that race is embedded in school discipline that provides a foundational analysis that race is a factor in the removal of boys of color from California public high schools. Research was evaluated through numerous paradigms aimed to examine race as an underlying part of the school discipline process. The application of this theory gives the ability to analyze race as a contributing factor in an organization's culture of school discipline and how disproportionate outcomes via race are a constant in California public high schools. CRT was also chosen due to the historical aspect of race intersecting with public school segregation decided in the court case of Brown vs. Board (1954), which fought for integration rather than better education for Black students. Bell (1973) saw the perpatuation of White hierarchical ideology within the civil rights movement as leverage for maintaining that ideology when it suited White society. This analysis by Bell provides a concept to be applied to systemic processes that have race as a prominent factor that is negative and connotates maintaining the racial staus quo. CRT was chosen over the theory of post-modernism because it is less abstract than the pragmatism that is espoused by Lyotard (1979) in predictions of future control of the masses (and assets) by the rich, for example. Post-modernist thought by Foucault (1975), which focuses on the control of large systems such as schools, prisons, and hospitals, was not chosen because it did not focus on the outcome of a system of control that results in a racial disproportionality of school discipline in an atmosphere not designed to discipline and punish but designed as an environment for children to learn.

The main point of the current research posits that boys of color are being expelled disproportionately from California public schools (EdData.gov, 2015). The relationship of CRT to this study is the ability of CRT to provide a lens that focuses on race and can be observed through analysis of the experience through discourse conducted in counselling formerly expelled students by California public school knowledgeable academic professionals. Bell (1973) described CRT as providing the ability to critically evaluate race on a theoretical level as a component of societal norms that disregarded the rights of people of color through countering the belief that race was no longer an issue in the legal system; and because of the civil rights movement or that integration into white schools by Blacks was the deciding factor that race was no longer an issue in this public setting was found to be a false narrative of equal treatment under the law. Bell also analyzed that the pace of integrating public schools revealed a white citizen hierarchal control of Blacks even though the law had changed, its implementation would be at the speed determined by the all-white Supreme Court. The CRT lens will analyze race as it relates to the expulsion of students of color and their decision to return to school while comparing and contrasting the impact provided in the statistical outcomes for boys of color resulting from the experience of expulsion intersecting with race. Lastly, there is minimal or no research that documents the outcome of educational achievement for boys of color who experienced being disproportionately expelled at the high school level and the impact on their perception of their expulsion experiences told through their stories to public school knowledgeable academic professionals about their decision to return or not return to school to achieve their high school diploma or a GED.

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework posited an epistemological context developed by the combahee initiative (1977) to discover knowledge of how school discipline and race intersect resulting in a disproportionate outcome for boys of color as compared to their White counterparts. The concept that when school discipline traverses the demarcation of normative expectant behavior for a student, the LEA action (discipline) forms the nexus with race with boys of color experiencing a disproportionate outcome of expulsion. This action places them in the position of needing to make decisions about completing their education based on the choices they have after being expelled from school. The acknowledgement of the requirement to decide can be juxtaposed with the need not to decide which could result in a decision of not returning to pursue completion of a high school diploma. The statements inherent to the conceptual framework is that school discpline executed by the LEA, and race, combine to form a nexus (defined as a connection linking two or more things) requiring some type of response to that intersectionality through disciplinary action. Prior research by Torre and Murphy (2015) evaluated academic accomplishment by using a photographic elicitation methodology to explore the difference between African-American and White boys at the post high school level that resulted with faculty members using color blindness and racial-coding to describe their thoughts and perceptions. CRT analysis was used to focus on race as a factor affecting the variation in academic achievement between African American and White male collegiate students coupled with the discriminatory perceptions of faculty and staff. In contrast to Torre and Murphy, faculty were not interviewed about the reason(s)

for their discriminatory thoughts and perceptions that would provide another perspective to their research. Scott et al. (2017) stated that research shows that schooling contexts and social policies set up the conditions for young people of color to experience violence in regularized, systematic, and destructive ways and this policy report centered on questions of race and disparate racial impacts with the authors drawing from critical race theory (CRT) to redirect how educators might talk more productively about students' social contexts, violence, and school discipline. Dixon and Anderson (2018) posited that there are boundaries for CRT and education such as CRT in education examines the roles of education policy and educational practices, and CRT in education engages intersectional analyses that recognize the ways race is mediated by and intersects with other identity markers (i.e. gender, class, sexuality, linguistic background, and citizenship status) (p. 121). Flores (2017) stated that CRT brings focused attention to the historic and contemporary invisible yet ordinary racial and racist ideologies and practices with key concepts discussed to include counter□storytelling, particularity, intersectionality, and microaggressions. Intersectionality relates to the study by providing an investigatory lens to examine how school discipline and race intersect resulting in a disproportionality of expulsion for boys of color and how that intersection can be implicit or explicit for the expelled students after they have experienced expulsion using questionnaires to garner opinions of knowledgeable academic professionals to answer this study's research questions (Becardes & Priest, 2015; Fisher et al., 2014).  The analysis provides support for this study as this study also posits the intersection of school discipline and race resulting in a negative outcome by gender and race for boys of color.

**Literature Review Related to Key Concepts**

The current research provides a perspective of disproportionate rates of expulsion through data collection but does not provide the perspective of the experience of the disproportionately expelled students' post-expulsion experiences through discourse with school knowledgeable academic professionals focusing on key concepts of CRT and the intersection of race and discipline resulting in exclusion, and the application of race, law, and power (Skiba, 2000, 2014; Skiba & Losen 2016).

Skiba (2000) described the construct of exclusion referencing African American boys as the data collected in the research listed them being removed from public school at a disproportionate rate as compared to other children. The result is a systematic exclusion through discipline policy that excludes children of this race from school. Rupke and Lauer (2018) described the history of the construct of race describing the history of race and the historical perspective of the term race and its application since the 18th century making race problematic as it has no scientific basis describing the history of the word "Caucasian" and its meaning and perceived superiority through the historical origins of the Caucasian Theory most influenced by a German anthropologist by the name of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach who suggested a five-race schema to describe the variety of human beings by physical characteristics of people of different colors such as a Georgia woman being considered more beautiful than an Ethiopian woman because of her cheekbones, for example. Allen (2017) stated that racism is permanent and that race, a social construct, is the basis of racism so ingrained in American culture that it appears to be normal and natural with  White, Christian, middle-class, heterosexual norms of the

dominant group have become the point of reference against which other groups are judged (p. 2). This perspective of race as a construct has a phylogenistic history in this country and has developed an intersection of race in many areas of society such as crime, socio-economic status, welfare, food stamps, and medical care based implicitly on the outcome for receiving these benefits as determined by the nexus at the intersectionality of race and the constructs mentioned above and those that will receive or not receive those benefits. Though the public school is a state legislated system, the state also is in compliance with the disproportionate removal of students of color from the public school system thorough expulsion.

Current research positied intersectionality to identify a point in which at the nexus of race and discipline result in discriminatory practices. The CRT framework was chosen as the theoretical foundation as it best postulates race being interwoven into society and society's norms and requires discourse in order to change the status quo about race in the publc school system. CRT also regards race as a construct based on physical appearance that along with the implicit disregard for race in a society is dominated by a discourse of racial color-blindness and explicit lack of responsibility for discriminatory praxis as normative societal behavior. This behavior within the law and de facto and de jure laws stemming from a history of prejudice and discrimination towards Americans of color, brought the critical analysis of race to the forefront of research discourse due to the civil rights era faltering in ushering in a new wave of rights that would protect black citizens from discriminatory laws and practices engrained in American society. The discussion of race, law, and power is a key concept for discourse in exploring the impact of rules,

regulation, and policy execution in the opinions of formerly expelled students in conversations with school knowledgeable academic professionals about their pereptions of their expulsion experience.  The particular aspect of CRT as a means to posit critcal analysis of frameworks with race as a factor was the primary postulation by Bell (1973). Current research also posited intersectionality to identify a point  at the nexus of race and discipline result in discriminatory practices resulting in exclusion of boys of color from public high schools. The intersectionality analysis provided by Crenshaw (2018) expounded on the intersection with a focus on gender and disproportionality resulting in marginalization for African American women. Crenshaw (2019) stated that scholars in their analysis also overlooked the relationship between racism and hegemony and CRT provided the analysis of the subordination of Blacks failing to appreciate the possibility that Blacks are an oppressed group and that racism is still a perpetuation of material subordination of Blacks to include legal academia.  CRT described the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and social movements with the relationship of each of the different categories that "intersect" to affect one another (Wegman and Smith, 2019). This research posits that intersectionality with race, gender, age, and socio-economics, results in the exacerbation of disproportionate treatment for people of color (Johnson, 2015). Besic (2020) stated that when focusing on children with disabilities that using an intersectional lens is needed in inclusive education in order to identify the interaction of multiple factors that lead to discriminatory processes in schools towards different student groups and that not recognizing this in the current system reinforces inequalities which can impact society at large. Sprague (2018) posited that using disciplinary exclusions,

such as office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions, has been the subject of significant concern related to student and family civil rights, school policy, and negative impact on short- and long-term outcomes for students with significant and persistent disproportional application to traditional racial and ethnic minority groups, with Black boys experiencing the highest rates nationally (p. 196). The intersectionality analysis provided by Crenshaw (2019) expounded on the intersection with a focus on gender and disproportionality resulting in marginalization for African American women.  Crenshaw also stated that scholars in their analysis also overlooked the relationship between racism and hegemony and CRT provided the analysis of the subordination of Blacks failing to appreciate the possibility that Blacks are an oppressed group and that racism is still a perpetuation of material subordination of Blacks to include legal academia (2019).   CRT described the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and social movements with the relationship of each of the different categories that "intersect" to affect one another (Wegmann and Smith, 2019).

The combahee initiative (1977) (the Collective) is recorded as having originated the conceptualization of intersectionality as it relates to race and gender discrimination for Black women. The Collective described their argument with the inability to separate race and class from sex oppression because they are mostly experienced simultaneously.

To establish discipline policy in California public schools, the CA EDC § 48900-65001 (referred to as The Code) was implemented to manage the public school system containing rules for maintaining discipline within the school districts throughout California. Title I of The Code,  Article 3 outlines the general education provisions that

all children will not be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity, or

gender (1976). Article 5.5 of Title 1 is referred to as the "Safe Place to Learn Act" which

also ensures the LEA work to reduce discriminaton. Title 2 of the Code, Part 27, Chapter

6, for example, outlines pupil rights and responsibilities and the policy for

recommendations for suspension or expulsion. This information is required to be

provided to parent/guardians of students, and the students who attend California public

school with each parent or guardian's signature acknowledging receipt of notification

(Education Code, Sections 48980 & 48982). The notification procedure posits the

proposition that parents and students have been made aware of the requirements of

student behavior and school discipline within the California public school at the

beginning of the school year and understand these requirements. The Code also posits

over 20 reasons a student can be expelled. These expulsion rules are divided into three

categories: 6 categories require automatic recommendation for expulsion:  selling a

controlled substance, possessing explosives, firearm, Knife-brandished, sexual assault or

battery, and selling Soma (The Code, Sections 48915(c)(3), 48915(c)(5), 48915(c)(1),

48915(c)(4), 48915(c)(4), & 48915(c)(3)). The second set of offenses require a "must

recommend expulsion unless appropriate" recommendation which provides additional

options for the LEA when deciding whether or not to recommend expulsion such as

having committted extortion, robbery, or caused serious injury (The Code, Sections

48915(a)(1)(D),  & 48915(a)(1)(A). The third category, "must suspend &/or recommend

to expel" provides  the LEA with further options regarding suspension and expulsion.

These policies are the disciplinary standards for California public schools administered

for violations of the code of conduct and are designed to be fair, impartial and promote good order and discipline to maintain order of a system that has millions of students in public school at one time yet removes students disproportionately from that school system as a result of the intersection of school discipline and race  (ED.gov, 2017).

According to Skiba (2014), zero-tolerance has been a failure in the public schools and the controversy about these policies as to whether they promote safety are still a source of discourse though these policies have dramatically increased the students put out of school for disciplinary problems. According to the Office of Civil Rights (2016), a school district in Calfornia for the 2011-2012 school year, had a total enrollment of 135, 954 with African Americans making up 10.7% with a 20.9% disproportionate expulsion percentage and 21.6% of referrals to law enforcement; White students comprised 22.6% of the population, but 9.2% of the expulsion percentage and 14.1% of referrals to law enforcement (Office of Civil Rights, 2016). According to Ed Data.org, data for violations of section 48900(k) resulting in expulsion for "Defiance" were two African American students which resulted in 50% of the expulsion total in the 2012-2013 school year; and three African American students resulted in 50% of the expulsion total in the 2013-2014 school year (2016).

Intersectionality arose from critical race theory when initially it critically assessed the relationship between gender and race (The Collective, 1977 & Crenshaw, 2018). Crenshaw and the Collective posited research that focused on the nexus of gender and race with the outcomes resulting from that key statement of intersectionality for women as ignoring the sum of their experience as being greater than the sum of racism and

sexism by society. Crenshaw also described the reference to Title VII in court cases that would not provide protection from discrimination for women as support for the Civil Rights Act, posited by Bell (1973), had diminished throughout society and in the courts resulting in unfair practices that were being reignited through de jure discrimination. Researchers defined intersectionality with race in research that was positing a gap in research on the impact of school diversity, student race, and the types of bullying positing that when race and school diversity intersect, the impact of the outcome from bullying results in a dispproportionate outcome for students based on race and population (Fisher et al., 2014). Identification of race as part of the intersectionality with school diversity resulting in negative outcomes postis that dependent upon the frameworks that are being researched involving race, the nexus at the center of the interaction can result in a negative outcome. The juxtaposition of the research by Fisher et al. is that though student participants were African American and White with the disproportionate result of bullying was being done by the African Amercan students thereby contrasting the outcome of intersectionality with race being a factor only for people of color. Intersectionality has also been used to evaluate children of color as compared to their white counterparts to determine the racial/ethnic and gender inequalities in academic achievement (Becares & Priest, 2015). Intersectionality has also used to examine the framework of inequality, gender, socioeconomic status, class, and race revealing a dynamic outcome that does not posit a positive research result stating intersectionality cannot be used as a worthy measure for determining academic outcomes as long as social stratification exists in society (Becares & Priest, 2015). In society, the stratification of

children by numerous factors such as race and gender are normative in the public schools in Calfornia. Data provided by Ed.Data.org (2016) contained the socio-economic status of children based on the receipt of free lunches at school which places children in another category positing that poor children, a vulnerable population, receive the most punishments. This research provides a very salient point that race and the intersection with gender has a detrimental effect on people of color.

Avery (2016) described the disproportionality in disciplinary administration in a public school positing that exclusionary principles used in school discipline result in negative outcomes and that the pattern of referral for certain types of behavior are based on staff member perception of the students which are normally racially based. However, the claims are that new policies reduced the amount of suspensions and expulsions resulting in a reduction for all students. But, children of color, as shown through research, prove to be more at risk for the exclusion from school (Skiba, 2014).

Lindsay and Hart (2017) described in their study that Black and Latino boyss are far more likely than their White counterparts to be removed from school as punishment and that having a teacher of the same race they tend to learn more at school. Rafa (2019) stated that exclusionary discipline — suspensions or expulsions that remove students from the learning environment — can have long-lasting, negative impacts on a student's trajectory with some addressing these issues through legislation aimed at striking an appropriate balance between promoting safe and productive schools while reducing the adverse effects of exclusionary discipline (p. 1). These researchers provide the amplified justfication for this study positing that race is a pervasive factor in public school

discipline and that school discipline is a significant factor in the outcomes for boys of color and their removal from school. The concept of intersectionality and race as a concept for this study is supported by the literature positing that as these items overlap to form the nexus of expulsion, the recognition of the nexus does not provide the analytical postulation of the process and its impact through a qualitative lens.

The disproportionality of African American expulsion in the public school system is also documented in literature and the statistical compilation maintained in by the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and the National Center for Education Statistics. The public policies that are currently in effect in the public schools throughout the United States are designed to provide a safe environment for learning to provide the school faculty and staff with a means to manage the schools and provide the ability to remedy disciplinary infractions at the local educational agency level unless a requirement from the federal level mandates a particular disciplinary action if the educational agency is in receipt of federal funds (The Code, 1976; Guns Free Schools Act, 1994). In California, zero-tolerance policies that have been mandated by the federal government for firearm possession on a school campus; and, there are five other infractions/crimes that are cause for a mandatory recommendation for expulsion which are selling a controlled substance, possessing an explosive, possessing a knife, sexual assault or battery, or selling a drug called Soma (The Code, Section 48915). These offenses are mandatory for consideration for expulsion consideration and there are also additional infractions/crimes that a student can be recommended for expulsion unless it would be inappropriate to do so (The Code, Section 48915). This discipline methodology contained in the disciplinary

policies in California provides the institution of the public school the ability to expel students from their school for the reasons contained in The Code with the intent of making their schools safer.  The zero-tolerance term was first used in 1980 referring to an incident with the military and received support from the Reagan administration though the legislation was defeated. But it was reignited in the Clinton Administration which resulted in the passing of the Guns FreeSchools Act of 1994. Toll (2018) stated school discipline disparities have been revalent for decades, are well documented, and need to be addressed by stakeholders.

Expulsion for boys of color have been a research topic throughout the country and California is no exception.   Expulsion rates in a southern school district in the state of California during the 2011-2012 school year revealed a total of 202 expulsions with 16 Caucasian students (7 percent) expelled compared to 129 Latinos (63 percent) and 39 African Americans (20 percent), and students of other ethnicities (10 percent) (Dataquest, 2015). When the data was compared for each ethnic population of students in the California school district during the same timeframe, the total student population was 131, 016 students with 60, 373 Latinos (46 percent), 14, 086 African Americans (11percent), 30, 493 Caucasians (23 percent), and 20, 064 (20 percent) students of other ethnicities. The data revealed disproportionality in expulsion outcomes for students of color as compared to their Caucasian counterparts (Dataquest, 2015).

Quigley and Mitchell (2018) described that CRT in education authorizes new questions about the impact of race and racism in poor educational outcomes and a new way of conceiving students' social and schooling experiences (p. 74).   This research

approach is similar to this study due to the school demographics only pertained to the homogenous group of African American boys. The analysis' reliability in is application to a heterogeneous group posited in this study supports the analysis using CRT for specific populations by race,  but a weakness of the research is that the population of the participants can only be generalized within a school with the same type of research population which would cause the participant selection to be a limitation to a study if it were generalized on another school of boys of color because of socio-economic background, location, number of attendees, private or public school, expulsion rates and the impact on graduation.   Torre and Murphy  (2015) evaluated academic accomplishment by using a photographic elicitation methodology to explore the difference between African-American and White boys at the post high school level that resulted with faculty members using color blindness and racial-coding to describe their thoughts and perceptions. CRT analysis was used to focus on race as a factor affecting the variation in academic achievement between African American and White male collegiate students coupled with the discriminatory perceptions of faculty and staff. In contrast, Torre and Murphy's faculty in the study were not interviewed about the reason(s) for their discriminatory thoughts and perceptions that would provide another perspective to their research which was also a consideration for not interviewing school staff for this research study.   Intersectionality posits the continual axis of race with intersectionality, but there can be additional factors that can intersect with race resulting in negative outcomes such as ethnicity, culture, and status quo for maitaining the dominant discourse that results in marginalization, for example, for people of color.

Hopkins (2017) stated that intersectionality is an approach to research that focuses upon

mutually constitutive forms of social oppression rather than on single axes of difference.

Intersectionality is not only about multiple identities but is about relationality, social

context, power relations, complexity, social justice and inequality. Seabrook and Wyatt-

Nichol (2016) described the institutional oppression of race through utilizing an

intersectionality approach to analysis focusing on on the overlap of oppression, racism,

and implicit bias towards African Americans (p. 20). Seabrook and Wyatt-Nichol (2016)

also positied that at the macro-level of analysis, intersectionality refers to the constant of

race and also class and gender positing that every person is positioned at the intersection

of multiple social identity and subject to advantages and disadvantages recognizing the

complexity of institutional racism that is embedded in a systemic process (p 21). The

intersectionality of race can also be coupled with other constructs of marginalization as

posited by Seabrook and Wyatt-Nichol with the outcome postulating unfair treatment

through institutions such as public schools and society in general evidenced by the

marginalization of people of color due to immigration status, socio-economic status, age,

and ethnicity. The research question for this study posting intersectionality and the

resulting outcome articulate that impact on the lives of expelled students and the

influence on their decision making post-expulsion with student success being outlined in

the Code and offers an education within a safe learining environment. Expulsion is

systemically incorporated throughout California public schools and is tied to race as a

commmon element of expulsion.

Shabazian (2015) described a complex understanding of unequal school practices analyzing obstacles that children of color must negotiate due to their race such as zero-tolerance policy. In the article entitled "School Resource Officers, "Zero Tolerance and the Enforcement of Compliance in the American Education System", students at schools with School Resource Officers (SRO's) are five times more likely to be arrested for disorderly conduct, with over 10,000 prosecutions of young people under the so-called 'disturbing schools' laws every academic year (Bleakley, P. & Bleakley, C., 2018). The implementation of the Guns Free Schools Act (GFSA) (1994) added additional penalties, Zero-Tolerance Policies, for children who bring a gun on campus in addition to the one-year minimum expulsion that accompanies the offense to include a penal code violation. Wilson et al. (2018) stated that research has established a link between zero tolerance disciplinary policies and increases in racial disproportionality in suspensions and expulsions of students of color and that there is a culture of colorblindness and white fragility that silences race talk. Welch and Payne (2018) stated that zero tolerance policies can be traced to the federal Gun-Free School Act of 1994 which sought to restrict weapons in schools, but expanded to include non-weapon related and non-violent behaviors resulting in research that has yet to produce any evidence that zero tolerance policies have achieved these objectives. Additionally, public schools were required to implement the expulsion policy contained in the GFSA (1994) or lose federal funding placing pressure on states to adopt the policy tied to the funding from the federal government exacerbating the use of disciplinary policy resulting in the disproportionality of expulsion of boys of color. Zero-tolerance policies evaluated through CRT provide a

focus that posits that children who are disproportionately removed are the vulnerable population of children of color.

Anderson and Rittner (2017) posited those marginalized students of color are more likely to receive exclusionary discipline positing Black boys are likely to receive exclusionary discipline, and, that schools with larger proportions of non-White students tend to give longer punishments (p. 327). The intersectionality of discipline/punishment and race is postulated in this research support this study's purpose of race as a contributor to the nexus of expulsion through intersecting with school discipline. This research presents that those students who are marginalized received the highest rate of punishment emphasizing that students of color are the primary recipients of exclusion. Office of Civil Rights Report (2016) described a 2014 analysis of expulsion for Black students who made up 15% of the nationwide population, were expelled at a rate of 36% which is over two times the percentage of their population excluding double the amount of the population percentage of Black children. Nishioka (2017) described that though expulsions were on the decrease for Black children, the expulsion rate for African Americans, for example, remained high over the years of the study from 2007/8 to 2013/14 (p. 3). The analysis of suspension and expulsions data provide a postulation that students of color are removed from public school and are not provided the same response by their teachers to discipline as compared to their white male counterparts such as challenging the teacher in the classroom which results in disciplinary action. The intersectionality of race in the context of the analysis of Nishioka (2017) research provides another perspective that teacher attitudes intersecting with race result in higher

outcome data for students of color because of the referral rate for students of color as compared to their White male counterparts.

Teachers have a large impact on the discipline process and do not present an environment of fairness and per Anderson (2016), this can be a difficult environment for students of color to thrive as compared to other students. The prior research established that students of color do not commit more infractions than other students, but are referred more often for discpline than their fellow white students. Anyon et. al (2017) stated that research results indicate that implicit bias in perceptions of student behavior may be more influential in locations where students and adults have weaker relationships and that Black, Latino/a, and Multiracial youth were no more likely than White students to have a discipline incident take place outside the classroom suggesting attention is needed to the role of systemic bias and colorblind policies and practices in discipline disparities. (p. 390). Horsford (2017) stated how the invisible ontology of race and its entangled relationship with class divert attention from economic inequality and undermine policies intended to redress racial inequality in schools. The intersectionality of school discipline and race is prevalent in the literature regarding positing that students of color were being expelled for reasons other than the dominant narrative of higher rates of misbehavior (Skiba, 2014). Modica (2014) posited that racial color-blindness was an attempt to consider color an unrecognizable facet of human identity whereas it allowed white ideology of privilege and status quo to remain in place with even more vigor as race was ignored and that the perception was all are treated equally as race is no longer an issue to be considered or discussed. Bell's (1973) conception supports Modica and the exposure

of race as a tool for implicitly ignoring race's binding with the normative aspect of

determining the composition of a person's worth in American society that needed to be

exposed and brought to the forefront of social, educational, and political issues. Race

needed to be confronted and injected into the conscience of the legal and social elites to

help establish a fair process for people of color who had become linked to the justice

system as a defendant by the legal machinery representing the people of the state. Holley

(2016) posited the use of the narrative methodology to aquire the perspective of students

who had undergone disicipline in public school. The approach was to understand the

phenomenon of how students experienced school paralleling this study through the

garnering of narratives from the research participants that actually experienced the

disciplinary actions and their perceptions about that experience.

Bryan (2020) described that the effects of school exclusion and criminalization of

youth has been thoroughly researched and that these actions result in disproportionate

punishment, exclusion, and incarceration of students of color; yet this study does not

describe any effects on the population researched in the study regarding educational

outcomes and the impact on that decision to achieve that education limiting the

perspective of the research to that of the researcher and the data collected, but not

expounded upon, by the former students who experienced expulsion nor the personal

impact on their lives. The weakness of the prior research posits a quantitative data

research methodology with recommendations to incorporate revised means of

punishment (Skiba, 2016). But, the research still posits the pervasiveness of school

discipline intersecting with race resulting in disproportionate outcomes for boys of color

still in existence for boys of color in California public schools. This is evidenced by the

degree of infractions haven risen to the point that research posits student infractions

received exclusionary punishment for minor violations such as tardiness and dress code

violations versus more serious violations indicating a disproportionate use of expulsion in

relationship to the offense committed versus an approach that removes students for minor

infractions exacerbating the disproportionality of school discipline for boys of color

(Shabazian, 2015). An examination of this study through CRT focused on the

intersectionality that results in disproportionate outcomes for people of color and how

race is a constant in prior research conducted on the topic of race and school discipline

since the early 1990's (Skiba, 2000).

A review and synthesizing of the literature posited the schoool discipline and race

nexus that persists in California for male student of color and in research conducted on

intersectionality from the perspective of race and other constructs that result in

disproportionate outcomes. The use of intersectionality as the approach to this study

posits that critical race analysis of expulsion requires a more in depth examination to

provide a perspective of the  nexus that expels boys of color in order to provide the

means through analysis to reduce  and or elimnate this disproportioality in California

public school. What is known about the issue of expulsion policy administration in

California is the disproportionate outcome for boys of color. The unknown factor is the

impact of individual expulsion experiences and how that experieince influenced decision

making for pursuing or not pursuing the completion of a high school diploma through the

use of the Delphi Technique.

**Delphi Technique**

This study will use a methodology for this research study entitled the Delphi technique to identify the impact of expulsion on boys of color as compared to their white counterparts, and to develop ideas, recommendations, suggestions, and strategies to identify and mitigate the impact of disproportionate discipline on achieving a high school diploma or GED for former boys of color (Avella, 2016). The rationale for the Dephi technique method was that it can be used to identify solutions to a problem, anonymity of group members that will allow an atmosphere that is conducive to speaking freely in their responses to the questionnaire removing the in-person domination of the conversation by a select few participants, it was economically feasible through the use of digital technology to recruit participants, and provided consent forms and questionnaires to participants (Lyons et al., 2018); the means of reaching the questionnaire group through email was faster than standard mail; cost effectiveness through use of electronic means for coding; achieving consensus in area that is in need of solutions and strategies for mitigation and prevention through review of the questionnaire responses is simplified; selection of a homogenous group of knowledgeable academic professionals that have knowedge of the topic and can provide a perspective that will extraoplate mitigation strategies that will contribute to the research (Ab Latif et al., 2017). The Delphi technique provided the focus on participants' Likert scale selections and descriptive analysis of their opinions on a posteriori expulsion and post-expulsion decision of boys of color to return or not return to school; the experiences culminating in analysis of the similarities and differences in those individual experiences by examining the themes and similarities

between participant questionairre responses (McIntyre-Hite, 2016; Pollard, 2019). Prior

research studies were successfully conducted utilizing the Delphi technique (Brosley,

2019; Mcintyre-Hite, 2016; and Pike, 2017, and Sekayi & Kennedy, 2017). Brosley

conducted a study on Title IX compliance for intercollegiate athletics and universities

utilizing snowball sampling to garner a panel of 25 athletic directors and three rounds of

questionairres to achieve consensus to determine a future model of Title IX compliance.

Mcintyre-Hite recruited ten long-term specialists to serve as participants in developing

competency-based programs in higher education. Data from three rounds of interviews

were coded and categorized using Delphi methodology resulting in effective practices for

developing competencies, with 15 principles for effective practice were agreed upon for

developing assessments and 16 principles for effective practice were agreed upon for

identifying and leveraging learning resources. Pike (2017) conducted a study on Positive

Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and how they reduce exclusionary discipline

and promote a positive school culture. Pike used three rounds of questionairres with

broad-based responses that were coded and stratified using a Likert scale to gauge the

importance of each emergent theme. Sekayi and Kennedy (2017) stated the qualitative

Delphi process results in textual consensus data and any qualitatively oriented research

question that can be answered by group-based data is a candidate for the qualitative

Delphi method. Though Delphi had traditionally been used in decision-making and

forecasting, the fully qualitative version can be used to gather expert perspectives for a

broader purpose. (Sekayi & Kennedy, 2017, p. 2755). Hirschhorn (2018) used the Delphi

method on an issue of public transportation focusing on attention to aspects such as the

choice of method, selection of experts, design of questionnaires, interaction between survey coordinator and participants, and also the analysis of experts' responses. These elements provide the foundation elements of the research for data collection using panels of knowledgeable professionals in the field under inquiry. This research study posited selecting participants from the population of knowledgeable academic professionals in Southern California school districts who have experience teaching at the $9^{th}$-$12^{th}$ grade level in traditional and/or continuation high schools who self-certify that they have personally talked with/counseled students about the pros and cons of completing their education  garnering their expert opinions on the impact of expulsion on boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts.

### Summary and Conclusions

In the literature review, the themes are the school discipline and race intersectionality that has been evident in educational research since the late 1990's. The research provides a foundation that race, exclusion, and disproportionate discipline is pervasive in the public school system with school discipline and race intersecting to posit negative outcomes of expulsion disproportionality for boys of color in California public high schools. This study will provide another perspective that is more emergent postulating research into the impact of expulsion and the perception of boys of color about their expulsion experiences and how race, law, policy, and exclusion were important factors in their experience as compared to their white male counterparts. A gap was identified in the research of specifically examining the ideas and recommendations that could be garnered from California public school knowledgeable academic professionals on the education

impact and mitigation of disproportionate application of discipline for boys of color expelled from California public high schools will be examined  Failing to gather this feedback does not provide LEA's and policy makers with suggestions and recommendation for resources for the affected population to help in mitigating the future impact of disproportionate discipline resulting in expulsion for boys of color.

In Chapter 2, I included the introduction, literature, research strategy, theoretical foundation and conceptul framework, summary,  and conclusions. In Chapter 3, I include the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, and summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

**Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to explore, from the perspective of individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and counseling, students who were expelled to understand the former students' perceptions about the impact of expulsion and returning to school and obtain recommendations on how to improve the application of the code of conduct. The remainder of this chapter includes the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, data handling instructions, a summary, and a transition to Chapter 4.

**Research Design and Rationale**

The research question for this study are:

RQ#1: What perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affected students' attitudes towards returning to school to continue their education after expulsion?

RQ#2: How can the application of race, law, and power explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus White students?

The central concepts of the study were race viewed through the theoretical lens of CRT and race intersectionality with school discipline, and the impact that expulsion has on the decision making of expelled students about their post-expulsion pursuit to complete their high school education. The Collective (1977), Crenshaw (2018), Becares and Priest (2015), and Fisher et al. (2014) postulated race as pervasive in society, intersecting with socio-economic level and gender to result in negative outcomes of

racism, prejudice, stereotyping, and disrespect for persons of color. I used the

intersectionality concept because, in prior research, it posited that the institutionalism of

race in public schools where school discipline and race intersect resulted in the

disproportionate outcome for boys of color (Crenshaw, 2019). I selected a qualitative

methodology and case study design because it was appropriate to conduct and interpret

interviews using open ended questions (Creswell, 2020). No previous study provided

input directly from the students that were expelled nor provided any solutions to the use

of school discipline policies that resulted in a disproportionate expulsion of minority boys

versus White boys (Gaston, 2015). Though prior qualitative research supplies a

perspective of disproportionality praxis in public schools, this case study explored the

perceptions of formerly expelled students as told by knowledgeable academic

professionals to garner ideas and strategies to mitigate the impact of disproportionality

while proactively mitigating the number of boys of color being expelled from school. The

qualitative method tradition using a case study design was chosen because it provides the

ability to investigate a phenomenon in a real life context in which the boundaries between

the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident using multiple sources of

evidence such as documentation, observation, and interviews (Creswell, 2020; Smith,

2018).  The rationale for using the case study design was its capacity to extrapolate

narrative responses from participants who had conversations with students who had

experienced expulsion about their description of events using their own words and

garnering the context of those words in describing the experience relayed to participants.

Administration of a questionnaire to knowledgeable academic professional participants

who have experience speaking with expelled students, together with analyzing responses for commonalities, contrasting themes, and variations in describing their experiences for comparison, helped describe, from the perspective of the participant, how student perceptions were transferred from their words to the analytic form in answering the research questions (Creswell, 2020). The case study design focused on participants' descriptive analysis of the students' episodic a posteriori expulsion and post-expulsion impact on decision making, culminating in an analysis of the similarities and differences in those individual experiences by examining the themes and similarities between student perceptions and participant perspectives of those perceptions. This research selected participants through snowball recruiting from the population of knowledgeable academic professionals drawn from the public high school population in southern California.

**Role of the Researcher**

I served as the research study coordinator during the iteration of three separate questionnaires while maintaining participant anonymity as part of the Delphi data collection (Avella, 2016). There was no assistance provided by a research assistant. I developed questionnaires that were the primary instrument in the collection of qualitative and Likert scale data from the participants and had the sole responsibility of recruiting prospective participants. I also performed the coding, questionnaire response review, analysis, and interpretation of the data. Creswell (2020) stated that the researcher' should identify biases, values, personal background, gender, history, culture, and socioeconomic status to help shape the researcher's interpretations formed during the study. My personal background and history were provided to the participants. This background included that

I am a Black man, retired military and retired federal civilian employee, Protestant, raised

by both parents in a dual income household in the southern region of the United States, a

child of the policy of (integration) desegregation implementation after the decision of

Brown vs. the Board of Education (1954), age group of the baby-boomer generation

(born before 1960), college graduate with an Associate, Bachelors, and Master's degree,

husband, father, grandfather, and brother, all of which may contribute to potential biases.

To control these biases, the data collection tool was executed in the same manner for each

participant by being provided through a survey monkey link via email, and upon receipt

of all responses, providing responses to the group for each questionnaire.  This allowed

the respondents to change their responses after member checking by the group

minimizing response bias by achieving narrative responses that are not influenced by the

thoughts and opinions of other participants; and, through anonymity of participants

allowing the voices of the individuals to be collectively displayed (in no certain order to

remove the appearance of a hierarchical arranged response) for individual and group

review of responses. There was not a power relationship between myself and the

participants. This was established by using a process for choosing participants I did not

know, and the use of purposeful sampling from the population of public high schools in

southern California who I may or may not have known, snowball recruiting through

social media (LinkedIn), and use of the Walden University participant pool (Gentles

&Vilches, 2017).

The ethical issue involved was a $10 gift card incentive offered for participating

in the study, intended to encourage participation. Participants were given the freedom to

stop at any time and still receive the gift card. The compensation was supplied because of the time and effort expelled by participants in support of the research and its contribution to society (Cheff, 2018; Lyons, Timmons, Cohen-Hall, & Leblois). Gift cards were provided to all eight participants via email in December 2020 after participants that responded to the last questionnaire reviewed the final questionnaire results.

## Methodology

### Participation Selection Logic

#### *Identify the Population*

The population for this study was all public and non-traditional high schools located in southern California. The latest data for estimated number of California public high schools in the 2017/18 school year was 1,323 (CDE, 2019). Within that number of high schools, there were approximately 83,000 teachers. This study identified contact information of high schools and principals using a publicly available database. Shaheen and Pradhan (2019) posited that qualitative inquiry has no stringent rules regarding the sample size, which depends on the purpose of the research, what is at stake, what is useful, what is credible, and what is the line of research that can be undertaken within the timeframe and use the resources at hand.  The public school system of districts in southern California was chosen for this study because of the statistically disproportionate impact on the minority male population more than any other male population in a California school district.

*Identify and Justify the Sampling Strategy*

The specific unit of study were the participants selected through the use of purposeful sampling described by Gentiles and Viches (2017) to identify only those participants who met the criteria of expert as determined by the topic. Justification for this sampling strategy is that the Delphi technique posits obtaining a sample of participants that will allow the researcher to achieve responses that will answer the research questions. That number varies in Delphi technique research ranging from a minimum of five participants to a number conducive to answering the research questions and obtaining a general picture of the research problem (Pollard, 2019). This population was selected because of their position of leadership and role as a classroom teacher or other school faculty, and because of their years of experience provided to school leadership on student discipline recommedations (California Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations, 2019).

*Criterion for Participant Selection*

The criterion for the prospective participants were knowledgeable academic professionals in the California public school system with experieince teaching at the 9th-12th grade level to include staff that had experience talking with/counseling expelled students about the pros and cons of returning to school to complete their high school education. Teachers are initially the first staff member to recommend students for disciplinary action, and subsequently work with children and school leadership when transitioning back into the school system to complete their high school education. These

participants were considered knowledgeable academic professionals because they have knowledge of the key concepts explored in this study. Teachers and other staff (principals, vice principals, counselors, administrators) are on the front line of intiating or administering discipline with their authority as a key staff member involved in the expulsion process and also in the education of formerly expelled students returning to traditional and/or continuation schools to achieve their high school education (California Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations, 2019).

### *Establish how Participants are Known to Meet the Criterion/a*

This study relied on a participant's self-certification of their expertise and was assumed to be accurate once they consented to participate in the study me. This approach was necessary because there was no means for ensuring the prospective participants are known to meet the criterion.

### *State Number of Participants/Cases and the Rationale for That Number*

No strict guidance exists on appropriate sample size for qualitative studies (Avella, 2016). The number of participants for this study was a sample of five to 10 to garner sufficient feedback on the topic, resulting in eight participants. The reason the number of prospective participants was chosen is because of the topic of the study and opinions needed was assumed to be reasonably sufficient enough to garner the narrative information. Recommendations for the number of participants when using a Delphi data collection technique indicate that the researcher should consider the scope of the problem and available resources when estimating the number to be used along with the number of iterations to obtain consensus.

***Specific Procedures for How Participants were Identified, Contacted, and Recruited***

California High School principals were identified using a publicly available database located at (https://www.cde.ca.gov/schooldirectory). Each of the 290 high school prinicpals received a letter of invitation via email which described the study and outlined the participant criteria (Appendix A). The letter included a flyer to post in a location to purposefully select knowledgeable academic professionals with experience in counseling expelled students on achieving their education to be made aware of the study and how to contact me if they were interested in participating (Appendix B). LinkedIn provided a venue for utilizing a snowball technique to identify, contact, and recruit high school personnel (Appendix C).

***Relationship Between Saturation and Sample Size***

Because this Case Study used a Delphi technique to collect data, the sample size was not estimated based on the population. In the Delphi technique, saturation is not considered in data collection as the number of participants depended on the topic of discussion, the scope of the problem, and available resources (Saunders & Kingstone, 2018). A good result can be obtained even with small panels of 10 individuals and this study recruited between five to 10 participants.

***Instrumentation: Source for Data Collection Instrument***

The online instruments for the study were developed using Survey Monkey by me (Appendix D), to gather participant thoughts, opinions, ideas, feelings, and perceptions about the a posteriori impact of expulsion on boys of color post-expulsion education decisions as compared to their white male counterparts, and how CRT explains race in

the disproportionate application of discipline. The tenets of CRT were also an important aspect of the missing data in the literature and will address the concept as race is posited as a construct that is is not given the attention on the impact on school discipline which will be underscored by the questionnaires in this study (Creswell, 2020).

There were three questionnaires. The source of the questionnaire content and design was garnered from the exhaustive review of the literature that identified key concepts that should be investigated and the most appropriate ways recommended by researchers on how to collect data via using the Delphi technique (Pollard, 2019).

### *Use of Historical Data*

The historical information was retrieved from data-based sources that met the standard for reliability such as EdData.org and CALPADS for Student data for California pupils, National Center for Education Statistics and The Department of Education websites providing statistical information supporting the disproportionate outcomes in discipline for boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts.  This data will be used to triangulate the opinions expressed by the participants.

### *Sufficiency of Data Collection Instruments to Answer Research Question*

Questions for questionnaire #1 were pre-tested on two subjects who met the criteria of "knowledgeable academic professional" to test the clarity of the questions and to ensure that the responses can be expected to provide the needed information. Pre-test of subsequent questionnaires presented one change expounding on one question to provide better clarity in the question for participants in Questionnaire #2 and #3.

*Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection*

Recruitment of prospective participants was conducted through Principals of public and non-traditional high schools located throughout the southern part of the State of California. Social media (LinkedIn) was also used to recruit. Once an interested participant contacted me, additional information was collected (i.e. demographics, email address, telephone number). I contacted the individual via email and revisited the eligibility requirement and accepted a written self-certification email of meeting the eligibility. When the individual answered in the affirmative to all criterion, I obtained their consent. Once consent was received I provided the participant with a link to Survey Monkey for each iteration, data collection, analysis, and member checking. This study was also approved by the IRB for placement on the Walden University participant pool site at Walden University and placed on the site to recruit any persons that met the criterion for participation. No participants were selected from the participant pool recruitment due to not meeting the specific criterion.

Data was collected for high school teachers and staff who met the criteria for participation. I collected the data for each of the questionnaires for approximately 60 days. The frequency of the data collection events followed after receipt, coding and analysis of each questionnaire. Each subsequent set of questionnaires were also mini-tested prior to uploading into Survey Monkey and approved by the committee and the IRB. The questionnaire's administrative process was repeated three times to ensure agreement was reached. Data was recorded electronically and downloaded from Survey

Monkey. The time to complete each questionnaire iteration took approximately an average of 4 minutes per questionnaire.

### Follow-Up Plan if Too Few Participants

Sufficient numbers for this research was estimated to be five to 10 participants resulting in eight participants. If the number of participants had not been reached at the end of the initial 30 days, the recruitment would be extended for another 14 days with data collection commencing thereafter as long as the minimum number of five and maximum number of 10 participants is achieved.

### Participant Exit from the Study

Participants exited the study once they validated that adequacy of the narrative transcripts of each of three questionnaire instruments.

### Follow-up Procedures

Only one of the eight participants did not answer one questionnaire of the three questionnaires. Specifically, the participant did not answer questionnaire #3. I contacted the individuals to remind the participants about completing the questionnaire. Due to a need for clarification for the missing response, I contacted each individual via email. This procedure required a minimal amount of time from the participants and all knew the requirements and time expectations.

**Data Analysis Plan**

**Connection of data to Specific Research Question**

The questionnaires provided the data needed to address each research question, as indicated below, when asked with the intent to get specific information for each of the two research questions:

| | |
|---|---|
| RQ#1: What perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affected students' attitudes towards returning to school to continue their education after expulsion? | Questions # 1, 2, and 3 |
| RQ#2: How can the application of race, law, and power explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus white students? | Questions # 4, 5, and 6 |

**Coding Procedure**

Creswell (2020) stated when classifying the data into codes and themes, use categorical aggregation to establish themes or patterns. Software used was the latest version of NVivo 12 software to execute In Vivo coding using words or short phrases from the participant's own language in the data record as codes (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2018). Repetitive words and major themes resulting from the narrative data for thick, rich descriptions of the experience, themes and patterns and analyze the results for commonalities and contrasts between participants. Words that referred to school

discipline and race, law, power, exclusion, and education goal decisions were the focus of

the participant response as these words intersected to result in the disproportionate

discipline outcomes impacting boys of color.

**Treatment for Discrepant Cases**

In the case of discrepant cases, no questionnaire with partial responses made any

of the research detract from the overall analysis because the participant did not provide a

recommendation, for example, after selecting their level of agreement regarding the

themes developed from questionnaire #2. Another participant did not make a selection in

the Likert scale portion of questionnaire #2 and did not provide a recommendation. This

participant stated that they did not "strongly agree" (or provide any level of agreement)

with any of the themes, but believed schools have racist practices and policies and that

race was not the sole reason for not returning to school. Lastly, one participant did not

respond to questionnaire #3 which requested a selection of the recommendations from the

group being most important and least important of the recommendations. Their lack of

participation did not detract from the data as 7 participants did complete the questionnaire

providing recommendations.   The questionnaires of these participants were not excluded

because their responses were not consistent with answering the questionnaire in an

attempt to answer the research question. The responses described above, in the manner

that the questions were answered, were retained to document the questionnaire responses

as a matter of record for the study and used in the analysis in the effort to answer the

research questions. I continued to pursue the questionnaire research until a reasonable

amount of time (2-3 weeks) to achieve responses through the third iteration of the research study questionnaire.

## Issues of Trustworthiness

This section is organized in the following subsections: validity and reliability of qualitative data, and informed consent and ethical considerations. Voluntary consent was garnered to ensure questionnaire participants understand the intent of the study, their rights, and procedures. Consent was obtained through use of my initial contact email with the participant after being contacted by the prospective participant containing in that email the criterion for eligibility to participate and the ability to reply back to me that they meet the criterion and agree to participate in the study. This study used the process of triangulation as described by Creswell, (2020), and Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018). Thick description and respondent validation was acquired through questionnaire iteration three times through InVivo coding the first questionnaire, providing those responses to participants from the first questionnaire to give the knowledgeable academic professionals an opportunity to see the responses of the group while maintaining anonymity of the group members; and to provide the opportunity to change their responses to the first questionnaire if they desired. Lastly, provided the partcipants the common themes resulting from the first questionnaire to obtain thoughts and opinions on how expulsion impacted boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts, and, to gain some level of agreement or disagreement on the impact through using a Likert scale formed from the responses to the second questionnaire iteration subseqently garnering in the final questionnaire the ideas, recommendations, and strategies to mitigate

the impact of the factors that impact boys of color resulting from disproportionate discipline.

**Validity and Reliability of Qualitative Data**

Triangulation described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018) stated that reliability and dependability are whether the process of a study is consistent, stable over time and across researchers and methods (p. 310). Creswell (2020) stated that validation in qualitative research is an attempt to determine the accuracy of the findings; utilization of numerous strategies will provide validity to the research study). Content validity was achieved through the conduct of a pre-test of the first and subsequent questionnaire instruments to ensure questionnaires are conducted in a consistent, iterative, manner reducing the variation in the conduct of the iterative questionnaire process by sending out questionnaires to all participants at the same time and providing timely feedback to the group for each iteration to garner consensus while maintaining anonymity in the group. The research design provided me the ability to gain the narrative and Likert scale responses from knowledgeable academic professionals culminating in themes positing the perception of the participants as to the impact of expulsion on the decision of boys of color as compared to their white counterparts to complete or not complete their high school education focusing on the theoretical framework of CRT and the conceptual framework of school discipline and race intersectionality's impact on their decision to extrapolate information to answer the research question.

Credibility was established through research triangulation using an iterative questionnaire instrument to gather narrative data from the participant ensuring anonymity

of the questionnaire respondent group to establish a level of comfort in responding, use of open-ended questions to obtain responses from questionnaire participants maintaining continuity and consistency in the research process, and Likert scale responses to provide a numerical assessment of the responses to answer the research question and garner consensus. I maintained the trust of the participant by allowing responses in the participant's own words without perceived judgment of the participant. The questionnaires elicited emergent data providing information that can also postulate a stronger parallel to the intersection of school discipline and race as described by the conceptual framework of this study. Creswell (2020) stated that data collection is an ongoing process collecting open-ended response data based on asking general questions primarily using a hierarchal approach by organizing and preparing the data for analysis, reading through all the data to gain a sense of the information, and detailed analysis through a coding process. Thick description described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018) stated that the research study should be so thick with details that the reader can come to their own conclusions about the study results.

Through self-certification of meeting participation requirements through the consent form, questionnaires, anonymity of the group, and response analysis as a standard procedure for the group, transferability was established within the limitations acknowledged in the study, positing the opportunity for replication with variation reduced through consistent use of the questionnaire and a group of knowledgeable academic professionals. Mitigation of external validity generalized the results of this research to

members of the population that have the same demographic characteristics of the target population.

Dependability was established using triangulation by using the questionnaire instrument containing structured, open-ended questions and historical documents to provide the ability to attempt to recreate the same results allowing future researchers the examine the validity of the methods of this study.

Confirmability was established through intra-coder reliability through a reflexive posture through the gathering of the data from the iterative questionnaire and the analysis of the data and its evaluative outcome through the coding process. I also exercised reflexivity by utilizing a written/digital log to capture the thoughts about the research study's execution/process after each iteration of the questionnaire until the research was concluded. Attia and Edge (2017) stated that reflexivity involves a process of on-going mutual shaping between researcher and research (p. 33). The log allowed me to reflect on the conduct of the study while maintaining a personal accountability for the process of the research study as the research progressed and took shape during the final analysis. My subjectivity was also reduced by having the data reviewed after each iteration of the questionnaire by the group to further remove any subjectivism from the research process that may result while coding the data.

## Ethical Procedures

Gaining access to knowledgeable academic professionals was facilitated by using a publicly available database to identify the public and non-traditional public high schools in the State of California. A letter of invitation, not requiring any support from

the principal other than posting the flyer announcing the study, ensured there was no way the identity of anyone who elects to participate or not will be known. The recruitment through LinkedIn, had the participant send a message to my email thereby not responding directly on LinkedIn. I complied with the ethical conduct of research by utilizing best practices by informing the questionnaire participants, in writing, about the confidentiality of the study emphasizing their anonymity, and their right to refuse to participate or discontinue their participation in the study at any time. Participants were required to meet the criterion for participation through a self-certification and acknowledgement of the consent form to participate and voluntarily comply with the study as mentioned above for their own protection and to ensure they understand their rights as a questionnaire participant in the research study. The flyer clearly stated that the incentive to be provided is not contingent on completing the questionnaire.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was requested and obtained per the Walden dissertation process requirements to gain permission to conduct the study as proposed in the approved Dissertation Proposal. The participants were treated fairly, respectfully, and with dignity listing all the information pertaining to humane, fair, and respectable treatment.  IRB permissions were required for the conduct of the study and were requested by approval of the research proposal by the Dissertation Committee.

Recruitment ethics were not of concern such as the recruitment of members of a vulnerable population such as prisoners, children, or mentally challenged persons. An assumption was made that all that wanted to participate would be truthful in their self-certification of their experience and providing their informed consent to participate. The

participant was asked to provide demographic information only for identifying them as an eligible participant in the research such as their current or former role, number of years as a teacher and/or staff member at the high school grade level (9th-12th), education level, and gender. Respect for the participant was at the forefront of the research study acknowledging there were no power relationships between me and the participants establishing a rapport with the participant to gain their trust and respect through the introductory letter provided to the school principals, the flyer, and through social media. This rapport helped gain the trust of the participants through communicating the details of the research study and its benefits to society. Measures to ensure the confidentiality of the participant included dispensing questionnaires to individually selected participants by email to maintain group anonymity establishing a level of comfort encouraging responses without judgement by fellow group members. Responses, however, were viewed by the group after analysis by me for the subsequent iterations of the questionnaire to further progress in garnering ideas from knowledgeable academic professionals to answer the research questions gaining agreement on mitigation. Questionnaire participants that decided to participate in the research gained an understanding about their rights as a participant to refuse to continue at any time (as explained in the initial briefing letter about the study and that, if they decided to discontinue participation, their responses would still be included in the study. The participants were informed that the Dissertation Committee would only see the raw data, with no personal identifying information, and that the data was reported only in themes garnered from the iterative questionnaire responses to find similarities focusing on answering the research question and using the

feedback to develop ideas for how expulsion impacts education decisions for boys of color as compared to their white counterparts culminating with recommendations and suggestions for mitigating the problem.  Questionnaire responses, qualitative analysis, ideas generated through the questionnaire research, and final analysis data are maintained at my residence under lock and key for the next five years at the completion of the study, as required by Walden University and then destroyed. The participants received the contact information of the Dissertation Committee Chair in case they have questions after debriefing after the research study to obtain answers or concerns about the research.

The responses were anonymous only identifying the participant to me.  The data was handled in the most economical and efficient manner as possible placing the data on an external hard drive large enough to maintain all the research data on one device. The location of the device is in my home secured in a safe box with access only by me and Walden IRB for a maximum of 5 years from the date of the study's completion.

Compensation was provided to participants by me supported by research in which participants in Toronto responded to a survey that 65% of researchers use a gift card as compensation (Cheff, 2018). Lyons, Timmons, Cohen-Hall, and Leblois (2018) used a stipend (no amount given) as part of their recruitment method when searching for participants for their research study. Additionally, per 45 C.F.R. 46, small payments or gifts are not intended to meaningfully reimburse or compensate study participants. Rather, they are intended to thank them for their contribution. Because of their minimal nature, these payments were unlikely to influence decisions about study participation, and therefore raised no concern about undue influence. Appreciation payments may be

particularly important when budgets do not allow full reimbursement or compensation. Participants in this research study received a $10.00 gift card for their participation in this research whether they participated entirely or decided to stop at any time. The gift card was provided digitally to each participant via their email address upon completion of the final questionnaire iteration or at any time the participant decides to no longer to participate.

## Data Handling Instructions

Data handling is important in ensuring the integrity of research data since it addresses concerns related to confidentially, security, and preservation/retention of research data. Proper planning for data handling can also result in efficient and economical storage, retrieval, and disposal of data. In the case of data handled electronically, data integrity is a primary concern to ensure that recorded data is not altered, erased, lost or accessed by unauthorized users.

To ensure data integrity for this research study the digital records were be placed on a removable external hard drive with no environmental impact expected. The location of the hard drive is a secure location (academic safe at my home) and I will be the only person with access. The reliability of the storage is safety from water, moisture, heat, and dust to prevent degrading the thumb drive's capabilities providing a means for safe transfer to upgrade to newer media in the future.

Data handling responsibilities/privileges are limited: Only me and the Walden University IRB (up to the date preceding my being bestowed my Doctoral degree) can handle portions of the data after the completion of the study for the purpose of IRB

confirmation that ethical and procedural policies meet IRB standards. Data retention will be a minimum of five years from the date the study is completed or from the date preceding my being bestowed my Doctoral degree (whichever is later). With the data being recorded electronically, the data will be regularly backed up on a removable hard disk drive with encryption; a hard copy should be made of particularly important data; relevant software retained to ensure future access.

Security: Individual files with login and passwords will be maintained by me in the academic safe kept in my home. The access will be through a lock and key maintained by me and only accessible by me. The research study scan for update virus protection to prevent vulnerability of data will occur monthly throughout the conduct of the study by me. Physical access is limited to a stand-alone computer at my home and only accessible by me.

Utilization of a process for standard and emergency accurate data removal to ensure transfer from old hardware, and certification that data removal was successful by backing up the data on limited access equipment, validating success data transfer to the new computer, then deletion of data from previous location. I will regular perform an update of electronic storage media to avoid outdated storage/retrieval devices with backup of multiple copies in secured multiple locations. Encryption of files when wireless devices are used will keep track of wireless connectivity to prevent accidental file sharing with maintaining a log to record the original date and time of a piece of electronic data to prevent alteration or manipulation of the data.

Management of the data: Data for use in developing tables and graphs for production of descriptive data for inclusion in the study for inductive analysis purposes.

Destruction:  If a participant does not desire to participate or discontinue participation during the study, the participant's documentation will be retained at the research site until the research is completed.

Disposal:  Paper documentation destruction by shredding upon completion of the study or the day preceding the bestowment of my Doctoral degree (whichever is later). Disposal of the data on the participants will require additional precautions ensuring confidential information and personal identifying information that could identify the participant is not conducive to allow data reconstruction. When disposing electronically data stored on computer disks, the thumb drive(s) erasure using the computer deletion program and certified through review of drive contents confirming data erasure after three data attempts will complete the process of data deletion.

**Summary**

In summary, this chapter described the central concepts of Critical Race Theory and its focus on race in society, and analyzing the intersectionality of school discipline and race and how knowledgeable academic professionals describe how the impact of being expelled influenced the decision process for returning or not returning to school to achieve a high school diploma; the Delphi technique design to garner the ideas from knowledgeable academic professionals using Likert scale and narrative responses from knowledgeable academic professionals, the role of the researcher as a participant, the

methodology for obtaining questionnaire participants through recruiting, the instrumentation, method of data collection and analysis, credibility of the data, and any ethical procedures concerning the treatment of human participants in the study.

In Chapter 3, I included the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, issues of trustworthiness, data collection and analysis plan, ethical considerations, data handling instructions, and summary. In Chapter 4, I will describe the Introduction, research study setting, demographics, data collection and analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results.

Chapter 4: Results

## Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to explore from the perspective of individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and counseling students who were expelled to understand the impact on the student and obtain recommendations on how to improve the disproportionate application of the codes of conduct. The study identified, through questionnaire responses from knowledgeable academic professionals and by using narrative Likert scale responses, perceptions of the students' attitudes and thoughts about their experience, school environment, and opinions about the process of expulsion and the administration of discipline. The study was guided by two research questions: (1). What perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affected students' attitudes towards returning to school to continue education after expulsion, and (2). How can the application of race, law, and power explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus White boys?

In this chapter, I will describe the pre-test of the questionnaire questions, research settings, demographics of participants, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results.

## Pretest of Questions

The questionnaire was designed with questions to garner the expert opinions of knowledgeable academic professionals in the California public high school system (grades 9 through 12). The questionnaire instrument was tested on two volunteers who

met the criteria as knowledgeable academic professionals in qualitative research but were

not participants in the study. The volunteers were provided the initial and subsequent

questionnaires prior to administering the questionnaire and were asked to review and

complete the questionnaire delivered in a link provided through Survey Monkey to garner

their opinions as to the adequacy of the questions to garner responses regarding race, law,

power, and disparity in school discipline for boys of color. The respondents were given 2

days to respond and provided feedback regarding whether the questionnaire and Likert

scale questions were conducive to achieving the feedback to answer the research

questions. The volunteers were asked the following about the questions:

- Do the questions allow the respondents to provide feedback that answers the

    research question?

- Are the questions easy to understand?

- Are there questions that could be modified to better garner a clearer definitive

    response?

- Are there too many questions?

- Are the questions too long?

- Should the narrative responses be separate from the Likert scale responses?

- Do the questions solicit responses that encourage non-response bias?

The first-round questionnaire was revised based on feedback from the pre-tests to

address response specificity, aspects of critical race theory, and intersectionality. The

subsequent questionnaires were considered for revision to ensure clarity of the questions

and the ability to garner responses that support answering the research questions, with the final surveys being approved by the committee and the IRB.

## Setting

The study was administered in the United States with participants that are former, current, or retired academic professionals of the California public school system, at schools with grades 9 through 12, that are considered knowledgeable with experience counseling formerly expelled students. The questionnaires were provided to the respondents by email and followed up with reminders (initial and subsequent if necessary) to garner their responses'. I also followed up with thank you messages. The recruitment process began with letters sent to school principals of over 290 high schools in 12 counties in southern California. Consent forms were provided to the prospective participants that contacted me, commencing in May 2020 and ending in June 2020. A sample of eight participants was selected and provided their consent via email to participate in the study. Questionnaires were provided to participants via an email with a link to the questionnaire in Survey Monkey. Participants responded in all three rounds except for the third questionnaire (seven respondents versus eight). There were no personal or institutional conditions that influenced the questionnaire responses, as respondents were given the opportunity to take their time when responding to the questionnaire in a location that allowed them to concentrate without interruption or distraction. This method was conducive to the Delphi method, providing an atmosphere of participant anonymity allowing for freedom in the narrative responses from judgement or conversational control by a few of the participants. Once each questionnaire was

completed and analyzed, the results were provided to the participants without identifying the participants to the group for their review. There was only one change to a response by a participant which provided clarity of the response in Questionnaire #2.

## Demographics

Participants were selected based on their occupation as a former or current teacher in the California public school system who taught in grades 9 through 12 or as a staff member that had experience counseling expelled students about completing their education.  This group was selected due to their interaction with students who were expelled and who have the responsibility of working with those students that would be returning to public high school to achieve their high school diploma. Recruitment was conducted through LinkedIn, education organizations such as the African American Association of Educators, Parent/Teacher Associations, Berkeley Federation of Teachers, ABC Federation of Teachers, California Federation of Teachers, California Teachers Association, and the Los Angeles Unified School District Restorative Justice Group, and organizations such as the southern California branches of the NAACP and Blacks in Government (BIG). Table 1 provides the participant demographics to provide a view of the diversity of the eight research participants with over 218 years of experience working in public schools.

## Data Collection

The study consisted of three rounds of questionnaires distributed to a panel of California public school teachers and staff members who had expertise with school

**Table 1**

*Participant Demographics*

| Roles | Years of experience | Education level | Gender |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teachers – 2 | 26+ years | Master's degrees, Bachelor's degree | 1 Male 1 Female |
| Principals/vice Principals – 4 | 125+ years | Doctorate degree, Master's degree | 1 Male 3 Females |
| Counselor – 1 | 27 years | Doctorate degree | 1 Male |
| Superintendent – 1 | 40 years | Doctorate degree | 1 Female |

discipline and had experience counseling formerly expelled students about completing their education. Data were collected through the internet using questionnaires designed in Survey Monkey that I provided to participants as an email link. Each questionnaire was approved by my dissertation committee and the Walden University IRB prior to distribution.

Variation in data collection was the initial sample population for recruitment was between 10 and 25 participants reduced to five to 10 due to the number of responses received from schools in the southern California region at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic requiring an expansion of the sample population from teachers to include principals, vice principals, and counselors who had experience with school discipline and counseling formerly expelled boys on continuing their education. Recruitment resulted in a sample of eight participants whose roles were varied from current, former, and retired teachers, vice, principals, principals, counselors, and superintendents both male and female, providing a diverse sample of knowledgeable academic professionals.

I provided eight questionnaires to participants that consented to participate in the study. The number of respondents were eight respondents in Round 1; eight respondents in Round 2; and seven responses in Round 3. The questionnaire site was managed through Survey Monkey using a link provided to the participants for each questionnaire. I monitored the site daily. Alerts were set up to notify me when a participant had responded, allowing me to immediately review the results of the questionnaire, providing participants the opportunity to contact me with questions about the questionnaire after its completion.  Upon receipt of the responses, member checking was completed after each questionnaire to provide participants with the opportunity to review group responses and make any modifications to their responses and to ask me questions. Participants were given 1 week to review the responses with the knowledge that no response after a week meant they did not have any changes or updates to their original responses.

My study used a Delphi technique to identify the impact of expulsion and the decision to return or not return to school to achieve a high school diploma and ideas, recommendations, suggestions, and strategies to identify and mitigate the impact of disproportionate discipline on achieving a high school diploma for former boys of color (Avella, 2016). The rationale for the Delphi technique method was that it can be used to identify solutions to a problem and provides anonymity of group members that allows an atmosphere that is conducive to responding freely, removing the in-person domination of the conversation by a select few participants. It was economically feasible through the use of digital technology to recruit participants and provided consent forms and questionnaires to participants (Lyons, Timmons, Cohen-Hall, & LeBlois, 2018). It

provided a means of reaching the questionnaire group through email faster than standard mail; cost effectiveness through use of electronic means for coding; achieving consensus in area that is in need of solutions and strategies for mitigation and prevention through review of the questionnaire responses is simplified; selection of a homogenous group of experts that have knowledge of the topic and can provide a perspective that will extrapolate mitigation strategies that will contribute to the research (Ab Latif et al., 2017), and the setting for completing the survey was recommended as being one that is comfortable to the participants and in a location that is quiet with a low probability of being disturbed. The Delphi technique provided the focus on participants' Likert scale selections and descriptive analysis of their opinions on a posteriori expulsion's impact on post-expulsion decision of boys of color to return or not return to school; the experiences culminating in analysis of the similarities and differences in those individual experiences by examining the themes, similarities, and contrasts between participant questionnaire responses (McIntyre-Hite, 2016; Pollard, 2019).

Prior research studies were successfully conducted using the Delphi technique (Brosley, 2019; Mcintyre-Hite, 2016; and Pike, 2017). Brosley (2019) conducted a study on Title IX compliance for intercollegiate athletics and universities using snowball sampling to garner a panel of 25 athletic directors and three rounds of questionnaires to achieve consensus to determine a future model of Title IX compliance. Mcintyre-Hite (2016) recruited 10 long-term specialists to serve as participants in developing competency-based programs in higher education. Data from 3 rounds of interviews were coded and categorized using Delphi methodology, resulting in effective practices for

developing competencies, with 15 principles for effective practice were agreed upon for developing assessments and 16 principles for effective practice were agreed upon for identifying and leveraging learning resources. Pike (2017) conducted a study on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and how they reduce exclusionary discipline and promote a positive school culture. Pike used three rounds of questionnaires with broad-based responses that were coded and stratified using a Likert scale to gauge the importance of each emergent theme. This research study selected participants from the population of knowledgeable academic professionals in Southern California school districts who have counseled students at the 9th-12th grade level in traditional and continuation high schools, and staff who self-certify that they have personally talked with/counseled students about the pros and cons of completing their education, garnering their expert opinions on the impact of expulsion on boys of color as compared to White boys.

## Round Details

The Round 1 questionnaire included six open-ended questions with the first three questions pertaining to knowledgeable academic professionals' conversations with previously expelled students to understand the impact on the students through the conceptual framework of intersectionality resulting in the disproportionate expulsion of boys of color, and the second set of 3 questions pertaining to race, law, and power to explore the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus white students as seen through the lens of critical race theory. The Round 1 questionnaire's first three questions extracted responses from participants about student thoughts and perceptions

garnered in conversations with students about completing their education through the conceptual framework of intersectionality. The response data was gathered from 8 questionnaire participants with all participants completing the questionnaire. The responses were provided to the group for member checking and any modifications to their respective responses for the Round 1 questionnaire and subsequent questionnaires. The second set of questions, questions 4-6, were designed to capture participant responses about race, law, and power in the application of disproportionate discipline by the school leadership and the disparity in outcomes for boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts. Participants provided responses that articulated the thoughts and perceptions of students that expressed their understanding of the policy, and how race was intertwined in the administration of the policy by those in leadership who have the power to enforce the law and the disproportionality in the outcomes of that administration.

Themes were developed from the narrative responses in the first round and used to design the Round 2 questionnaire. The themes emerged from the participant responses to ascertain student perceptions about race, school authority/policy, and the application of race, law, and power to help explain the rate of minority expulsions versus white student expulsions. In Round 2, the participants were asked to provide a level of agreement with the themes that emerged from the narrative responses in Round 1 using a Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree to strongly disagree*. The overarching themes were graded on a Likert scale and the results provided to the group to allow participants to review the responses of the group. Round 2 also provided an opportunity for the participants to

provide a recommendation to mitigate the themes provided in Round 2. There were eight completed questionnaire responses, with two being partial responses (no recommendations), and one questionnaire without completing the Likert scale portion. Round 3 questionnaire was comprised of the recommendations provided from the group in questionnaire #2 graded on a Likert scale from the highest number representing its level of importance for recommendation (six recommendations for the themes identified for questions 1-3), and nine recommendations for the themes resulting from questions 4-6 to determine agreement as to which recommendations should receive priority on the list of recommendations for mitigating the formerly expelled students' perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion and race, law, and power in the disparity of expulsion rates for boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts. For questionnaire #3, one participant did not complete the questionnaire. All questionnaires were approved by the Committee and subsequently by the IRB for each round before the questionnaire was distributed to the participant group.

**Data Analysis**

**Round 1**

In Round 1, the participants were asked to answer 6 open-ended questions that inquired about their conversations with formerly expelled students on exclusion (questions 1-3), and race, law, and power (questions 4-6). The responses from the participants (Appendix E) were coded by identifying repetitive words such as African American, Latino, White boys, race, and expulsion and phrases that could be used to surmise the narrative information as posited by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018). A

word count analysis was developed utilizing In Vivo to display the repetitive words used in the participant responses to the Round 1 questionnaire responses (Table 2).

The coding process began after receipt of all Round 1 questionnaire s by reviewing each response listed in a matrix that provided a view of each participant's responses, and the responses of the group as a whole using the word count responses and comparing their use in the responses and the phrases of the participants own language (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2018). For questions 1-3, group responses for each question were analyzed through the lens of the intersectionality of race and school discipline for key words such as "race", and words synonymous with exclusion such as "forced out" and "expelled" to determine any emergent data relating to factors that could explain the student's perceptions of the school environment and their opinion of their treatment.

Responses revealed that students described their experiences negatively with comments about their expulsion experience such as "they didn't care", "some were not motivated to continue", "overly punitive for the situation", "boys of color often speak out about how schools are racist", "everybody here is black and brown so we are the only ones expelled", "race was a factor in their disciplinary action", "expulsion process separates and isolates them from their peers", and "African American and Latino boys recognized the disproportionate number of expulsions because the school that serves students that are expelled have more Black and Brown boys than white boys". Utilizing the process in Figure 1, the responses were analyzed for words and phrases synonymous with exclusion and positing the resulting disproportionate outcome for boys of color.

**Table 2**

Questionnaire 1 Word Count Analysis

| Words | Length | Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Students | 8 | 34 | 14.5 |
| School | 6 | 22 | 9.4 |
| Race | 4 | 17 | 7.3 |
| Expelled | 8 | 15 | 6.4 |
| African | 7 | 11 | 4.7 |
| American | 8 | 10 | 4.3 |
| Latino | 6 | 9 | 3.8 |
| High | 4 | 8 | 3.4 |
| White | 5 | 7 | 2.9 |
| Black | 5 | 6 | 2.6 |
| Conversations | 13 | 6 | 2.6 |
| Factor | 6 | 6 | 2.6 |
| Expulsion | 9 | 5 | 2.1 |
| Schools | 7 | 5 | 2.1 |
| Authority | 9 | 4 | 1.7 |
| Leadership | 10 | 4 | 1.7 |
| Return | 6 | 4 | 1.7 |

Through the lens of critical race theory and its tenets of race being intertwined into society and institutions, fair and equal treatment, discourse to challenge the dominant conversations regarding race, and marginalization because of race, key words such as

**Figure 1**

Coding Process for Questionnaire #1

| Review Participant Responses | Utilizing InVivo, develop Repetitive Word Count Analysis document | Develop Codes by using and comparing responses and word count results to develop and finalize themes |
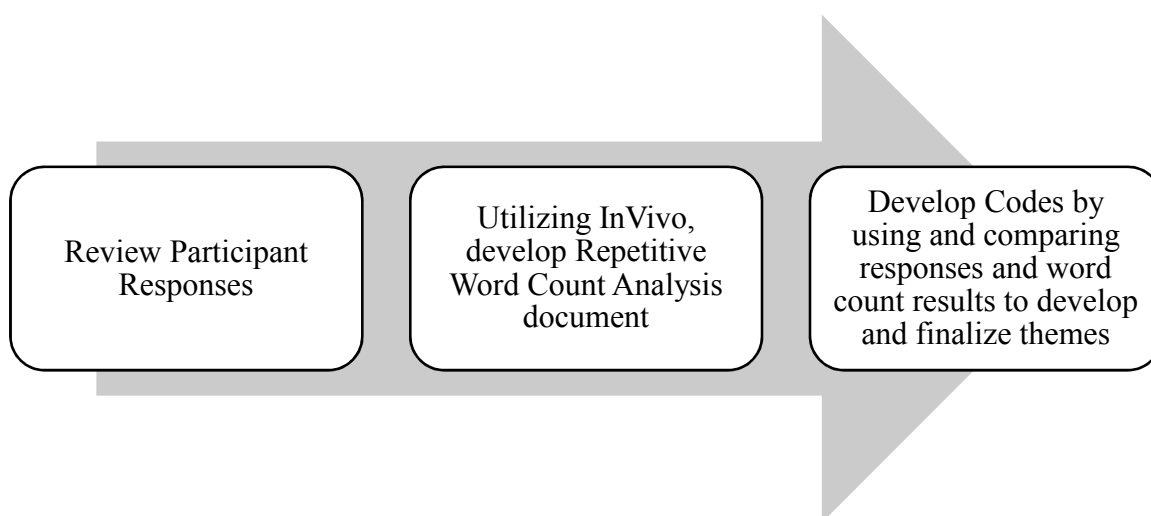
"unfair" and "outsted" emerged from questions 4-6 pertaining to the perception of race, law, and policy in the school's administration of the code of conduct for boys of color, but not for their white counterparts who did not mention race as an issue regarding their expulsion experience. Themes also emerged in the responses that provided a view of the formerly expelled student's perception of their expulsion experience such as "frustration and with leadership" as the boys of color felt "pushed out" and they "hated it because the process is unfair, they felt discouraged, outsted, and judged differently". The perception of boys of color "being judged differently" coincided with white boys admitting to "not having conversations about race" when it came to their expulsion, but the white student

discussions would be about "the incident and/or their behavior". The focus of race for White boys was a smaller myopic experience than it was for boys of color positing that white boys were less likely to see race as a factor in the expulsion process as compared to boys of color disproportionately expelled from their high schools.

**Round 2**

Key words and repetitive phrases were used to develop the second questionnaire utilizing thematic analysis of the narrative responses garnered in Round 1. Each narrative and Likert scale response from the group in Appendix F was analyzed for key words and phrases that posited students' perceptions as told to knowledgeable academic

professionals regarding how they felt about their expulsion experience from responses to questions 1-3 from questionnaire #2 (Table 3).

Actual participant responses based on discourse with students about their perceptions garnered through their experiences were described using descriptions such as:

"schools are racist";

"students felt they were "being targeted or identified because of race";

they were "picked on because of race"; "race was a factor"; and

that there were "disparity in expulsions".

Themes were also developed from the narrative responses from questions 4-6 on the disparity of expulsions for boys of color as compared to their white counterparts as indicated by themes such as race was not really discussed in this context regarding a specific disparity in expulsion overall, but there was:

**Table 3**

Theme Analysis for Questionnaire #2 Questions 1-3

| | Strongly Agree | Some what agree | Agree | Do not agree | Strongly disagree | Total responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Themes | | | | | | |
| Schools are racist | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Being targeted or identified because of their race | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Being picked on because of race | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Race not a factor | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5* | 0 | 7 |
| Disparity in expulsions | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| Students feeling separated and isolated from peers | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 |

Note: *Do not agree (DNA) value considered "in agreement" that race "is" a factor adding to the total of being in agreement because of the context in which the theme was analyzed

"frustration and anger with leadership";

feelings that they "felt pushed out";

feelings that they "hated it because process is unfair";

they felt discouraged, ousted; judged differently";

"not a fair process" in reference to the administration of the code of conduct for

boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts because knowledgeable

academic professionals stated that white boys, who did speak of race, only mentioned

that race was not a part of the expulsion conversation and that race was not an issue for

white boys though they are not disproportionately expelled.

Themes that emerged from Round 1 were synonymous with being accusatory towards the leadership such as:

 "schools are racist"; they had feelings of "being targeted or identified because of race';

they were "being picked on because of race;

"race is a factor" referring to exclusion to include "disparity in expulsions", and

students feeling isolated from their peers" also positing exclusion as an outcome of the race, law, and power analysis through the CRT lens.

The themes in Table 3 were provided to the knowledgeable academic professionals in Round 2 and they were asked to utilize a Likert scale to provide a level of agreement for each of the themes to include one narrative recommendation to mitigate the theme that the participant felt most strongly would require a recommendation for mitigation. Each ranking of "agreement" or "disagreement" was counted for each theme to achieve a total in each category for the themes resulting from questions 1-3 regarding student perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affecting students' attitudes towards returning to school and the same process for the themes emerging from questions 4-6 in Round 1 to describe the application of race, law, and power as a reason in the disparity of expulsion for African American and Latino boys as compared to their white male counterparts with boys of color seeing a disparity because of race and their white male counterparts only seeing behavior as the reason for disparity as the disparity appears to be the perceptions of the expelled students of color.

Each ranking of "*agreement*" and each ranking of "*disagreement*" was counted for each

theme that received each ranking to achieve a total of themes that were mostly agreed to

by the participant group, and themes were counted to include those rankings of

"*disagreement*" resulting in more of "agreement" for the themes resulting from

**Table 4**

Themes from Questionnaire #2, Questions 4-6

| | Strongly Agree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Themes | | | | | | |
| Race not discussed | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Frustration and anger with leadership | 2 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Felt pushed out | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Hated it because it was unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Students did not speak much about the laws and policies | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Depended on who was in charge | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| Not a fair process | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 7 |

 questions 1-3 regarding student perceptions of race, school authority, and or school boys

of color seeing a disparity because of race and their white male counterparts only seeing

behavior as the reason for disparity as the disparity appears to be the perceptions of the expelled children. The recommendations from the participants were placed in a Word document and along with the themes for member checking which did not result in any modifications or updates.

**Round 3**

Recommendations from participants were used to design questionnaire #3 to using a Likert scale to prioritize the recommendations to garner expert opinions as to which recommendations should receive priority for mitigating the disproportionate outcomes relating to intersectionality and discipline outcomes of exclusion, marginalization, and school leaders, school staff, community members, civil rights organizations, and families of high school students.

There were 6 recommendations for themes that emerged from questions 1-3, and 9 recommendations that emerged from questions 4-6 in the round 2 questionnaire for a total of 15 recommendations. Some recommendations were extensive and had to be separated into more than one recommendation while maintaining the integrity of the recommendation(s). The recommendations require dialogue with stakeholders (school leaders, faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, to ensure that there are resources available to support those recommendations that meet required criteria for adoption, acceptance, and agreement through consensus by the school leadership and supported by families of students and other stakeholders in the community to include law enforcement, and local civic action organizations. There was one case in which one participant did not

complete this questionnaire. However, all previous completed questionnaires whether in their entirety or partially, were included in the study.

- Questionnaire #2 Participant Recommendations results were as follows: Create policies that are inclusive and support all students in an equitable manner and are not isolating.

- Leadership that is proactive and not only ensures the student is included in a plan to continue his or her education.

- Schools should have mentors or advocates in their first year of middle or high school.

- Teachers should participate in professional development in the areas of race, race in America, the history of cultures, unconscious bias, and the pedagogy of Love.

- The rules and regulations that apply must be applied to all equally with implementation at the District level first then filtering to all schools.

- Develop positive relationships with each child and build a nurturing and equitable school.

- There needs to be a "warm handoff" to site after expulsion and a "warm welcome back" for students who return.

- Develop a nurturing and loving school where equity is practiced.

- School leadership is key in change and racism should be addressed but not tolerated.

- Staff professional development in implicit bias and what institutional and structural racism is.

- Staff professional development in how to stop racist practices/policies that negatively impacts students.

- Transparency in the process.

- Strong leaders that know their community/parents/staff and would know how to work with the students in their particular situations.

- Eliminate any form of overt or covert attacks and make sure justice and compassion is followed in turn.

- Provide an opportunity for students to engage in dialogue among themselves and with adults.

Participants were asked to provide their perspective as to which of the recommendations should be considered as the most important. The results are as follows beginning with the themes originating from questions 1-3 that received the most votes:

- "Develop positive relationships with each child and build a nurturing and equitable school" received most of the participant votes.

The recommendation from the second group of recommendations for mitigating the themes originating from questions 4-6 that received the most votes is:

- "Strong leaders that know their community/parents/staff and would know how to work with students in their particular situations" receiving most of the participant votes.

**Evidence of Trustworthiness**

Issues of trustworthiness were addressed by adhering to credibility, transferability, dependability, conformation, and ethical procedures. These areas were important to ensure validity of the data collected and to eliminate chances of conflict or inconsistency. Triangulation was used to also ensure the validity of information by using open-ended questions, Likert scale ratings of themes and for recommendation ranking to determine recommended level of prioritization.  Detailed notes were kept on all steps of my research process from the time of recruitment through submission of the developmental document to the Committee. Ethical procedures were adhered to by following the recruitment, data collection, and data analysis steps to provide rigor in research to answer research questions while ensuring participants were treated with respect, dignity, and transparency throughout the research process maintaining anonymity in accordance with the Delphi Method data collection technique. Member checking was also conducted with each iteration to ensure the opportunity to response to the questionnaires provided to the participants and removing researcher bias by providing a short researcher biography to the participants. Trustworthiness is explained in detail in the sections below.

**Credibility**

Credibility can be achieved through several strategies in a qualitative research study such as triangulation using several sources of information (Stahl & King, 2020). Credibility was achieved through research triangulation using data from a state government website to obtain information about the expulsion of boys of color from the

state of California through its website at the CDE. Credibility was also obtained through

the use of an iterative questionnaire instrument to gather narrative data designed to garner

responses to answer the research questions from participants ensuring a consistent

process of obtaining information from participants on the topic while providing

anonymity of the respondent group to establish a level of comfort in responding, use of

open-ended questions, and use of Likert scale responses to provide a narrative assessment

of the responses to answer the research question and garner agreement. Each

questionnaire type yielded the same or similar conclusions about the data in comparison

and contrast of the responses. Transparency was achieved by member checking of the

questionnaire results is all rounds providing participants the ability to review all

responses with the opportunity to adjust their responses. Member checking was

conducted by email to the participant group after each questionnaire was received from

the group. Aggregated data was provided to participants with the option to make any

corrections to their responses if they felt the need to change the information previously

contained in their questionnaire responses (Noble and Smith, 2015). Each iteration

provided the same instructions to ensure participants were given the opportunity to

review all of the responses from their fellow participants, and to make any

changes/updates to their response. No changes or updates were made by any participant

on any iteration of the questionnaire and therefore, their initial submission was utilized as

submitted in its original form.

**Transferability**

Transferability is a suggestion that must be researched for its applicability to a new context (Stahl and King, p. 27). Transferability was established within the limitations acknowledged in the study producing thick, rich descriptions from the participant group's diversity in years/experience in their roles, the setting used for completing the questionnaire, and personal biases regarding interpretation of student responses about race and other factors surrounding student perceptions about school authority or school policy regarding returning to school and the diversity in student expulsion experiences resulting in outcomes in this study.   Thick description resulting from the process provided the transferability of this present study by use of more than one information source through the CDE, EdData.org, and the U. S. Department of Education to validate the research's purpose for conducting the study, and the use of member checking with each iteration of the questionnaire. I also engaged in peer examination by discussing my study with local University academics, my dissertation committee, and fellow/former Walden University students/alumni. Due to the limitations of this study, this study cannot be generalized past the participants.

**Dependability**

Dependability was established through triangulation by using the questionnaire instrument containing structured, open-ended questions, Likert scale responses, and historical documents to provide the ability to attempt to recreate the same results allowing future researchers to examine the validity of the methods of this study. I also spoke with impartial peers and academics at local universities, and faculty and current

students and Alumni from Walden University to garner their opinions about the study. I will also present my results to other researchers at local academic, social, and civic and social organizations to include presenting at professional events. During the process of the dissertation, I kept notes on the progress of the research to keep an audit trail of the research process to include research notes, my thoughts, data collection, data analysis, and data coding through completion of the study. This researcher's biases were controlled to the extent that each questionnaire was reviewed by two professionals who are knowledgeable in qualitative research prior to administering the questionnaire to mitigate researcher bias and I received approval of the questionnaires from the dissertation committee and the Walden University Institutional Review Board.

## Confirmability

Confirmability defined as getting as close to objective reality as possible (Stahl and King, 2020). Credibility was established through intra-coder reliability through a reflexive posture of the researcher through the gathering of the data from the iterative questionnaire s, the analysis of the data, and its evaluative outcome through the coding process resulting in themes for analysis and garnering a majority agreement or disagreement of the themes emanating from questionnaire #1 and the generation of recommendations from questionnaire #2. The researcher exercised reflexivity by utilizing a written log to capture thoughts about the research study's execution/process after each iteration of the questionnaire until consensus was achieved or a majority agreement, and the recommendations in questionnaire #3 review by the participant group based on their opinion of which recommendations should receive the priority for implementation into,

or update to, current school policy. This log allowed the researcher to reflect on the conduct of the study while keeping a personal accountability for the process of the research study. The researcher presented a biography to the participants to garner an understanding of the researcher's objectivity as a researcher and student mitigating any bias that could be perceived by the participants of the researcher's intent during the conduct the research.

**Results**

The first research question on students' perceptions of race, school authority and or policy regarding expulsion affecting the attitudes towards returning to school to continue education after expulsion, were evidenced in the analysis of responses through the conceptual framework of intersectionality and race positing what students perceived as the reason for the disproportionate outcomes emulating race being intertwined into the institution of public school disciplinary processes resulting in exclusion, marginalization, and discrimination for students of color. The responses of participants emulated students' perception that "schools are racist" and that race is a factor" in the disproportionate outcomes at the nexus of the two constructs, but only disproportionately impacting boys of color. The questionnaire responses provided a perspective of students that because of their race, those in authority expelled boys of color disproportionately as students of color were treated differently than their white male counterparts because of race and being targeted and identified because of their race. Students' attitudes reflected negatively towards the school atmosphere because boys of color perceived a disparity in expulsions and felt picked on and targeted because of their race. The perception of disparity in

expulsions is reflected in the expulsions for boys of color and white boys in California public schools with results positing disproportionate outcomes for boys of color with white boys stating race was not an issue of discussion regarding their expulsion experience. Overall, participant responses were in agreement that students' perceptions encompassed race as an issue throughout the themes and that participants overall agreed that race was intertwined throughout all responses garnering a majority agreement to those themes supporting the responses from students per results from questionnaire #2.

The second research question on how the application of race, law, and power explains the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus white students is posited through themes that emerged from the original questions about race, law, and power and its application as analyzed through the lens of critical race theory. Critical Race Theory (CRT) tenets such having discourse about race and the outcomes that exist through the execution of expulsion for boys of color (Bell, 1973). The disparity in the execution of discipline is pervasive for boys of color as compared to their white counterparts as perceived by the themes such as frustration and anger with leadership, felt pushed out, process is unfair, felt discouraged, outed and judge differently when white boys did not have any discussions relating to race. Daftary (2018) posited that discourse is a key element of CRT because having a discussion about race allows the voices for the marginalized while considering issues of power, racism, and other forms of oppression. These discussions are made of stories that counter the dominant narrative such as there not being a race problem in this country unless you are not a member of the dominant society. The issue of race in schools possibly resulting in a disparity in expulsions for

boys of color remain below the surface of societal issue conversations because people in positions of authority do not want to discuss race except as a demographic and not for the difficulties that impact boys of color in public high school discipline outcomes to include a culture that does not support listening to the voices of formerly expelled students. The CA EDC § 48900-65001 is designed to provide a set of rules and guidelines for student behavior and the consequences for behavior that violates those rules. However, boys of color believe that expulsion is not a fair process and they have frustration and anger with leadership which extends to their perception that outcomes are not consistent because it may depend on who is in charge. These themes resulting from the participant responses were largely in agreement with the themes that spelled a negative perception of the process for boys of color that leads to a disparity in expulsion as compared to while male counter-parts experiences. Recommendations were ranked by participants on a Likert scale with the highest number representing the recommendation considered most important. The themes that emerged from questions 1-3 were ranked on a scale of 1-6 for the 6 recommendations made by the group; questions 4-6 emerged with 9 recommendations and ranked accordingly. For the first set of recommendations, the recommendation that received the highest ranking by 4 of the 7 participants selecting this recommendation was:

*"Students should have mentors or advocates in their first year of middle or high school."*

For the second set of questions, the recommendation that received the highest ranking by 3 of 7 participants selecting the recommendations at was:

*"Strong leaders that know their community/parents/staff and would know how to work with students in their particular situations."*

The recommendations that received the lowest ranking from each participant group for questions 1-3 with 3 participants selecting the recommendation as the lowest was:

*"The rules and regulations that apply must be applied to all equally with implementation at the District level first then filtering to all schools."*

For questions 4-6 with 2 participants selecting the recommendation as the lowest was:

*"There needs to be a "warm handoff" to site after expulsion and a "warm welcome back" for students who return."* Per the foregoing analysis of the questionnaire responses, research question #1 was answered through the participant responses that provided expert perspectives on student perceptions of race, school authority, and or school policy regarding expulsion affected students' attitudes towards returning to school to continue their education after expulsion with perceptions that boys of color were singled out because of their race and were subjugated through racism, discrimination, and marginalization because of the color of their skin. Agreement was also garnered in questionnaire #2 through agreement with the themes that race was an issue and that students' perceptions posited the leadership did not administer discipline fairly for students of color. Research question #2 about how race, law, and power explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate of minorities versus white boys was answered with responses which provide student perceptions that white boys did not discuss race as an issue with knowledgeable academic professionals though boys of color felt the system

was not fair to them because of their race as evidenced by the discipline outcomes for boys of color. There were no discrepant cases.

## Summary

In chapter 4, I discussed the introduction, setting, participant demographics, data collection, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results of the three rounds of my Delphi study. Steps to ensure evidence of trustworthiness were explained. Recommendations for mitigation were ranked for positing recommendations to community stakeholders. In chapter 5, the interpretation of the findings will be presented as well as the limitations of the study, implications, and recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

**Introduction**

The purpose of this case study was to explore, from the perspective of individuals who have experience with both the California disciplinary system and counseling students who were expelled, the impact on expelled students and obtain recommendations on how to improve the application of the codes of conduct. The perceptions of previously expelled students revealed that race is an issue in the outcomes of school discipline and that school leader's execution of the expulsion process is not fair to boys of color, resulting in their expulsion. The theoretical framework of CRT and the conceptual framework of intersectionality were used to guide the structure of the Delphi questionnaire questions and to identify what information to collect.

Intersectionality was used to examine the expulsion experience of boys of color and their White counterparts to determine race and discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color. At the nexus of this intersection is the expulsion of boys of color in numbers that are disproportionate to their population, and the conversations about this phenomena with research participants revealed that students perceived race was an issue and a factor in discipline outcomes and that words synonymous with schools being racist, feelings of being isolated and separated from peers, and disparity in expulsions positing a school environment they had to consider prior to returning to school to complete their education. CRT was used to examine the application of race, law, and power to explain the disparity in California's expulsion rate between boys of color and their White counterparts. Participant responses to questions about the disparity in

expulsions administered through the process of executing the standards of conduct for public high schools were posited to be a systemic process that is unfair to boys of color, hated because the process left them feeling ousted, and that they were judged unfairly. White male student conversations with participants revealed that White boys did not discuss race relating to expulsion, providing a disparity in the perception that expulsion policy was fair for all students.

Recommendations were made by participants based on their conversations with students and the themes that emerged from those conversations that student perceptions manifesting from their experiences made boys of color feel discriminated against because of the racist school environment also resulting in a disparate treatment in the expulsion process in which leaders treated boys of color differently than their White counterparts resulting in the disproportionate outcomes. These recommendations were made to mitigate the data emerging from questionnaire responses to provide stakeholders in the school system and communities with ideas that can suggest training for school staff members on race and unconscious bias, providing mentors for students, creating policies that are inclusive and support all students in an equitable manner, and necessitating a "warm handoff" to site after expulsion and a "warm welcome back" for students who return. These recommendations will require review by stakeholders, as some may require a change in school policy in how expulsions are handled and how students are treated by school staff who will need to be educated on the perspective of race and bias, whether implicit or explicit, when counseling students. This sensitivity should be initiated through listening to former students' stories and how those stories can impact decisions about

returning to a school culture perceived to be racist and unfair when administering

discipline to boys of color. Chapter 5 includes interpretation of findings, limitations of

the study, recommendations, implications, and a conclusion. The interpretation of

findings section is divided into four subsections to provide more detail.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

The key findings were grouped into three categories: student perceptions derived

through disproportionate outcomes at the nexus of the intersectionality of race and

discipline and their perception of what influenced them when deciding on  returning to

school to continue their education after expulsion; how the application of race, law, and

power can explain the disparity in California expulsion rate of male minorities versus

White boys; and participant perspectives of the discourse with those students, and

recommendations to mitigate student perceptions on disproportionate outcomes, and the

application of race, law, and power in explaining the disparity in expulsions of minority

boys versus White boys.

Prior research provided the foundation for defining race as a construct and the

need for discourse to examine the elements of race such as the embedding of race in

society to recognize that it exists as a means to subjugate, discriminate, marginalize, and

exclude from society's environments. Bell (1973) and Daftary (2018) posited that

conversations were needed to address these elements of race because being embedded in

society provides a means of ignoring the impact of race on society, particularly in large

systems such as the criminal justice and public-school systems. Race being intertwined in

society public school systems without discourse about the outcomes in which race could

be related does not allow the voices of those expelled to challenge the systems or bring about conversations about the perceptions of race and discipline by those who have experienced it. Such discourse challenges the status quo of policy administration that establishes processes and procedures to execute the code of conduct within the state of California, however, resulting in an environment for boys of color that impacts their perceptions of their race impacting that environment they would have to return to in order to complete their education. The CA EDC § 48900-65001 establishes the policy for expelling students for actions that are not conducive to abiding by the code of conduct contained therein. This policy, when viewed through the lens of intersectionality of race and discipline and the discourse between formerly expelled students and school staff, provides a perspective that race is an issue as perceived by expelled students and that the process is not fairly executed for boys of color as compared to their white male counterparts because of the manner in which the leadership executes the policy. Discourse provides a means for the expelled and those that counsel the expelled or even recommend students for expulsion to hear about the experiences of the expelled and are able to take those conversations and consider the short- and long-term impact of the policy on all students focusing on those that are disproportionately expelled. These conversations provide a means to have discussions about the state sanctioned process and how race is intertwined in the discipline outcome for boys of color. Discourse expands expulsion policy beyond policy implementation, execution, and outcome by providing another element of impact that will challenge the conversations about race, fairness, equity, and discrimination for all students as the policy was originally designed. These

conversations about policy have to address the implicit and explicit bias evident in the disciplinary outcomes which have provided a systemic protection of the process because of the manner of execution of school discipline is some schools in California. Kempf (2020) stated that CRT should be used as a tool to disrupt and interrogate implicit bias by bringing attention to questions of race power and inequity. Discourse helps to build a bridge between students and faculty that may not have existed and can be extended to other groups such as families and mentoring organizations who can listen to the experiences of the students, the perspective of school faculty involved in counseling these students on their education, and any other stakeholders who have a genuine interest in mitigating disproportionate disciplinary outcomes.

**Student Perceptions**

Public schools are an institution in this country. These institutions provide the education of the children in this country, providing the opportunity to gain knowledge on subjects such as history, science, language, music, and sports. Schools are required to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. This study examined the perceptions of students who have attended public high schools in California to determine student perceptions about the how the disproportionate outcomes for boys of color impacted their thoughts about returning to school to complete their education. Student perception coupled with school leaders' responsibility to maintain a level of order through administering the code of conduct has resulted in students within some public high schools feeling that their race (targeting, identifying by race) was an issue in their disciplinary outcome, positing a discriminatory culture for boys of color. Bell (1973) and

Daftary (2018) described discourse as one of the key elements of bridging the communication gap by critically examining race that is intertwined into society's institutions through conversation with those that have the experience. This research supports increasing the communication with students by students speaking with school staff members about their expulsion experience. Through expressing these experiences to teachers, principals, vice-principals, and counselors, the exchange of thoughts and perceptions from students provide knowledgeable academic professionals with a view to help in developing recommendations to mitigate the culture of racial discrimination and exclusion in the expulsion process mitigating the disparity in expulsion outcomes through the exercise of a fair and consistent process that does not result in disparate outcomes for any group of students. Some themes resulting from the research:

- "Schools are racist"

- "Being targeted or identified because of race"

- "Race was a factor"

- "Feeling separated and isolated from peers"

- The discourse will help to establish trust in a system that is designed to change a student's behavior and convince them that they can still complete their high school education. Public high school leadership has the responsibility to ensure that disciplinary procedures and processes are executed in a fair manner for all students regardless of race or any other constructs. Students, too, have the responsibility of abiding by the standards of conduct expressed outlined in the Education Code (1976). However, student perceptions indicate that boys of color

who are disciplined are not treated the same as their White male counterparts,

resulting in a disparity in expulsions. White boys did not discuss race as an issue

in their expulsion, but boys of color did, as outlined in these thematic results

emanating from questions about disparities:

- "Process is unfair"

- They felt discouraged, outsted, and judged differently"

- It depended on who was in charge"

These responses indicate that boys of color perceived they were treated differently than

their White male counterparts and that this treatment was perceived to result in disparity

in discipline outcomes for boys of color, failing to ensure a fair and standardized process

that leads to mitigating this disparity.

**Participant Perspectives**

Participant perspectives were garnered through analysis of the themes developed

from the questionnaire I developed. Participant perspectives were analyzed using the

results of Questionnaire #2 and the levels of agreement for the themes developed from

responses to research Questionnaire #1. Their perspectives were analyzed through use of

a Likert scale and narrative responses in evaluating themes based on experience as

knowledgeable academic professionals in the California public school system. The

analysis of the Likert scale responses provided levels of agreement that posited a majority

of agreement versus disagreement with themes by participants about race and exclusion

such as schools being racist and students being targeted because of their race. Regarding

race, law, and power, there were themes that participants were in agreement such as "race

was not discussed" and that "students did not speak much about the laws and policies," positing that there was a lack of discourse about race and that disciplinary policies also were not discussed, presenting a lack of discourse about expulsion policy and procedures. However, a majority of participants agreed that students were frustrated and angry with leadership, felt pushed out, and hated it because the process is unfair.

## Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations for this qualitative research is subjective, positing the use of opinions and perspectives which will vary dependent on the experiences, episodic memory, and personal biases of the participants. A limitation of Delphi data collection was participant responses can be incomplete or participants may decide not to participate in the entire study. Sample size could have resulted in re-recruitment due to participants deciding not to participate for the entire study, requiring the study to be considered less rigorous than if the minimum sample range was reduced below the minimum number for Delphi technique data collection. Lastly, the research cannot be generalized beyond the expressed opinions of those that participated in the study due to the subjectiveness of responses by participants and due to second-hand opinions with no way to remove participants' personal opinions from a student's actual beliefs and attitudes about the topic.

## Recommendations

Discourse about race with students who have experienced expulsion is an important conversation to have with school leadership/staff to understand what children of color perceive the reason they were expelled, and that the expulsion process is unfair to boys of

color. School leadership and faculty should be the catalyst for formal and informal discussions with all students about race to address any issues that may arise in the conversations so that leaders can obtain the "pulse" of the student body pertaining to the expulsion process that is disproportionate for a particular segment of the school population. Future research should encompass interviews directly with students to allow them to provide their experiences and conduct of analysis to explore school environments and the impact of those environments on students who have been expelled from school. Additionally, there should be analysis of teacher and leadership training to include performance measures and outcome metrics to mitigate disproportionate outcomes for any groups and establish preventive measures to monitor the expulsion process by school leaders and the public.

## Recommendations for Future Research

Policy research in the area of disproportionate discipline outcomes for boys of color in California public schools provide an opportunity for lawmakers, local LEA's, faculty, students and their families to have discourse about these outcomes that formerly expelled students perceived as having to negotiate when considering completing their high school education post expulsion. Knowledgeable academic professionals have a perspective as part of the school's leadership and can provide insight to the Principals, Vice-Principals, Counselors and other faculty about this issue to initiate a methodological approach to working with internal and external stakeholders to implement policy changes to the CA EDC § 48900-65001. Future research should explore:

- Recommendations from students and faculty to school leadership on how to reduce disproportionate outcomes through focus groups and town halls to discuss the issues.

- Formerly expelled students' perceptions of the discipline process and the school environment and culture that formed those perceptions.

- Budget review for incorporating funding for development and conduct of training for faculty staff on implicit bias, racism, and the school discipline process and the statistical outcomes for local schools, districts, and counties in California.

- Conduct public focus groups, panels, with community leaders, civil rights organizations, LEA's, and family members with formerly expelled students incorporated into the school year schedule and advertised in the community through social media outlets and emails to stakeholders encouraging discourse between all stakeholders and actors about the impact of expulsion and how students perceive their school environment and its leadership.

Public policy has three main elements which are identify the problem, debate the issue and develop and initiate solutions, monitor the outcomes to ensure the policy is actually performing as designed and implemented for all actors involved with established performance measures for those outcomes. In regards to expulsion, research should be performed on the development of performance measures that will provide a the LEA's with a notification when expulsions begin to reach the statistical level of disproportionality requiring LEA's review their policies and processes to determine how the outcomes are not within a particular range, and, how to maintain/bring the numbers

below a level of disproportionality with progress towards reducing all expulsion rates and outcomes particularly for children of color who are the recipient of the largest amount of expulsions.

**Implications**

The potential social change of the study may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff teams working together to remodel perceptions about race and its impact on returning to school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color. Lawmakers and school leadership should enact a task force to undo the status quo of race as a factor in expulsions requiring discourse between formerly expelled students and knowledgeable academic professionals on the topic of race and school discipline outcomes to garner experiences of former students to educate and inform the knowledgeable academic professionals about the experiences of all students and provide recommendations for mitigating the issues revealed in those conversations; trust that was established between the students by sharing their stories about their experiences without fear of retribution;  and the recommendations that emerged from the knowledgeable academic professionals and formerly expelled students that can lead to change in school policy, mentoring of students, and training for teachers on race and implicit bias specifically exploring the perceptions intertwined in the stories of former students. Discourse is one of the primary elements of Critical Race Theory as race is intertwined in society and in order to critically investigate race in the context of school discipline policy,  these conversation are needed and must continue to initiate changes to the expulsion policy impacting students, schools, and society by helping school leaders and

lawmakers focus on students' voices about their experiences with expulsion, and the mitigation strategies recommended by knowledgeable academic professionals with the goal of a process that treats all students equally resulting in outcomes that are fair coupled with a transparent process supported by stakeholders: students, schools and their faculty, families of students, and the local lawmakers who can provide resources to implement the recommendations from the knowledgeable academic professionals. An environment that encourages discourse between students and the institution of education to voice concerns, thoughts, opinions, and perspectives on the topic of race and expulsion disproportionality will encourage future conversations about topics as difficult as race to make school and its culture a positive experience for all students regardless of race even after being expelled when deciding whether to return to school.

**Conclusion**

The conversations of formerly expelled students with knowledgeable academic professionals in the public school system about student perceptions on their expulsion experience brought forth stories from students that knowledgeable academic professionals felt necessary to point how students feel that race is intertwined in the process of expulsion that results in disproportionate discipline outcomes for boys of color. These conversations also revealed that boys of color perceived that their white male counterparts were not expelled at a disproportionate rate because race was not an issue for white boys. The conversations between students and faculty reveal that discourse about the topic of race can and should be encouraged and conducted to result in recommendations for improving the process of expulsion by mitigating student

perceptions about race and increasing the needs for conversations in support of that goal. Formerly expelled students should have a voice about their perceptions of what impacts their decision to return or not return to school to achieve their high school education. Providing their stories through discourse with faculty provided insight into those experiences and this research provided participant perspectives on those conversations resulting in a level of agreement with the themes emanating in the research and positing that race and an unfair process did exist for some of the students who had been in discourse with the research participants. Bell (1973) posited conversations as being necessary to begin to talk about race and its impact on society critically analyzing society's actions regarding race in America. The discourse in the research provides an example of that and future research should be conducted with other stakeholder groups to ascertain their perceptions and school faculty perspectives to examine current policy to ensure policy outcomes are fair, equitable, and the implementation of recommendations for change to develop a more inclusive environment for students and  upgrading current policy and standards for monitoring disciplinary enforcement efficiency and effectiveness  through metrics to proactively ascertain when policies for expulsion are not being equally applied to all students. The potential social change may be accomplished by establishing programs for students and school staff teams working together to remodel perceptions about race and its impact on returning to school discipline's disproportionate outcomes for boys of color.

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Appendix A: Letter to California Public High School Principals

Announcing Study & Requesting to Post Recruitment Letter in the Facility

Organization Name (California High School)

Organization Address

Organization Phone Number

Today's Date:

Dear sir/ma'am,

My name is XXXXX XXXXXXX and I am a Doctoral Student at Walden University in the School of Public Policy. I am conducting a research study on the impact of expulsion on the decision of boys of color as compared to their White male counterparts to return or not return to school to achieve their high school diploma. I will be utilizing Critical Race Theory as the theoretical framework for this study. I am asking you to post the attached flyer in your organization to provide the information to your faculty. The criterion is provided below.

**Participation Criterion**

- A current, former, or retired academic professional working in or worked in a California Public High School (grades 9-12)

- Personal experience talking with/counseling expelled students about the pros and cons of not completing their education

If you have questions or would like additional information before deciding to post, please contact me at  xxxxxx.xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx or phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Thank you very much. With kind regards,

XXXXXX XXXXXX, Doctoral Student

Attachment: Flyer

Appendix B: Flyer for posting by School Principals in Their High Schools

PARTICIPANTS FOR RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF EXPULSION ON
EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

I am seeking volunteers to take part in a study as part of a requirement to complete my doctoral program at Walden University. I am interested in understanding how current, former, or retired academic professionals who work or have worked in the California public school system perceive the impact of expulsion from high school influenced the post-expulsion education decision of minority boys of color as compared to their White counterparts.

**PARTICIPATION**:  Voluntary and there will be a $10 gift card for compensation for participation in this study whether you complete or do not complete all or part of the surveys, or you decide to discontinue participation entirely. You do not have to provide any personal identifying information outside of your email address and phone number and data will only be reported in a consensus aggregate. Your participation is confidential, and no one will know you participated or be able to connect any response to a specific participant.

**ELIGIBILITY:**

**Participation Criterion**

- A current, former, or retired academic professional working in or worked in a California Public High School (grades 9-12)

- Personal experience talking with/counseling expelled students about the pros and cons of not completing their education

As a prospective participant, once you contact me, I will provide additional information on the study, answer any additional questions you may have, verify your eligibility, ask for contact information (i.e., telephone and email), and send you a Consent form to the email provided. If you elect to participate, please email me to provide your voluntary participation and understanding of your meeting the eligibility. Once the Consent form is received, I will send you the questionnaire link which means that you have been accepted as a participant. This study will use the Delphi technique and will involve three iterations of surveys. The initial survey of 6 questions, will be followed by two follow-on surveys that you will be asked to complete. The three surveys are estimated to take a combination of approximately 40 minutes each. You may withdraw and not complete the survey(s) at any time.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer, please contact: ***XXXXX XXXXXX (Walden University Doctoral Student in Public Policy and Administration) at XXX-XXX-XXXX or Email:*** xxxxx.xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx.

Appendix C: Social Media Recruitment Letter for LinkedIn

PARTICIPANTS FOR RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF EXPULSION ON
EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

I am seeking volunteers to take part in a study as part of a requirement to complete my doctoral program at Walden University. I am interested in understanding how teachers in the California public school system perceive the impact of expulsion from high school influenced the post-expulsion education decision of minority boys of color as compared to their White counterparts.

**PARTICIPATION**:  Voluntary and there will be a $10 gift card for compensation for participation in this study whether you complete or do not complete all or part of the surveys, or you decide to discontinue participation entirely. You do not have to provide any personal identifying information outside of your email address and phone number and data will only be reported in a consensus aggregate. Your participation is confidential, and no one will know you participated or be able to connect any response to a specific participant.

**ELIGIBILITY:**

**Participation Criterion**

- A current, former, or retired academic professional working in or worked in a California Public High School (grades 9-12)

- Personal experience talking with/counseling expelled students about the pros and cons of not completing their education

As a prospective participant, once you contact me, I will provide additional information on the study, answer any additional questions you may have, verify your eligibility, ask for contact information (i.e., telephone and email). If you elect to participate, you will be asked to email me back with your voluntary participation and understanding of your meeting the eligibility. Once the email is received, I will send you the questionnaire link which means that you have been accepted as a participant. This study will use the Delphi technique and will involve three iterations of surveys. The initial survey of 6 questions, will be followed by two follow-on surveys that you will be asked to complete. The three surveys are estimated to take a combination of approximately 40 minutes each. You may withdraw and not complete the survey(s) at any time.

 For more information about this study, or to volunteer, please contact: ***xxxxx xxxxxxx (Walden University Doctoral Student in Public Policy and Administration) at XXX-XXX-XXXX or Email:*** xxxxx.xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx.xxx.

Appendix D: School Discipline Questionnaires

School Discipline Questionnaire #1

Research Question #1

Question 1. In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe their thoughts on how their race, when combined with a disciplinary infraction, would result in expulsion?

Question 2. In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe their thoughts about why there is a disproportionate difference in the number of expulsions for African American and Latino boys and White boys?

Question 3. In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe their feelings of exclusion after being expelled?

Research Question #2


Question 4. In conversations with formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, in what context did they describe race influencing their decision whether to go back, or not go back to school to achieve, or not achieve, their high school education?

Question 5. In conversations with formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe the power/authority of their school leadership influencing their decision to go back to school and achieve, or not achieve, their high school education?

Question 6. In conversations with formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how would you describe their conversations with you about how they felt the laws for expulsion are fairly applied to all students regardless of race?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

School Discipline Questionnaire #2

Q1.   The themes below were developed from the group responses to questions 1-3 in the first survey addressing your conversations with formerly expelled students
about **"Exclusion"** impacting returning or not returning to school to achieve their high school diploma. Based on those conversations, please choose your level of agreement with each theme from "strongly agree" to strongly disagree". After selecting only **<u>one</u>** level of agreement for each theme, please provide a recommendation for mitigating the choice represented by your selection of "strongly agree" in 2-3 lines in the text box below.

Strongly agree   Somewhat agree   Agree   Do not agree   Strongly disagree

Schools are racist

Being targeted or
Identified because
of race

Being picked on
Because if race

Race not a factor

Disparity in
expulsions

Students feeling
separated and
isolated from peers

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is:

Q2:

The themes below were developed from the group responses to questions 4-6 in the first survey relating to your conversations with formerly expelled students about "Race, Law, and Power" impacting returning or not returning to school to achieve their high school diploma.  Based on those conversations, please choose your level of agreement for each theme from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". After selecting only one level of agreement for each theme, please provide a recommendation for mitigating the choice represented by your selection of "strongly agree" in 2-3 lines in the text box below.

|  | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Race not discussed |  |  |  |  |  |
| Frustration with leadership |  |  |  |  |  |
| Felt pushed out |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hated it because process is unfair; they felt discourage, ousted, and judged differently |  |  |  |  |  |
| Students did not speak much about the laws and policies |  |  |  |  |  |
| Depended on who was in charge |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not a fair process |  |  |  |  |  |

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is:

School Discipline Questionnaire #3

Q1. Based on the responses to the themes from questions 1-3 in the 2nd survey and the recommendations from the group below, on a scale of 1-6 (6 being the highest recommendation down to 1 being the lowest) please make one selection per row for each recommendation below:

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create policies that are inclusive and support all students in an equitable manner and are not isolating |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Leadership that is proactive and not only ensures the student is included in a plan to continue his or her education |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Schools should have mentors Or advocates in their first Year or middle or high School |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teachers should participate in Professional development in the Areas of race, race in America, The history of cultures, Unconscious bias, and the Pedagogy of love |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The rules and regulations that Apply must be applied to all Equally With implementation at the District level first then filtering to all schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Develop positive relationships With each child and build a Nurturing and equitable school |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Q2.  Based on the responses to the themes from questions 4-6 in the 2nd survey and the recommendations from the group below, on a scale of 1-9 (9 being the highest recommendation down to 1 being the lowest) please make one selection per row for each recommendation below:

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

There needs to be a "warm handoff" to site after expulsion and a "warm welcome back" for students who return.

Develop a nurturing and loving school where equity is practiced.

School leadership is key in change and racism should be addressed but not tolerated.

Staff professional development in implicit bias and what institutional and structural racism is.

Staff professional development in how to stop racist practices/ policies that negatively impacts students.

Transparency in the process

Strong leaders that know their community/ parents/staff and would know how to work with the students in their particular situations.

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Eliminate any form of overt or covert attacks and make sure justice and compassion is followed in turn.

Provide an opportunity for students to engage in dialogue among themselves and with adults.

Appendix E: Questionnaire #1 Responses

**Question 1:  In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe their thoughts on how their race, when combined with a disciplinary infraction, would result in expulsion?**

**Responses for question number 1:**

I am not sure that my students articulated a feeling about how race affected their expulsion. I can say that African American and Latino students often speak about how schools are racist and that they felt picked on due to race.

I am not exactly sure I understand this question. Are you asking if these students felt that race directly impacted their being expelled? As a high school principal, I have had to recommend several students for expulsion. I do not recall any student mentioning race to me. The topic never came up during our conversation.

Many African American and Latino boys I have worked with indicated that race was a factor in their disciplinary action. African American and Latino students felt as if they were targeted or identified because of their race. For White students, race was not raised as a factor that resulted in expulsion.

They did not talk about race being a factor because the discipline was based on what they did not who they were.

Black and Latinx boys did not get the benefit of the doubt. They were not heard, somewhat presumed guilty. Black and Latinx students shut down and did not try to explain.

Honestly, race never played a part in our conversations. Their behavior was what we discussed.

They did not express their concerns in terms of race, simply the circumstance.

**Question 2:  In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe their thoughts about the disproportionate difference in the number of expulsions for African American and Latino boys as compared to White boys?**

**Responses for question number 2:**

Again, I am not sure it was articulated quite as you asked but I often hear things like, "everyone here is black and brown because we are who are expelled."  Also, it is hard for students to separate the disparity since they are being expelled from schools that are predominantly black/brown. I have very few expelled white students.

Educators discuss the disproportionality of students of color being expelled from school. However, I have never had a discussion like this with students who I have expelled or been expelled.

African American and Latino boys recognized the disproportionate number of expulsions because the school that serves students that are expelled have more Black and Brown boys than White boys.

No conversations were held like that with me.

Devastating.

We did not have that conversation.

Students that are being expelled didn't express concerns on race.

**Question 3: In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe feeling excluded from achieving their high school education after being expelled?**

**Responses for question number 3:**

Students often express a need to "get their credits up" to return to their schools. They want the full comprehensive high school experience. Others enjoy staying with us since we are small and offer a lot of individualized supports.

Once these students are expelled from school, I don't typically speak to them again because they no longer attend my school. So I have never spoken to them about feelings of exclusion.

All students that have been expelled feel as though they are excluded from achieving their high school educational goals. Because the expulsion process separates and isolates them from their peers, they typically become disillusioned about their high school education.

They wanted to get back on track as soon as possible so they could get their diploma.

Black and Latinx Students did not understand the relationship between being expelled and high school completion or alternative school.

We discussed how their behavior needed to change as to allow them to continue to stay on track for graduation. I worked with many students to get them back on track after a suspension.

They were concerned about getting their diploma so that they could continue on in college.

**Question 4: In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, in what context did they describe race influencing their decision whether to go back, or not go back to school to achieve, or not achieve, their high school education?**

**Responses for question number 4:**

I am not sure race has often been articulated but they want the high school experience. Even though we offer a "cap and gown" graduation, they want to do it with their peers from the comprehensive site. "For their families"

Again...sorry. But I have not had conversations with them about this.

I'm not sure African American or Latino students that I have conferred with described race as an influencing factor to return to school. Formerly expelled African American and Latino students I have talked to typically refer to race as it is viewed in society, versus whether or not they go back to school. Though some White students are aware of racial issues, I have not had a lot of conversations with White boys are racial issues.

They did not talk about that.

They did not articulate this.

It was more a socio-economic issue with my students. Because during our conversations, I would show them scholarship opportunities that were ONLY for either African American students and/or Latino students. This gave them some hope for post-high school opportunities.

They did not express that race was a determining factor in their decision to return to school.

**Question 5: In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they feel about the power/authority of their school leadership influencing their decision to go back to school and achieve, or not achieve, their high school education?**

**Responses for question number 5:**

Most felt pushed out by their comprehensive sites. I often see expulsions for extremely minor offenses. Our students feel a sense of belonging and experience success and often want to stay.

Again...sorry. But I have not had conversations with them about this.

With African American, Latino and White boys, the authority figures in schools are a major consideration. Typically, all students will express anger and frustration towards

authority figures because, mostly likely, it would be those authority figures that recommended the students for expulsion. Some African American and Latino boys feel that the school leadership targeted them because of race and/or ethnicity. Though White students complained about the authority of school leadership, they did not seem to identify any racial concerns are an influencing factor to return to school.

Most of the conversation was focused on what they needed to do not leadership. Seldom were students who were expelled allowed to go back to the school that they were expelled from.

It depends. Some African American and Latinx said it could go either way depending on who was the school leadership. It was dependent upon their relationship with school leader.

It depended on who was in charge at the time! Certain leaders cared about "all" students. When I had one who didn't, as a counselor, my team stepped up and assisted these students with options for success.

They said that the administration was "tripping" over the situation. In each case the student finished their studies at other high schools.

**Question 6: In conversations between you and formerly expelled African American, Latino, and White boys, how did they describe how they felt the laws for expulsion were fairly applied to all students and, how those laws influenced their decision to return, or not return to achieve, or not achieve, their high school education?**

**Responses for question number 6:**

Not much conversation on this level. Though there should be!

When disciplining students, suspending them, and recommending them for expulsion, sometimes students do express frustration regarding fairness. Depending on the situation, they do not feel like it's fair that they are being suspended or being expelled. It all depends on the situation.

In reviewing procedures with formerly expelled African American, Latino and White boys, most feel the same way about the laws--that the laws are set-up against them. Boys in all racial groups feel the same way about the laws.

I never had that kind of conversation. I was Principal of a predominately Black high school. 70% Black, 20% Latino and 1 to 2% White.

They did not articulate any difference.

Overall, the laws for expulsion changed during superintendent changes. As time went on, the laws eased up quite a bit and there were less suspensions/expulsions towards the end of my 30 year career.

The students were not that deeply thoughtful of the laws, simply that their home situations was difficult and completing their studies in a new setting would be daunting.

Appendix F: Questionnaire #2 Responses

Q1
**The themes below were developed from the group responses to questions 1-3 in the first survey addressing your conversations with formerly expelled students about "Exclusion" impacting returning or not returning to school to achieve their high school diploma. Based on those conversations, please choose your level of agreement with each theme from "strongly agree" to strongly disagree". After selecting only one level of agreement for each theme, please provide a recommendation for mitigating the choice represented by your selection of "strongly agree" in 2-3 lines in the text box below.**

Participant 1

Schools are racist - Do not agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Do not agree

Being picked on because of race - Do not agree

Race not a factor - Agree

Disparity in expulsions - Do not agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Agree

Participant 2

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: Honestly, I do not strongly agree with any of these themes. None of them seem to be a just reason as to why a student would be excluded from returning to their site to receive their high school diploma. While I do believe that schools have racists practices and policies, I cannot strongly agree that racism is the sole reason that a student could not return to their site to obtain their high school diploma.

Participant 3

Schools are racist - Strongly agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Somewhat agree

Being picked on because of race - Somewhat agree

Race not a factor - Do not agree

Disparity in expulsions - Somewhat agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Strongly agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: Racist schools-create policies that are inclusive and support all students in an equitable manner. It is the system of policies and procedures that create the racist inequities. Create systems that are inclusive and not isolating.

Participant 4

Schools are racist - Do not agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Do not agree

Being picked on because of race - Do not agree

Race not a factor - Do not agree

Disparity in expulsions - Agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Do not agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is:

I honestly do not believe schools are racist. The rules and regulations that apply must be applied to all equally. That must be implemented at the district level first then it will filter to all schools.

Participant 5

Schools are racist - Somewhat agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Somewhat agree

Being picked on because of race - Somewhat agree

Race not a factor - Do not agree

Disparity in expulsions - Agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Do not agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: This is a continuing saga in any institution especially in our country. I think there has to be leadership that is proactive and not only insures the student is included in a plan to continue his or her education. We are in a pandemic and you see how learning can continue in other manners.

Participant 6

Schools are racist - Somewhat agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Somewhat agree

Being picked on because of race - Somewhat agree

Race not a factor - Do not agree

Disparity in expulsions - Strongly agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Somewhat agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: You must develop positive relationships with each child and build a nurturing and equitable School.

Participant 7

Schools are racist - Somewhat agree

Being targeted or identified because of their race - Somewhat agree

Being picked on because of race - Somewhat agree

Race not a factor - Somewhat agree

Disparity in expulsions - Strongly agree

Students feeling separated and isolated from peers - Agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is:

I think that schools should have mentors or advocates their first year of middle or high school. Teachers should participate in professional development in the areas of race, race in America, history of cultures, unconscious bias, and the pedagogy of Love.

Q2:

**The themes below were developed from the group responses to questions 4-6 in the first survey relating to your conversations with formerly expelled students about "Race, Law, and Power" impacting returning or not returning to school to achieve their high school diploma. Based on those conversations, please choose your level of agreement for each theme from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". After selecting only one level of agreement for each theme, please provide a recommendation for mitigating the choice represented by your selection of "strongly agree" in 2-3 lines in the text box below.**

Participant 1:

Race not discussed - Strongly agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Somewhat agree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently – Somewhat disagree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Agree

Depended on who was in charge - Somewhat agree

Not a fair process - Somewhat disagree

Participant 2:

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Strongly agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is:

I can see why students would think the process would be unfair and feel discouraged about returning to their sites.

Participant 3:

Race not discussed - Somewhat agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Somewhat agree

Felt pushed out - Strongly agree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Strongly agree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Strongly agree

Depended on who was in charge - Somewhat agree

Not a fair process - Strongly agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: transparency in the process is needed. Students don't understand the policies etc. There needs to be a "warm handoff" to site after expulsion and a "warm welcome back" for students who return. Schools create an environment that pushes students out so if that is the case, we need places for students to attend a school that meets their needs and is inclusive and welcoming. Comprehensive sites are not currently set up to educate ALL students.

Participant 4:

Race not discussed - Somewhat agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Strongly agree

Felt pushed out - Somewhat disagree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Agree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Somewhat agree

Depended on who was in charge - Strongly agree

Not a fair process - Somewhat disagree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: Again, if the leader of the district and/or site was weak and had unfair biases from the start...it was felt at the site level. A strong leader that disagreed with the district was not well received. This was unfortunate because a strong leader knows their site/community/parents/staff and would know how to work with the students in their particular situations.

Participant 5:

Race not discussed - Agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Agree

Felt pushed out - Agree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Agree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Somewhat agree

Depended on who was in charge - Strongly agree

Not a fair process - Somewhat agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: School leadership is key in change and racism should be addressed but not tolerated. You can't make someone not racist but you can rid the nooks and crannies by eliminating any form of over or covert attacks and make sure justice and compassion is followed in turn.

Participant 6:

Race not discussed - Strongly agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Strongly agree

Felt pushed out - Somewhat agree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Somewhat agree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Strongly agree

Depended on who was in charge - Somewhat agree

Not a fair process - Somewhat agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: Again, develop a nurturing and loving school where equity is practiced. Give staff professional development in implicit bias, what institutional and structural racism is and how to stop racist practices policies that negatively impact students.

Participant 7:

Race not discussed - Strongly agree

Frustration and anger with leadership - Somewhat agree

Felt pushed out - Somewhat agree

Hated it because process is unfair, they felt discouraged, ousted, and judged differently - Agree

Students did not speak much about the laws and policies - Strongly agree

Depended on who was in charge - Somewhat agree

Not a fair process – Agree

My recommendation to mitigate the selected theme with the agreement as "strongly agree" above is: Provide multiple opportunities for students to engage in dialogue among themselves and with adults