APPROVAL SHEET

Title of Dissertation: Restorative Practices: Attitudes and Evidence

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ABSTRACT

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Restorative practice initiatives (RPIs) have the potential to increase sense of community in schools and reverse the negative consequences associated with punitive, exclusionary discipline which may make them attractive to the public, yet little evidence exists to support either of these assumptions. In three papers, this dissertation aims to address these gaps. The first paper is a systematic review of the published, quantitative evidence on RPIs using McMillan and Chavis' sense of community model as an organizing framework. 18 studies met the criteria for inclusion in the study. The interventions and outcomes for each study were analyzed according to the model. The findings indicate that RPIs positively impact sense of community in K-12 under certain conditions. Further, results point to three priorities for future research: a clear organizing framework, a focus on RPI's impact on community outcomes, and RPI interventions and impacts in post-secondary environments.

The primary purpose of the second study was to determine if there is support for restorative practices initiatives (RPIs) in the Baltimore metro area where K-12 schools are involved in a multi-year implementation. Drawing on relevant literature in criminal justice, the study also seeks to determine if characteristics of respondents' affect their punitive or restorative attitudes toward misconduct in K-12 schools. Results indicate that RPIs are supported by a slight majority of Baltimore metro area residents. Results also show that ideology and political affiliation drive support or opposition for RPIs. The findings are discussed with consideration of recent policy shifts in Baltimore and the United States which indicate a concerted move toward RPI implementation in schools.

The third paper builds on prior research showing that providing information about alternatives to the status quo can shift support for education reforms (e.g. Common Core). This study is the first to explore whether participants' attitudes on discipline policies in K-12 schools are similarly malleable. The theory of conceptual change is applied to determine whether providing brief information about RPIs to Baltimoreans will build support. Linear probability modeling was used to identify the statistically significant predictors of attitude change and whether those shifts were associated with demographic characteristics. The findings showed that there was no increase in supportive attitudes for RPIs post-treatment, and among some respondents may have raised questions in their minds about RPI that led to a shift from restorative to punitive responses. More detailed information than a brief statement may be needed to build support for restorative practice initiatives in schools. These findings have important policy implications for educators and policymakers seeking to build support for RPI implementation in the Baltimore metro area, and other similar communities.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES ATTITUDES AND EVIDENCE

By

Lauren Teresa Mauriello

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the

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Essay 1: Building Community In Schools: A Systematic Review of the Research

on Restorative Practices

Introduction

Studies in K-12 and post-secondary educational environments show that

students experience academic and socio-emotional benefits when they believe that

they belong to a classroom or school community (Durlak et al., 2011; Rovai, 2002).

On the other hand, students who do not experience a sense of community in their

learning environments experience isolation (Haythornthwaite et al., 2000), are less

likely to persist (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; Tinto, 1997), and are more likely to

experience burnout (McCarthy et al., 1990). The relational orientation and the

transformational nature of Restorative Practices Initiatives (RPI) suggest they could

impact sense of community in schools. RPIs unify a set of theories and practices

which improve relational connections by using collaborative processes to promote

emotional exchanges and affective expression (Adamson & Bailie, 2012; Costello et

al., 2009; McCluskey et al., 2008; IIRP, 2020).

The collaborative processes and tools utilized in RPIs focus on proactively

building relationships to prevent conflict and mitigate harm when conflict occurs.

Theorists pointed out that this approach is meant to transform school policies and the

nature of relationships within the school setting, influencing school culture by

fostering a stronger sense of community (Mirsky, 2007). Despite the importance of

sense of community, and the theoretical influence RPIs may have, few studies have

rigorously evaluated RPI's efficacy in building a sense of community within schools

(Acosta et al., 2016).

The purpose of the current study was to fill this gap by conducting a systematic review of the quantitative, published studies of RPIs in K-16 school environments. The research questions for this systematic review were:

1. What outcomes are described in the RPI literature which align with sense of community?

2. To what extent has research evaluated RPI outcomes in K-16?

3. Does the use of RPIs positively impact schools via sense of community?

Systematic review methodologies were used to identify and collect data on studies that use RPI as an intervention in K-16. To address the first and second research questions, the characteristics of the sample studies are described. To address the third research question, evidence is analyzed from the sample studies using the sense of community model as a framework.

Definitions

The first and second research questions rely on the concepts Restorative Practices Initiatives (RPIs) and sense of community. RPI is an umbrella term that refers to both an educational intervention and a mindset. There is a lack of an agreed-upon definition of RPIs, which complicates the study of their effectiveness (Cremin et al. 2012; Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007). The definition of RPIs used in this paper is the definition used by the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP). The IIRP defines restorative practices as a set of theories and tools which "strengthen relationships between individuals and social connections within communities" (IIRP, 2020). Relative to other similar interventions (e.g. Positive Behavioral Interventions), RPIs have the potential to be alternatives to exclusionary discipline while

strengthening individual student's well-being, peer and teacher relationships, and school culture (e.g., Hopkins, 2004; Gregory & Evans, 2020; Kline, 2016; Vaandering, 2011, 2014).

The philosophy underlying RPIs comes from its emergence from restorative justice (RJ). Restorative justice is defined by a philosophical approach to wrongdoing based in centering the needs of a victim, and collaborative problem solving to repair harm and build relationships (Zehr, 1995). Where restorative justice is applied in response to wrongdoing, restorative practices are applied both to prevent wrongdoing, and to respond to it. RPIs are therefore distinct from restorative justice in that they embrace prevention as a core philosophy, in addition to responding to harm.

RPIs include both theories and tools, which the IIRP describes as 11 Essential Elements (IIRP, 2018). Table A.1 shows the 11 elements, which range from informal tools such as affective statements meant to communicate needs and feelings, to formal practices such as the use of restorative conferences which are structured group meetings during which participants utilize affect to develop connections. The elements also include organizational theories like Fair Process (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Finally, the elements include the fundamental hypothesis of restorative practices, which is that people are happier, more cooperative, and more productive when people in positions of authority do things with them rather than to or for them.

Early theorists and practitioners advocated implementing restorative practices by integrating them into the whole school culture rather than on a case-by-case basis (Hopkins, 2004). To accomplish this, the IIRP encourages the use and integration of the 11 elements into all aspects of school life. These elements are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Essential Elements of Restorative Practices

Essential practices	Sample indicators of proficiency in practice
1. Affective statements	Use "I" statements; make students aware of positive or negative impact of their behavior; focus on behavior; encourage students to express their feelings
2. Restorative questions	Reflect standard restorative questions (What was the harm? How has it impacted you? What needs to happen to make things right?); Require a response
3. Small impromptu conferences	Use to resolve low-level incidents between 2 people; Take place as soon as the incident has occurred; Use standard restorative questions; Use affective statements; Ask students to conduct a specific activity to repair harm from the incident
4. Proactive circles	Comprise at least 80% of circles conducted; Use to set behavioral expectations (e.g., for academic goal setting or planning, to establish ground rules for student projects, to monitor or build understanding of academic content); Use standard restorative questions; Use affective statements; Run by students, after being facilitated 5 times
5. Responsive circles	Comprise no more than 20% of circles at the school; Use in response to behavior or tensions affecting a group of students or entire class; Require all people involved to play a role; Use standard set of restorative questions; Use affective statements
6. Restorative conferences	Use in response to serious incidents or a pattern of repeated less serious incidents; Use standard restorative questions, affective statements, and a trained facilitator
7. Fair process	Allow students to provide input into decisions; Explain the reasoning behind decisions to the students affected; Clarify expectations so students understand implications of decision, specific expectations for carrying out the decision, and consequences for not meeting the expectations
8. Reintegrative management of shame	Avoid stigmatizing wrong doers; Discourage dwelling on shame; Acknowledge worth of person while rejecting unacceptable behavior (i.e., separate deed from the doer)
9. Restorative staff community	Use restorative practices to resolve conflicts and proactive circles to build sense of community
10. Restorative approach with families	Use restorative practices during interactions with family members, including proactive circles that focus on intentional communication of positive student behavior and academic achievement
11. Fundamental hypothesis	Have high expectations for behavior; do not ignore inappropriate behavior; use the appropriate mix of control/pressure and support; minimize use of staff facilitators

Note: Adapted from *SaferSanerSchoolsTM Whole School Change Through Restorative Practices,* by The International Institute for Restorative Practices, n.d. (https://www.iirp.edu/pdf/WSC-Overview.pdf). In the public domain.

As a result, the term "whole-school approach" emerged to refer to the integration of restorative practices into the system or policies, procedures, and organization of a school and community members using the tools in proactive and responsive ways (Hopkins, 2004; Morrison, 2002, 2007). Social change or cultural transformation at the school-level is the goal of a whole-school approach to RPIs (Lustick, 2021).

Because social change or cultural transformation at the school-level is the goal of a whole-school approach to RPIs, scholars see the potential for RPIs to impact schools positively by improving the overall sense of community (Lustick, 2021). Sense of community is distinct from physical geography. Instead a sense of community refers to the social context of groups, how the members engage, rather than where they are. McMillan and Chavis (1986) define community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). This definition suggests the most essential elements of community: interdependence, belonging, relationships, trust, and shared experiences, interests, values and goals.

Rovai et al. (2004) theorize that sense of community in an educational setting includes two dimensions, social community and learning community. Both dimensions are derived from McMillan and Chavis' (1986) model. A learning community is defined in terms of group membership in academic endeavors. Specifically, the learning community dimension involves the degree to which community members share norms and values and expectations related to their academic goals. Social community is derived feelings of belonging and trust.

Accordingly, the four dimensions of sense of community identified by McMillan and Chavis (1986) work together to facilitate a sense of community in an educational setting through the domains of group membership, mutual goals and needs, influence and belonging.

Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this study is to examine the current evidence on RPIs to explore whether RPIs contribute to a sense of community within a school. McMillan and Chavis' (1986) sense of community model is a useful framework for examining whether the current evidence indicates that the use of RPIs positively impact schools via sense of community. This study utilized sense of community as a conceptual framework to anchor the review in an explicit, rigorous and theory-based implementation. Of this approach, Sih et al. (2019) suggested that making the conceptual framework explicit in a systematic review guides the study anchors it in theory and provides insight into how the mechanism being studied functions. In the present study, the sense of community framework was used to guide the formulation of the information that should be extracted, if available, from each included study. Additionally, the framework is used to hypothesize how RPIs connect to the sense of community model.

McMillan and Chavis conceived of community as an interacting system of four components. To examine how RPIs might conceptually contribute to a sense of community, a conceptual model was developed to link the four domains of sense of community, to the elements of RPIs which is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model of RPIs

RPI outcomes	Sense of community domain
Climate **School connectedness** **Engagement**	**Group membership:** Community members have shared attitudes, relationships, And identification with aspects of school life
Sense of belonging **Deepening connections or relationships**	**Integration and fulfillment of needs:** Interdependence; Social networks developed and reinforced in schools
Having a voice **A listening culture** **Agency**	**Influence** Community members feel they have influence or agency over the community and acknowledge the influence the community has on them
Quality of life **Happiness** **Wellbeing** **SEL skills/behaviors**	**Shared emotional connection** Community members have shared participation in the academic and developmental goals of the learning environment.

Restorative Practices Initiatives (RPIs):

11 Essential Elements of Restorative Practices

Community Domain 1: Group Membership

The first domain, group membership, is relevant to a community member's sense of location and relationship. Group membership refers to how individuals are bound to communities physically, through their location, socially through their relationships, and emotionally through the shared attitudes and shared school morale, and finally shared identification with aspects of school life. Recognition of membership in a classroom or school community would encompass social relationships of being learners together. Emotional connections might look like feelings of friendship, or the bonding that develops among learners as they grow academically and developmentally (Gruenert, 2008; Rovai, 1999).)

RPI's are connected to group membership through their potential to transform school engagement and climate. A whole-school approach to RPI is considered best practice to integrate restorative practices into the system or policies, procedures, and organization of a school and community with the goal of increasing the sense of community within the school (Morrison, 2007). This approach intends to transform school policies and the nature of relationships within the school setting, influencing the attitudes, norms and rituals of community members (Mirsky, 2007).

Community Domain 2: Mutual Goals and Shared Needs

The second dimension is the acknowledgment of mutual goals and shared needs. This domain involves community members acknowledgement and understanding of their interdependence (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). This domain is related to the quality of interpersonal relationships. In a classroom this might include

learners' sense of belonging and deepening connections or relationships (Rovai,

2005). For example, this domain is apparent in the social networks developed and

reinforced in schools. The relational framework, and collaborative processes and tools

utilized in RPIs are meant to (a) build connections among members of a school

community, (b) prevent conflict, and (c) mitigate harm when conflict occurs (IIRP,

2020), thereby impacting the quality of relationships.

Community Domain 3: Sense of Influence

The third dimension, a sense of influence, is based on having a say in the

decisions that affect you (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). In other words, community

members feel that they have some influence or agency over the community, and they

acknowledge the influence of the community on them. "Agency" is defined as the

capacity to bring about change (Baker, 2003). In a classroom, once participants

feelings of safety and trust are developed, community members can seek support or

support others in the learning process (Rovai, 2005). Fair process and the inclusion of

all community members in decision making is an important element of RPIs. These

elements establish trust and empower community members to (a) speak openly to

express their needs in the learning process, (b) ask for help in getting those needs met,

and (c) influence the classroom environment (IIRP, 2011).

Community Domain 4: Shared Emotional Connection

The final domain, shared emotional connection, includes a shared history and

participation in a common goal (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) In an ideal classroom

community, learners accept that learning is a shared goal, and internalize values and

standards which enhance that goal. Therefore, the quality of life in the classroom, and

the well-being of classroom community members is inherently tied to learning

(Rovai, 2005). The fundamental hypothesis of restorative practices includes

happiness, cooperation, and productivity (IIRP, 2020). As a result, the restorative

outcomes linked to this dimension are (a) happiness, (b) skills that contribute to social

and emotional well-being, and (c) quality of life.

Existing Reviews of RPIs

The use of RPIs in education in the United States and internationally is

growing (e.g., Anfara et al., 2013; Karp & Breslin, 2001; Riestenberg, 2003; Schiff,

2013; Vaandering, 2014; Wong et al., 2011). As the use of RPIs in schools grows, so

does the literature, yet no systematic reviews previously existed concerning evidence

to support RPIs impact on sense of community in schools. Previous reviewers

examined the extent of quantitative research on RPIs in K-12 schools (Weber &

Vereenooghe, 2020). Others focused on the effectiveness of RPIs in K-12 schools in a

narrative review, rather than using a systematic method (Fronius et al., 2019). Still

others focused on disciplinary outcomes (Kline, 2016), or outcomes related to

negative behaviors and their mitigation (e.g., Weber & Vereenooghe, 2020). Finally,

some focused primarily on qualitative findings (Anfara et al., 2013) or restorative

justice rather than the broader restorative practices (Fronius et al., 2019; Gumz &

Grant, 2009).

Categorizing the findings from research on RPIs using the sense of

community model provides a conceptual framework to guide this review and identify

important connections and gaps. The impacts of a strong sense of community in both

higher education and K-12 has been widely researched. Studies have examined its

effects on academic success, happiness, the development of social-emotional skills, and conflict resolution skills among 13–18-year-olds (Pretty et al., 1994, 1996). Results from this research show that in classrooms where the elements of sense of community are present (e.g., interactions are respectful, students have a voice, experience autonomy, and perceive discipline as fair) students are more likely to experience academic success, develop socially and emotionally, and feel motivated (Durlak et al., 2011). Additional studies find that students' belief that they belong to a classroom community, and active participation in the community facilitated their learning (Rovai, 2002). In a higher education context, Tinto (1997) found that creating a sense of community on college campuses helps students feel belonging and encourages personal growth and academic development. Donaldson et al. (2000) researched the post-secondary environment and found that relationships formed in the classroom extended beyond socialization and facilitated learning.

Significance

A systematic review of the quantitative research on RPIs is needed using the SOC conceptual framework to summarize the current state of research on RPIs with respect to SOC outcomes, anchor the theoretical link between RPIs and SOC in empirical evidence, and provide implications for K-16 education. Currently, research on RPIs is primarily at the K-12 level and is dominated by correlational studies, descriptive documentation, and case studies. Overall, the studies suggest a positive influence of RPIs on relationships and the environment in schools (e.g., Jain et al., 2014; Lewis, 2009; McCluskey, Lloyd, Kane, Stead, Riddell, Weedon, 2008). However, as with many studies in educational settings where it is challenging to

establish an effect, there are methodological concerns in these studies that raise questions about the validity and generalizability of the findings (e.g. case studies which are useful for studying the needs and impact on schools using RPI interventions but lacking external validity). There are also studies in the higher education setting that suggest that a restorative approach may build positive social ties among community members who engage in misconduct. However, these studies utilize the concept of restorative justice (RJ), rather than restorative practices or RPIs. While RPIs are theoretically linked to RJ, there are distinct differences in their application and intended use. For example, where RPIs aim to both prevent harm, and repair relationships after harm occurs, RJ focuses on reparation only, not prevention. While there are well-known, rigorous studies of RJ in higher education (e.g. Karp, 2014), there are no known quantitative evaluations of RPIs at the post-secondary level. The present study addresses these issues through a systematic review of RPIs with respect to SOC outcomes that takes into account methodological designs.

Methods

The objective of this review was to examine the evidence and determine whether RPIs contribute to a sense of community in schools. The research methodology for this study was a systematic review, entailing an extensive literature search, a process with criteria for a priori inclusion and exclusion criteria, and extraction of data from the included studies. This study adheres to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2019).

This analysis began with searching for evidence-based research on RPIs in education settings using the following sources: EBSCOhost search across the Academic Search Complete, APA PsycInfo, Education Research Complete, ERIC databases, and Google Scholar. Full texts were searched using the following keywords, subjects, and search strings:

"restorative practice"

AND

"post-secondary" OR secondary"

AND

effects OR impact OR influence

Two inclusion criteria were applied using filtering to require that (a) English-language publications and (b) articles were published between 2002 and 2022 to capture research that captures the current state of the evidence, as recommended by the Institute for Education Sciences (2020).

Study Selection

Once the study objectives and hypotheses had been determined and outcomes defined, inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed. These predetermined criteria framed the review process. The review inclusion criteria were:

1. The restorative intervention must fit this study's definition of RPIs used in this study: a relational framework including proactive and responsive tools that strengthening relationships between individuals and social connections within communities (IIRP, 2020).

2. Study participants were anyone in a K-16 educational setting (e.g., students, teachers, administrators).

3. The study designs resulted in quantitative data. Therefore, the included studies used designs ranging from RCT to correlational studies without controls.

4. The study was published.

Exclusion criteria included (a) non-educational settings, such as studies examining RPIs in criminal justice contexts, workplaces, or healthcare settings (b) publication type (i.e., theses and dissertations), and (c) studies that did not use an intervention consistent with the definition of RPIs as a relational framework involving both proactive and responsive tools found in the 11 Essential Elements of Restorative Practices.

Scholars have conflicting views on whether grey literature, including doctoral dissertations, should be included in the analysis of a systematic review (Bellefontaine & Lee, 2014). Calls for the inclusion of grey literature focus on their potential to address publication bias (Bellefontaine & Lee, 2014). However, some early research support that including dissertations in systematic reviews rarely influences the conclusions (Vickers & Smith, 2000). Additionally, there are documented challenges to finding and accessing grey literature which, at times, impacts the feasibility of a project (Bellefontaine & Lee, 2014). Even so, advocates strongly suggest that grey literature should at least be reviewed for inclusion (Conn et al., 2003; Bellefontaine & Lee, 2014). Both critics and proponents agree that any included grey literature should be assessed for quality (Bellfontaine & Lee, 2014). Generally, PhD dissertations are recommended for inclusion given their potential depth of reporting and quality

control mechanisms (Giustini, 2019). To honor the critical role of dissertations in addressing gaps in publication bias, this research study critically reviewed 1314 relevant dissertations, 121 of which met the inclusion criteria. But because these studies were likely to overwhelm the sample as warned against by Guistini (2019) and others, dissertations were excluded from the analytic sample for the present study. A discussion of the review process and general findings can be found in the discussion section of this paper.

As shown in Figure 2 the search of scholarly databases retrieved 2996 potentially relevant citations prior to filtering. After filtering for language, date, and duplicates, 236 titles remained. Titles or articles which were irrelevant included duplicates or titles that included a reference to a qualitative study type such as *Restorative justice: A phenomenological study of the evidence.* Next, each abstract was assessed using the inclusion/exclusion criteria, and 152 were excluded, leaving 84 records. Many of the studies excluded at this stage were not school-based interventions or did not meet the definition of RPIs used in this paper. Additionally, many studies met multiple exclusion criteria. Examples include Karp and Sacks's (2014) study *Student conduct, restorative justice, and student development: findings from the STARR project: a student accountability and restorative research project,* which uses restorative justice as its intervention rather than restorative practices. Additionally, studies were excluded at this stage because they were deemed to be qualitative. An example is Ingraham et al.'s (2016) *Consultation Collaboration To Develop Implement Restorative Practices in a Culturally Linguistically Diverse Elementary School.*

Figure 2

Identification of Studies

Identification	Records identified through database searches n=2996		Records removed during title screening n=2760
			    Duplicate records n=10
			    Irrelevant records n=61
			    Filtered=2689

Title & Abstract Screening	Records abstracts and titles screened n=236		Records excluded after title & abstract screening: n= 152
			        Intervention doesn't fit RP definition=17
			        Non-quantitative study design n=103
			        Study participants not affiliated with educational settings=6
			        Publication type=19
			        Studies without an intervention=7

Eligibility	Full text reviewed for eligibility n=84		
Included	Studies included in review n=18		Records excluded after full-text review n=66 Intervention doesn't fit RP definition n=7 Non-quantitative study design n=24 Study participants not affiliated with educational settings=5 Publication type/Studies without an intervention=30

Note: Some studies had overlapping reasons for exclusion.

Still other excluded studies had flaws in design or execution that increased the potential for bias that may invalidate the results. For example, one excluded study used a voluntary sample of 15 students who participated in an RP program, which increased the potential bias toward positive results. While such studies are useful for validating the potential promise of a program, they do not provide valid evidence of impact (Shadish et al., 2002). Finally, the researcher assessed the full text of the remaining 84 articles. The assessment included a more profound analysis of whether the study met the inclusion criteria. For example, Gregory's (2020) article *The Starts and Stumbles of Restorative Justice in Education: Where do we go From Here?* was excluded after a full-text review after it was determined to be a policy brief. Some studies had overlapping reasons for exclusion. For example, they may have been excluded because the study design was not quantitative, and because the intervention was implemented in a non-educational setting such as a juvenile detention center.

Of the remaining studies, 18 met the criteria needed to provide information on the effectiveness of restorative methods in building community in education settings. The following data were extracted and organized from the 18 selected studies: author and year, journal name, title, country, study population, study design, RPI intervention, the sense of community outcomes relevant to study question as well as all other outcomes, and the findings.

Measurement and Classification

Finally, the researcher summarized the selected studies' nature, extent, characteristics, and individual study findings on the outcomes of interest. The results are shown in Table A. 1. The restorative outcomes in each study were identified and

grouped according to the domains based on McMillan and Chavis' (1986) sense of community model. This is shown in Table 2. Belue, et al. (2021) state that interrater reliability (IRR) tests should be used in the coding process to ensure that coding decisions are reliable and consistent. To improve IRR in this study, a seasoned professional in the field of education and student development, whose research focuses on RPIs and sense of community was consulted on grouping outcomes according to domains. Both coders reviewed the sense of community model and independently grouped the list of outcomes and then compared. There was 100% agreement between the coders.

Table 2

The Four Sense of Community Domains and RPI Outcomes

Domains of Sense of Community	Restorative Practices Outcomes
Group Membership	Climate School connectedness, engagement
Acknowledgment of Mutual Goals and Shared Needs	Sense of belonging Deepening connections or relationships
A Sense of Influence	Having a voice A listening culture Agency
Shared Emotional Connection	Quality of life Happiness Wellbeing SEL skills/behaviors

Note. An additional coder was consulted to establish interrater reliability for these groupings in accordance with best practices in systematic reviews (Belue, et al., 2021).

Due to the lack of a consensus about a definition RPIs as a school-based intervention, the studies implement the 11 Essential Elements in varying degrees, used varying intervention models and used various implementation approaches. To address the research question in a systematic way, the restorative intervention in each study was identified and classified according to the IIRP's 11 Essential Elements of Restorative Practices, Whole-School Approach, and the implementation design of the intervention.

The IIRP categorizes the restorative elements into proactive and responsive tools (IIRP, 2011). Some restorative interventions use both proactive and responsive tools, others use proactive-only tools and still others responsive-only tools. For example, interventions which use affective statements, and harm circles are considered to use both proactive and responsive tools. Interventions which describe the use of proactive circles-only are considered proactive-only.

The RPIs in each study were also classified based on their model type. Restorative elements differ from model type in that restorative elements refers to the intended use of the RPI tools, whereas the model type refers to the structure of the intervention. For example, interventions using structured, comprehensive models with defined curricula and training programs were categorized by the model's name. These models are helpful for the body of RPI research in that they provide a consistent framework for the study. Examples of these models are the IIRP's SaferSanerSchools™ model, or the learning together model. In other studies, schools may have developed home-grown programs, or models specific to the implementing

school. These interventions pick among restorative tools or elements and were classified as such.

Finally, the restorative interventions were grouped by their implementation approach. The implementation approach refers to integrating the restorative elements into the school, or the scope of implementation for each intervention, i.e., whole-school, or partial. Researchers and practitioners alike suggest that a whole-school approach is preferable because the approach integrates the intervention at all levels of the school ecology ensuring that improvements in individual behavior can influence school culture, as well as the reciprocal which has a reinforcing effect (IIRP, 2011; Hopkins, 2005; Braithwaite, 2002). Other researchers have considered that an add-on approach, such as the use of only proactive, or only responsive tools, or even the use of single elements of RPIs, allows schools to customize the use of RPIs to their needs and context (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). For this study, schools that fully integrated the restorative tools at the policy levels and the classroom level and trained all school staff on RPIs were classified as using a whole-school approach. On the other hand, schools which utilized restorative tools but did not implement restorative practices at the policy-level or train all teachers, administrators, and staff in using RPIs labeled as taking a partial-implementation approach

Results

This review offers a picture of the state of the RPI literature which align with sense of community. Together, evidence from both the RCTs and QEDs included in this review indicate that RPIs effect each of the four domains of sense of community. Additionally, the results show that the K-12 literature base has evolved and has

recently expanded to include more rigorous evaluation designs. Despite these

advances, the results of this review also show that the literature base lacks critical

elements that limit its utility to guide practice. Finally, the evidence from the included

studies suggests that RPIs have positive impacts on the sense of community domains

under certain conditions.

Publication Characteristics

A description of the characteristics of the studies addresses the first research

question by describing the extent to which research evaluated these outcomes in K-

16. The selected studies represent various disciplines, with some published in journals

focused on children, youth, and adolescents, criminal justice, sociology, psychology,

social work, secondary and post-secondary education. Most studies were conducted in

the United States, with only two studies conducted outside the United States, one in

Australia and the other in Hong Kong. In addition, one study was published by the

RAND organization and not published in a journal (Augustine et al., 2018).

Study Designs

The identified studies included both quasi-experimental designs (QED), and

experimental designs. Table 3 shows the frequency of populations studied by grade

level, and the study design of the included studies. Fifteen of the studies used a quasi-

experimental design. Anyon et al. (2014), Gregory et al. (2018), McCold (2008), and

Ray et al. (2019) used cross-sectional designs. Anyon et al. (2016) and Gregory and

Clawson (2016) used longitudinal designs. Rainbolt et al. (2019) and Brown (2017)

used a one-group post-test-only design with a restorative intervention and one

measurement of the outcome variables. Stinchcomb et al. (2006), Mansfield et al.

(2018), and Morrison (2002) chose a one-group follow-up design. Norris (2019) and

Wong et al. (2011) conducted a quasi-experimental pre-post design and compared

three groups with different interventions. Hashim et al. (2018) used an interrupted

time series design to compare trends in student suspensions following the

implementation of a suspension ban in one urban school district. These pre-post and

correlational study designs challenge researchers to ascribe any observed outcomes to

the restorative practice intervention. Although these designs are helpful in evaluating

the benefits of a specific intervention, they are considered low in internal validity

because of a lack of a comparison group and other statistical controls (Weisburd et

al., 2014).

Table 3

Frequency of Publication Characteristics

Variable	Frequency	%
Grade Level		
K-4	5	27.78
5	8	44.44
6	10	55.56
7	11	61.11
8	8	44.44
9	9	50.00
10	7	38.89
11	8	44.44
12	7	38.89
Postsecondary	1	5.56
Study Design		
Experimental	3	16.67
Quasi-experimental	15	83.33

Note. Several studies included multiple grade levels. As a result, there is overlap in
the frequency table.

Three of the included studies used experimental designs. Acosta et al. (2019), Augustine et al. (2018), and Bonell et al. (2018) each used cluster-randomized control trials. These are also the most recent studies within this review. Until 2018, no studies on RPIs in the United States had utilized causal methods. Notably, almost twenty years since Morrison's (2002) seminal study, these are the first studies that contribute to determining whether restorative interventions are causal versus correlational with specific outcomes.

Study Samples

This review revealed minimal research on RPIs in higher education, with only one correlational study meeting the inclusion criteria. Many of the included studies represented K-12. Many of the studies focused on more than one group within the school community. Twelve of the studies focused on students whereas two studies focused on teachers, and four involved all students, staff, and teachers (Augustine et al., 2018; Bonell et al., 2018; Gregory & Clawson, 2015; Gregory et al., 2015. In practice and research, higher education has focused chiefly on restorative justice theories and practices (e.g., Karp & Sacks, 2014). This result highlights a critical gap in research and practice.

The Restorative Intervention

The restorative intervention used in each study differed in various ways, including the model-type, i.e., using an existing model or a program borrowing various RPI elements and vital elements, such as the restorative tools used, and the implementation approach. Notably, the explanation of the restorative intervention employed in each study was not comprehensive. These limited explanations made

categorizing each intervention and comparing outcomes across studies challenging.

Table A. 2 shows the characteristics of the restorative intervention by author. Tables

4-6 show the frequency of the RPI intervention characteristics for the included

studies.

Beginning with restorative elements, Table 4 shows the frequency of studies

according to the elements used in the associated intervention. Most of the included

studies included both proactive and responsive elements of RPIs. Two studies

included schools using the proactive-only intervention. Three studies investigated a

responsive-only model and showed the frequency of restorative elements in this

systematic review.

Table 4

Frequency of Restorative Elements

Elements	Frequency
Proactive and responsive	13
Proactive only	2
Responsive only	2
Total	18

Proactive restorative elements or tools include affective statements and

proactive circles. Responsive tools include restorative questions and responsive

circles. For example, Mansfield et al.'s (2018) study looked at a school using

restorative questions during writing assignments during detention. The use of the

restorative questions to reflect on an incident that prompted detention is an example

of the use of the tool responsively. On the other hand, the school in Ray et al.'s

(2019) study used affective statements to build encourage positive behaviors prior to

any conflict or harm. Therefore, the use of affective statements in this example is

considered a proactive intervention. Another example of use of proactive-only tools is

Brown's (2017) study on using community-building circles during advisory meetings

to build community.

Table 5 shows the frequency of the various model types in the included

studies. Eleven of the schools in the studies borrowed various tools from the Eleven

Essential Elements (IIRP, 2011) according to their needs. These were categorized in

Table 5 using the label "contextual" as they were not designed to be a replicated

model, but instead were meant to serve the needs of the school community in which

the intervention was implemented. Other studies used existing models and are

referred to in Table 5 by the model's name. Four studies utilized the IIRP's

SaferSanerSchools™ model, a whole-school approach that includes the use of both

proactive and responsive tools and involves training for all school staff (Acosta et al.,

2019; Augustine et al., 2018; Gregory & Clawson, 2016; Norris, 2019).

Table 5

Frequency of Model Types

Model Type	Frequency
Contextual	11
Responsible Citizenship Program	2
Learning Together intervention	1
SaferSanerSchools™	4
Total	18

Two studies utilized the learning together intervention. Moreover, two studies utilized

the responsible citizenship program (McCold, 2008; Morrison, 2002). The

responsible citizenship program is grounded in the community building and conflict

resolution principles of RPIs and includes curriculum content on SEL skills (McCold,

2008). Finally, Bonell et al. (2018) used the learning together intervention which

incorporates several linked practices, such as conflict resolution and shame

management, to maintain a positive school-wide culture (Bonell et al., 2018).

Table 6 shows the frequency of the various implementation approaches of the

included studies. Implementation approach refers to the integration of the restorative

elements into the school, or the scope of intervention's implementation, i.e., whole-

school, or partial. Four studies, including two RCTs (Augustine et al., 2018 and

Acosta at al., 2019) evaluated interventions using the whole-school approach. Twelve

of the studies assessed schools partially implementing RPIs. Two of the included

studies (Norris, 2019; Wong et al., 2011) compared schools using each of the three

approaches. For example, Wong et al. (2011) screened schools for existing indicators

of RPI implementations and grouping these schools into three categories depending

on the degree of RPI implementation in each school.

Table 6

Frequency of Implementation Approach

Model Type	Frequency
Compared whole school, and partial	2
Partial implementing	12
Whole school implementing	4
Total	18

Morrison and Vaandering (2012) conceptualize the elements of a whole-

school RPI intervention, as being tiered. The base tier is used in all areas of the school

environment and includes behaviors and attitudes modeled by everyone, including

students and teaches. Interventions in the second and third tiers are reserved for target

environments, groups, or situations. In some studies, the researchers defined the

intervention as a whole, or partial implementation. Other researchers simply

described the approach. Inconsistencies in the level of detail about each intervention presented challenges with categorizing some of the interventions according to the implementation approach. While there is no clear distinction as to what makes an intervention a whole-school implementation versus a partial implementation Morrison and Vaandering's (2012) tiered concept, especially the integration of RPIs in all environments, and the inclusion of all school community members in the intervention informed the categorization of approaches in this study. An example of an intervention categorized as a whole-school approach is found in Bonell et al.'s (2018) study. The intervention is described as training for all teachers and staff, and comprehensive integration of RPIs in the schools in addition to social-emotional skill-building, through a 10-hour per week curriculum (Bonell et al., 2018). Conversely, Morrison's (2002) intervention is categorized as a partial implementation approach, as the intervention is described as involving only the 10-hour per week curriculum. Because the intervention in this study is limited to a classroom experience and not integrated at various levels of the school environment, it is classified as partial implementation.

Outcomes

To further the second research question, the included studies with outcomes which map to the sense of community model are described below. Ten of the included studies examined outcomes which mapped to the McMillan and Chavis (1986) sense of community model domains: membership, influence, needs fulfillment and shared emotional connection (Acosta et al., 2019; Augustine et al., 2018; Bonell et al., 2018; Brown, 2017; Morrison, 2002; Norris, 2019; Rainbolt et al., 2019; Ray et

al., 2019; Skrzypek et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2011). Many studies looked at multiple

outcomes within the four domains. The frequency of the outcomes across the

included studies is shown in Table 7. The next step in analyzing the included studies

was to organize the outcomes of interest according to the sense of community

model's four domains to determine the to what extent research has evaluated the

effects of RPIs on school sense of community.

Table 7

Frequency of Outcomes of Interest

Social Domain	Outcome	Percentage of Frequency of Outcomes in Studies	Number of Studies Addressing Outcome
Group Membership	Climate	40%	4
	School connectedness, engagement	10%	1
Acknowledgment of Mutual Goals and Shared Needs	Sense of belonging	10%	1
	Deepening connections or relationships	30%	3
A Sense of Influence	Having a voice	10%	1
	A listening culture	10%	1
	Agency	0%	0
Shared Emotional Connection	Happiness	20%	2
	Wellbeing	10%	1
	SEL skills/behaviors	30%	3

Note: Ten of the included studies examined outcomes which mapped to the McMillan
and Chavis (1986) sense of community model domains: membership, influence,
needs fulfillment and shared emotional connection (Acosta et al., 2019; Augustine et
al., 2018; Bonell et al., 2018; Brown, 2017; Morrison, 2002; Norris, 2019; Rainbolt et
al., 2019; Ray et al., 2019; Skrzypek et al., 2020; Wong et al., 2011). Many studies
looked at multiple outcomes therefore the final column does not represent the sample
total.

   Domain 1: Group Membership. Group membership relates to a feeling of

belonging or a sense of interpersonal relatedness (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The

evidence in the included studies suggests that the more frequently RPIs are used in

the school setting, the greater their impact on the school's group membership outcomes of climate and school connectedness. For example, in Augustine et al. (2018), the teacher participants reported improved connections to the school community, while students in the intervention group did not. Although students' overall experiences did not match the positive experiences of their teachers, those students who reported more frequent use of RPIs by their teachers also reported a more positive impact on their perception of school climate and the school community. Table 8 presents the findings for group membership.

An objective of developing a sense of community is to teach resilient behaviors to maximize students' experience of the school's nurturing environment and prepare for life outside the classroom. In the only post-secondary study included in this review, the results showed that RPIs impacted the perception that students are a part of a nurturing community where advice and resources are available. Ray et al.et al. (2019) found that when students view a video showing a student using restorative tools and concepts, they are more likely to state their intention to utilize restorative tools to cope with stressful situations. Additionally, students who perceived higher levels of the restorative quality of the video reported greater outcome expectations, indicating their perception that the advice/resources presented would help themselves and others to deal with challenges at the institution.

Based on their 44-school RCT study, Augustine et al. (2018) found evidence that RPIs caused a statistically significant ($p < .05$) increase in teachers' perceptions of school climate and working conditions after the implementation of RPIs. In contrast, teachers' perceptions did not align with typical student perceptions. Student

Table 8

Effects for Sense of Community Domain, Group Membership Outcomes

Study Design	Student perceptions: School climate, school connectedness	Teachers' perceptions of school climate & working conditions	School Connectedness/Engagement
RCT	Acosta et l., 2019 Climate: No improvements for students in intervention schools Students' self-reported experience with RP was associated with improved school climate and connectedness, peer attachment, and social skills Augustine et al., 2018 No between-group difference, but lower classroom climate ratings IG students	Augustine et al., 2018 increases in overall teaching and learning conditions, teacher leadership, school leadership, conduct management and work safety	
QED	Morrison, 2002 Increase of students' feelings of safety within the school Wong et al, 2011 Decrease in positive perception toward teachers in partial implementing IG		Norris, 2019: Small between group difference at T1 At T2 Whole School group decreased and Proactive-Only groups scores increased

Note. RCT = Randomized Control Trial. QED = Quasi-Experimental Design.

experiences varied widely concerning RPIs. The results indicated that student experiences of RPIs did not significantly differ between treatment and control schools. Additionally, no significant between-group differences were evident in these outcomes. Students in the intervention group reported lower classroom climate ratings when their teachers underwent training with the IIRP's SaferSanerSchools™ Whole-School Change program. Alternatively, students who self-reported greater use of RPIs also reported better outcomes, including feeling significantly more connected to their peers. Acosta et al. (2019) used an RCT design and also supported that student experiencing more frequent use of RPI practices by teachers also reported significantly higher levels of school connectedness, positive peer relations, and peer attachment ($p < .001$).

A notable concern in the implementation of Augustine et al.'s (2018) study was that students in the control schools reported experiencing more RPIs than expected, measured by the frequency of using specific methods. Conversely, a smaller fraction of students in the intervention schools experienced RPIs more significantly. The result suggests a common threat to internal validity in education studies that impacts the integrity of the evidence. Internal validity concerns the reliability of the research design in determining a causal relationship (Drost, 2011). Indeed, the researchers noted that their findings might contain additional internal validity concerns because they only measured outcomes two years after implementation. As a result, the study duration may have been too short to detect the effects of the treatment.

Domain 2: Acknowledgment of mutual goals and shared needs. In this domain, of the sense of community mode, acknowledging the interdependent needs of school community members contributes to learning when members of a classroom community take responsibility for their learning. Taking responsibility includes understanding their roles in learning and participating in activities or creating environments to further learning. Table 9 shows the results for the second domain.

In a quasi-experimental pre-post study, Wong et al. (2011) evaluated restorative conferences interventions as a part of a "school harmony" curriculum, including anti-bullying and peer mediation components. They described the intervention as a whole-school approach. Wong et al. found that the sense of belonging and school harmony of Grade 7 to 9 students in Hong Kong decreased when they received no restorative interventions or partial restorative practice implementation. There was no significant finding for the whole-school intervention. Using a quasi-experimental design, Norris (2019) compared three approaches to RPIs: reactive-only, proactive-only, and a whole-school approach. Schools using the responsive-only model did not see improvements in school engagement; however, there was a significant difference in engagement in the schools implementing the traditional whole-school approach, and a significant increase in the schools implementing the proactive-only model. Notably, the only study that assessed the sense of belonging of participants returned null results. The finding is especially notable due to consistency with Wong et al.'s (2011) results. These similarities may have been a result of the pre-post within-subject study design. It may also have resulted from pre-post within-subject study design and the focus of the study.

Table 9

Effects for Sense of Community Domain, Acknowledgment of Mutual Goals and Shared Needs Outcomes

Study Design	Deepening Connections or Relationships	Sense of Belonging
RCT	Augustine et al., 2018 63% of teachers reported moderate to great improvements No link between teacher-reported RP implementation and teacher-student relationships Link between higher student-reported RP and greater teacher respect Bonnell, 2018 Link between teacher-reported cooperation of students and student-reported respect of teachers	none
QED	Rainbolt et al., 2019 Participants rated student-teacher relationships as being respectful, moreover they chose student-teacher-relationships as being the most respectful compared to staff and student-student-relationships	Wong et al, 2011: Decreases in partial implementing IG and CG. No change in whole-school IG.

Note. RCT = Randomized Control Trial. QED = Quasi-Experimental Design.

Additional rigorous evaluations of RPIs which look at their effect on participants' sense of belonging will further our understanding in this area.

Several studies found an impact on relationships. Rainbolt et al. (2019) evaluated a school's adoption of RPIs regarding teachers' experiences and found that teachers rated student-teacher relationships as respectful following the intervention. However, the study was a post-test design, and as a result, a causal link between RPIs and the outcomes was indeterminable. For example, it is unclear whether teachers thought their relationships with students were respectful prior to the study. Rainbolt et al.'s (2019) study did not look at student reports of student-teacher relationships, however Augustine et al.'s (2018) study did and only those students who reported receiving frequent and consistent doses of the restorative intervention reported improved relationships with peers and teachers. Morrison (2002) investigated school climate five years after RPI implementation and found an increase in students' feelings of safety in their school.

In studies where researchers could assess experiences based on role and grade level, a theme emerged that RPIs appear to impact perceptions of safety and school climate differently for teachers and younger students compared to older students. For example, Skrzypek et al. (2020) studied a school-wide intervention focused on circles. Circles are structured meetings between community members that focus on developing, repairing, or maintaining relationships. The study assessed experiences of predominantly Black middle school students in an urban middle school. Ninety students participated in the study. Students in this study felt that restorative circles helped address behavior issues and interpersonal conflict. In addition, Skrzypek et al.

studied differences in experience based on grade level and found that younger

students felt that the restorative circles were more effective at addressing these

behaviors than older students reported.

Domain 3: A Sense of Influence. A sense of influence in a community

concerns a perception that the community can meet community members' need to be

heard and have agency in the community (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The effects for

the third domain are shown in Table 10.

Brown (2017) conducted a one-group post-test-only study design and found

that RPIs positively impact feelings of influence in schools. For example, after

participating in community building circles during advisory periods, the participants

received a survey. The results showed strong agreement regarding a positive listening

culture in the school and students felt a sense of empowerment. In both cases, there

was a directional lean favoring the intervention group. Additionally, after

implementing community-building circles, teachers and support staff reported via a

survey that a positive listening culture between various groups in school, for example,

administrators, parents, and students.

Wong et al. (2011) conducted a quasi-experimental pre-post design and

compared three groups receiving different treatments, partial-implementation of RPIs,

whole-school RPIs and no implementations. In the schools implementing RPIs

partially, students reported strong agreement about positive perceived voice and

empowerment of students.

In Brown's (2017) study, students participated directly in community building

circles during advisory periods, like Augustine et al. (2018), Acosta et al. (2019), and

Table 10

Effects for Sense of Community Domain, Sense of Influence Outcomes

Study Design	A Listening Culture	Agency	Having a Voice
RCT	none	none	none
QED	Brown, 2017 Strong agreement about a positive listening culture in school	none	Brown, 2017 Strong agreement about a positive perceived voice and empowerment of students

Note. RCT = Randomized Control Trial. QED = Quasi-Experimental Design.

Skrzypek et al. (2020), Brown adopted a whole-school approach. However, in contrast to Augustine et al. (2018) and Acosta et al. (2019), the purpose of Brown's (2017) study was to evaluate the impact of RPIs on the school culture. Brown (2017) showed that teachers and administrators perceived a positive listening culture.

None of the included studies evaluated RPI's effects on school community members' sense of agency. Agency refers to a person's beliefs and attitudes about their ability to influence their environment (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The gap in the research is surprising given that RPIs are meant to positively impacts participants' ability to participate in decision-making through the element of fair process (IIRP, 2011).

Domain 4: A Shared Emotional Connection. Shared emotional connection involves a feeling of attachment or bonding rooted in members' shared history, place, or experience (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The effects of a shared emotional connection are shown in Table 11. Wong et al.'s (2011) study of students in Hong Kong exemplified the point, showing that a whole-school implementation of RPIs is necessary to promote changes in elements of shared emotional connection. In this study, those schools with a whole-school implementation model, self-esteem increased ($t = 4.0$, $p < .001$). Bonell et al. (2018) studied quality of life and psychological well-being. They found a between-group difference at 36 months of implementation, where, compared to the control group, the intervention group reported increased quality of life (adjusted difference 1.44, $p < .001$, adjusted effect size 0.14) and reported increased well-being (adjusted difference: 0.33, $p < .05$, adjusted effect size 0.07).

Table 11

Effects for Sense of Community Domain, Shared Emotional Connection Outcomes

Study Design	SEL Skills	Happiness	Quality of life & Well-being
RCT	none	none	Bonell, 2018 Between-group difference at 36 months in favor of IG
QED	Morrison, 2002 Small increase in students' reported use of adaptive shame management skills Decrease in the use of maladaptive shame management skills Decrease in student-reported shame displacement strategies Skrzypek et al., 2020 RP intervention promoted nonviolent problem solving Girls were significantly less positive than boys' assessments Black girls had less positive perceptions of Circles' utility in promoting nonviolent problem solving compared with girls from other racial or ethnic backgrounds Wong et al., 2011 Self-esteem: Increase in the full implementing IG Lack of empathy: Decrease in the full implementing IG Hurting others: Decrease in partial implementing IG Caring behavior: Increase in partial implementing IG AND Decrease in CG	Norris, 2019 Increase over 36 months, in schools using proactive-only models Ray et al. 2019 Small increases in feelings of happiness, joy, encouragement	

Note. RCT = Randomized Control Trial. QED = Quasi-Experimental Design.

In an RCT study, Bonell et al. (2018) found that RPIs improved students' quality of life and psychological well-being. Of the three RCTs included in this study, Bonell et al. was the only experimental study that did not use the IIRP's SaferSanerSchools model. Instead, the schools in the study included elements from the learning together intervention. Another feature of Bonell et al.'s design, which differed from the other RCTs, was that the researchers built supports and measures for fidelity into the design. For example, Bonell et al. conducted teacher interviews to assess their knowledge and practice alignment with the restorative framework. Additionally, this study is the only one to involve students in training with teachers through target lessons on social-emotional skills and planning and guided group meetings. Additionally, Bonell et al.'s study design incorporated a measure for fidelity, whereas the other RCTs did not. In Acosta's study, support for fidelity was provided monthly, but the author explained that consistency was not measured, and the fidelity support may not be sufficient for intensive intervention. Unfortunately, the study also had a significant confounding issue with the inclusion of the learning together model in the study design.

Discussion

Research Question 1

The findings from the study indicate that the outcomes from the included studies aligned with each of the four sense of community domains. Analysis of the evidence from the RCTs indicated that RPI studies in K-12 improve outcomes associated with three of the domains of sense of community. The RPIs studied using QEDs address each of the four domains.

Importantly, the evidence from the included studies also demonstrates that the priority in past research on RPIs has been academic and disciplinary outcomes, rather than outcomes which further our knowledge of the relational mechanism of RPIs to impact the learning environment. Most of the included studies in this review articulated primary versus secondary outcomes. A primary outcome links with the variable that answers the research question. Secondary outcomes assist the researcher in interpreting the primary outcome results. Of all 18 studies, only one names an element of a sense of community as a primary outcome of the study. Norris (2019)'s primary outcomes included happiness and engagement as a shared emotional connection in the -four-factor model (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Accordingly, the remaining nine studies include outcomes that map to the sense of community model. This means that this systematic review is almost entirely based on an analysis of secondary outcomes, i.e., outcomes that were not the primary focus of the study and, therefore, did not drive the study design or methodology. The result points to a surprising gap in the literature that should be addressed, primarily because restorative practices are defined by the relational nature of the practices' philosophy and tools. For example, the IIRP defines restorative practices as a set of tools and theories which "strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities" (IIRP, 2020). Moreover, in both practices and processes, the whole-school model is designed to be used proactively to create a stronger school community bond by building relationships and responding to conflict and harm within the community (Costello et al., 2009).

Next, insufficient evidence exists to determine the impact of RPIs on sense of community in higher education conclusively. Only one study concerning the post-secondary setting was included in this review. The result was not unexpected because most restorative interventions in higher education are restorative justice-based rather than RPIs. While these interventions are similar, restorative justice and RPIs have essential differences. The differences between the approaches are topics that future practitioners and researchers could address.

Research Question 2

The study results also offer insight into how much research has evaluated RPI outcomes that align with the sense of community in K-16 and identifies several gaps in the current literature. The results show that the K-12 literature base has recently expanded to include more rigorous evaluation designs. Additionally, the review highlights notable gaps in the literature base. Due to the number of studies reviewed, the evidence summarized in this review likely represents the best available evidence for the near future. Therefore, these gaps are likely not a function of the review criteria. Even so, a discussion of the grey literature below addresses the potential for this issue. It is more likely that these gaps in the literature are likely a symptom of the challenges in studying education policy generally, and RPIs specifically.

Regarding gaps in the literature, first, the results highlight a gap between motivation and definition in the literature, which poses considerable challenges. The results from this study indicate that none of the included studies utilized elements of sense of community as primary outcomes. Theoretically, the use of RPIs can change the experiences and dynamics of relationships and other aspects of the school

community due to the focus on relationships and building connections. However, the evidence on the impact of RPIs is limited if research questions do not consider the influence RPIs can have on the learning environment beyond academic and disciplinary outcomes.

Further, these results point to a lack of longitudinal studies in the literature. The outcomes of interest in this review have to do with the environment in a school, including engagement, relationships, agency and influence. Evaluation of a newly implemented program may not provide evidence of sustained change until several years post-implementation. However, of the 18 included studies, only five evaluated interventions after two or more years of RPI implementation (Acosta et al., 2019; Augustine et al., 2018; Bonell et al., 2018; Rainbolt et al., 2019; Stinchcomb et al., 2006).

Finally, these results point to an imbalance between causal and descriptive and correlational study designs in the RPI literature. Studying education policy is difficult, especially RPIs which do not have a common definition or model. Studying RPIs using RCTs is especially difficult, because implementation requires the buy-in of educators and school administrators, and where educators in control groups are likely educated about the reform and may be using the practices in their classrooms. These challenges led to threats to internal validity, which were observed in the three RCTs included in this review. For example, a common threat to validity in education research is controlling compliance. This was the case for Augustine et al. (2018), who found that teachers and schools in the control group began using RPIs. Furthermore, researchers can have difficulties controlling the measurement of the intervention

dosage, i.e., the consistency and intensity of the intervention cannot be measured and hence is uncontrolled. Augustine et al.'s (2018) and Acosta et al.'s (2019) studies exemplified this implementation challenge. For example, some teachers reported struggling with incorporating RPIs into their classes in middle schools, due to tight schedules (Augustine et al., 2018). The results of these studies should be interpreted with these threats in mind.

Despite the threats to internal validity in the RCTs, the three RCTs in this review have external validity due to their size and representative samples, and therefore have the potential to be generalized beyond the studied schools. This demonstrates the increasing sophistication of education research and the potential for future research on RPIs to overcome these challenges.

Conn et al. (2003) and Bellefontaine & Lee (2014) strongly suggest that grey literature should be critically reviewed for inclusion in systematic reviews. While the current study focused on the published literature, a preliminary systematic review of dissertations was undertaken. This additional review identified 1314 dissertations, 121 of which would be included based on the inclusion criteria after abstract and title review. The implications of this preliminary review are encouraging for the RPI literature base, as there is the possibility that each of the three literature gaps noted above could be addressed in upcoming published research due to the number of studies identified in the preliminary review. This research could not accommodate the inclusion of the identified dissertations due to the scope of the study, and because the number of identified dissertations would overwhelm the sample of published studies. This is an exciting area for future study.

Research Question 3

The evidence from the experimental studies in this review show that group membership is improved through positive impacts on school climate and school connectedness (Acosta et al, 2019). Primarily, where the interventions have been implemented frequently and consistently, the studies show that RPIs improved teachers' perceptions of school climate and working conditions (Augustine et. al, 2018). Evidence from these studies also show that RPIs establish acknowledgment of mutual goals and shared needs through deepened connections and relationships, where teachers report increases in cooperation, and student's report increased respect for teachers (Bonell et al., 2018). The studies also show that RPIs contribute to shared emotional connection through improved quality of life and psychological well-being (Bonell et al., 2018). However, no evidence exists from the experimental studies that RPIs impact the sense of influence domain.

The findings from the experimental studies are supported by evidence from the quasi-experimental studies. Together, evidence from the QEDs indicated that RPIs affect each of the four domains of sense of community. Group membership is positively impacted by increasing students' feelings of safety (Morrison 2002; Skrzypek et al., 2020: Wong et al., 2011), and in improvements in school connectedness/engagement Norris's (2019). Acknowledgment of mutual goals and shared interests is improved through the development and deepening connections of respectful student teacher relationships (Rainbolt et al., 2019). However, there is no evidence that RPIs impact the sense of belonging outcome associated within this domain. Wong et al.'s (2011) study is the only study of the 18 included studies to

examine sense of belonging and found no difference in sense of belonging for the whole-school implementation group and decreases in sense of belonging in the partial and control groups.

Additionally, the evidence shows that shared emotional connection in the school community is improved both in the long term and the short term, when RPIs are implemented. Over 36 months, in schools using proactive-only models Norris (2019) found increases in happiness. In the short term, immediately after watching a video using RPI tools, Ray et al.'s (2019) intervention was associated with small increases in feelings of happiness, joy, encouragement and hope in participants. SEL skills were also improved through the development of empathy and non-violent problem solving (Skrzypek et al., 2020), improved self-esteem and caring behavior (Wong et al., 2011) and adaptive shame-management (Morrison, 2002).

Finally, the evidence from the QEDs supports RPI's impact on school community members sense of influence. The findings from these studies show that RPIs improve student's sense of influence by giving students a voice and a sense of empowerment (Brown, 2017), and creating a listening culture in the school (Brown, 2017). While relevant to RPIs, especially because of the element of fair process, the development of agency was not studied by any of the included studies and is an area of opportunity for future studies.

Analysis of the results points to the most significant impact on sense of community outcomes occurring when a whole-school implementation is coupled with a proactive-only or a combination of proactive and responsive RPI intervention. For example, in the Norris et al. (2019) study researchers observed that schools using

both proactive and responsive, or a proactive-only whole-school implementation approach, saw positive impacts on students' happiness and school engagement. In contrast, there was no difference observed on these outcomes in the school using a reactive-only partial implementation model. Further supporting this is Wong et al.'s (2011) study in which schools using a partial implementation model reported decreases in school harmony, sense of belonging, and positive perceptions toward teachers.

Finally, the evidence from the included studies suggests that the dose of proactive restorative elements matters. This finding is seen in the results from the Norris (2019) and Wong et al. (2011) studies, combined with the results from Acosta et al. (2019) and Augustine et al. (2018). Norris (2019) found that happiness and engagement sustained for a more extended period of time among students in schools using proactive-only interventions compared to those using a whole-school approach.

In the Augustine et al. (2018) study, teachers experienced doses of proactive restorative elements through on-going professional development, and support through on-going small groups. They also reported increases in overall teaching and learning conditions, teacher leadership, school leadership, conduct management and work safety. Unfortunately, these positive outcomes were not experienced by students (Augustine et al., 2018). Student reports of classroom climate actually decreased in intervention schools. However, in a similar study, Acosta et al. (2019) found that student reports of improved school climate and connectedness, peer attachment, and social skills were associated with reports of consistent and frequent experiences with RP in their classrooms.

Together, these findings suggest that consistent, frequent use of RPIs, especially the proactive elements, bolstered by a whole-school implementation approach enhances the effect of RPIs on sense of community outcomes. This is supported in the sense of community literature. In order to have a strong sense of community, community members must do more than have surface-level interactions. Instead, they must have strong feelings of responsibility and belonging achieved through active participation (Rovai & Gallien, 2005). It follows that the more a school community member experiences RPIs, the more time they spend interacting with their peers and teachers, thereby developing relationships, trust and community. More research is needed to make this claim with confidence. Future studies could study this phenomenon to better understand how consistent versus inconsistent doses of proactive restorative elements contribute to the experiences of school community members.

<u>Limitations</u>

There are limitations in the design of the current review which fall into three categories. First there are limitations regarding the constraints of having a single reviewer synthesize the included articles. The review could be more substantial if a second reviewer gave an additional appraisal of the findings. To improve rigor, future similar studies could involve multiple reviewers.

Second, this study's focus on the literature published in journals, and the exclusion of the "grey literature" limited the overall generalizability of the findings. Specifically, dissertations are a category of grey literature that often include non-significant that are often not included in peer-reviewed studies (Bellefontaine & Lee,

2014; Conn et al., 2003). Non-significant findings of RPI interventions may be of interest to both school-based practitioners and researchers and could address a gap found in this review. Therefore, I conducted a critical review of the dissertations following the systematic process of identifying research published in journals to address potential publication bias. The analysis of dissertations began with searching the following sources: EBSCO: Thesis and Dissertations. Full texts were searched using the exact keywords, subjects, search strings, and filters as were used for the initial review. The same inclusion and exclusion criteria were also used. The initial search returned 1314 dissertations. Following the title and abstracts review, 121 dissertations met the inclusion criteria.

The high number of eligible dissertations indicates that new research – which may soon be published in journals – may fill gaps identified in this paper. However, a full systematic review of the 121 eligible dissertations would overwhelm the sample for this current study. As a result, dissertations were excluded from the systematic review. However, this is a promising area for future study which may offer critical direction to the field.

A third limitation arose from a significant imbalance in two areas. (1) There are far fewer causal studies than correlational/descriptive studies in the literature base. (2) here are far more studies of RPIs in K-12 than in higher education. This limitation highlights the complexity of studying education policy in schools, and the consequences of a lack of definition and standard framework for RPI interventions in education. While some organizations, like the IIRP have established a definition, and a popularly utilized model, it is unlikely that a standardized definition of RPIs or

consensus on an approach will exist in the near future, as the needs of every school are different and the field of RPIs is growing and evolving.

Having identified these biases in the literature base, the researcher determined that the thoroughness and standardization of the review process supports comparisons of the evidence reviewed, hypotheses to formulate, and conclusions to draw about gaps in research design. This decision is supported in previous similar studies and the research. Like other systematic reviews in education, a setting where RCTs are challenging to achieve, the researcher sought quality assessment tools to evaluate various study designs and biases in the systematic review. However, the use of quality assessment tools is controversial among researchers. Specifically, there is a concern about the gap between the intended use of the tools and their efficacy (Cooper et al., 2019). A systematic review is itself a quality assessment tool in that the systematic identification, and critical review of studies aligns with three components of quality assessment. Cooper et al. (2019) refers to these components as: (a) researchers write study protocols in advance, (b) thoroughly review the literature, and (c) studies are selected and data extracted in a reproducible and objective way.

Conclusion

The learning environment is crucial for school community members' success and quality of life. In recent years, RPIs in schools have gained increasing attention from education researchers and policymakers seeking impact the learning environment positively. The purpose of this study was to synthesize the existing research using a systematic. Results indicated that the current literature base on RPIs in K-12 is growing, and evaluations of RPI interventions have recently become more

rigorous in their design. The results also showed that sense of community is not

prioritized in the research. In almost every included study, outcomes which align with

RPIs were secondary. Finally, the study results showed that RPIs impact all four

domains of McMillan and Chavis's (1986) sense of community model. Because the

four sense of community domains link to distinct aspects of the school environment

and culture, the findings indicate that RPI outcomes positively impact schools via

sense of community.

Policy Recommendation 1: Use a Whole-School Implementation Approach and

Prioritize Proactive Tools.

Studies that utilized whole-school and proactive models saw improvements in

sense of community outcomes compared to those that utilized responsive-only

models. Those studies comparing a proactive-only model with a comprehensive

proactive and responsive model saw increased engagement and happiness in schools

using whole-school and proactive-only. However, schools using the proactive model

saw a longer-term increase in engagements and happiness (e.g., Norris, 2019).

Compared to partial implementation, studies focused on whole school implementation

saw more significant effects (e.g., increased SEL skills), but the effect was not as

strong and comprehensive as schools using whole-school implementation. This

recommendation is consistent with the IIRP's recommendation that 80% of the

energy and effort applied to implementing restorative practices should be focused on

using proactive tools like affective statements, fair process, and proactive circles. The

goal of using proactive restorative tools is to develop closer bonds and relationships

(IIRP, 2011). The sense of community model helps to explain why the development

of better relationships and deeper connections promotes a positive overall sense of community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) describe dynamics within and between the elements which ensure that each domain is sensitive to multiple influences from improvements or detriments in other domains. Therefore, changes in peer-to-peer and student-to-teacher relationships in the model's mutual goals and shared needs domain can have a reciprocal positive influence on group membership, and in turn, can promote improvements in the shared emotional connections and influence domains.

Policy Recommendation 2: Implement RPIs Consistently and Frequently:

The results from the included studies indicate that the dose of the intervention matters. Acosta et al. (2019) showed that when restorative tools were implemented consistently and frequently in the classrooms, students reported improved outcomes, especially in the sense of community model group membership domain. This result could also explain why teachers who receive more support for their use of restorative practices reported more positive outcomes than students. Thus, systematic support and ongoing training for students and teachers could ensure fidelity and consistent dosing. Additionally, to ensure these variables are captured in the research, future studies should detail the intensity and duration of RPI training, the frequency of classroom practices, and the involvement of various community members.

Policy Recommendation 3: Continue to Evaluate the Impact of RPIs:

First rigorous evaluation of RPIs in higher education are needed to fill the existing gap. This review returned only one study on RPIs in higher education. Rigorous evaluation of RPIs in K-12 environments are emerging, but more evidence is needed to confidently state that RPIs impact sense of community at this level. B)

Second focus on outcomes that align with RPI theory. At least three systematic reviews of the RPIs literature have been published since this study began, but none investigated the evidence using a sense of community framework. The authors of the more recent systematic reviews chose not to align with sense of community despite the theoretical centrality of community in RPIs (Song et al., 2020; Weber & Vereenooghe, 2020; Zakszeski & Rutherford, 2021). This is a gap in the literature had not been addressed prior to the current study.

Third, to enhance the future study of RPIs researchers should develop a framework for studying outcomes related to RPIs. For example, two of the three studies utilizing the most rigorous research design used the IIRP's SaferSanerSchools[TM], and one used the learning together model. While this allows for some comparison across study types, without similarly rigorous studies on the many RPIs models currently in use, we cannot compare the effectiveness of each model about the outcomes. Getting a clearer understanding of how RPIs affect the sense of community in schools is challenging due to inconsistencies in the interventions and definitions used. Most concerning is that while there are clear outcomes stemming from the IIRP's (2011) Eleven Essential Elements, very few studies utilize a consistent framework for studying or reporting results. A clear framework could help organize future research.

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Appendix

Table 1

Descriptive Characteristics of the Restorative Interventions

Study author	Elements	Model	Implementation
Acosta et al., 2019	Proactive and responsive	SaferSanerSchools™	Whole School
Anyon et al., 2014	Responsive only	Contextual	Partial
Anyon et al., 2016	Responsive only	Contextual	Partial
Augustine et al., 2018	Proactive and responsive	SaferSanerSchools™	Whole School
Bonell et al., 2018	Proactive and responsive	Learning Together intervention	Partial
Brown, 2017	Proactive only	Contextual	Partial
Gregory & Clawson, 2016	Proactive and responsive	SaferSanerSchools™	Whole School
Gregory et al., 2018	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Partial
Hashim et al., 2018	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Partial
Mansfield et al., 2018	Responsive only	Contextual	Partial
McCold, 2008	Proactive and responsive	"Responsible Citizenship Program"	Whole School
Morrison, 2002	Proactive and responsive	"Responsible Citizenship Program"	Partial
Norris, 2019	Proactive and responsive	SaferSanerSchools™	Compared Whole school, and partial
Rainbolt et al., 2019	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Partial
Ray et al., 2019	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Partial
Skrzypek et al., 2020	Proactive only	Contextual	Partial
Stinchcomb et al., 2006	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Partial
Wong et al., 2011	Proactive and responsive	Contextual	Compared Whole school, and partial

Note. Implementa*n* = implementation approaches, WS – whole school implementing, Partial = partial implementing

Essay 2: Public Attitudes on Restorative Practices in K-12 Schools

Introduction

Exclusionary school disciplinary policies have resulted in a host of adverse outcomes for K-12 school students and communities within the United States. Among other negative consequences, these policies, defined in this research as punitive exclusionary policies, have resulted in schools' over reliance on suspensions and expulsions (Skiba et al., 2011). There is evidence that the students most impacted by the negative consequences of these policies are from low-income families, racial-ethnic minority groups, and urban communities (Anyon et al., 2014; Skiba & Raucsh, 2006; Skiba et al., 2002).

Reform efforts have produced some auspicious alternatives. One major reform effort that has gained considerable state and federal support are Restorative Practices Initiatives (RPIs) (Dear Colleague Letter, 2014; Maryland Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices, 2018). While scholars have studied the nature and outcomes of exclusionary discipline policies which inform why the public may be supportive of reforming them, there is little systematic evidence of support or opposition for RPIs generally. Additionally there are no known studies which examine attitudes toward RPIs in communities which bear the greatest impact of the negative consequences of punitive, exclusionary discipline policies, such as urban areas with high crime rates and high juvenile incarceration rates. This study aims to test public support for RPIs in the Baltimore-metro area, a Democrat-majority, and black-majority city (Federal Election Commission, 2020; U.S. Census Bureau, 2021), where juvenile crime is trending upward while overall crime is trending down (UCR, 2020), and where efforts are in place to

establish RPIs in K-12 schools (Maryland Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices, 2018) to determine if differences across groups converge. The research question for this study is what factors emerge as statistically significant predictors of supportive attitudes for Restorative Practices Initiatives in K-12 schools among Baltimore metro area residents?

As legislated at the federal and state levels, punitive, exclusionary discipline policies have promoted consequences such as suspension and expulsion for misconduct on a continuum from severe, such as bringing a weapon to school, to minor, such as insubordination. Scholars have found two problematic and related categories of evidence which inform why the public may be supportive of reforming punitive, exclusionary discipline policies. First, these policies are correlated with disengagement, poor academic outcomes, school climate, and connection to the school-to-prison pipeline (Balfanz et al., 2014; Fabelo et al., 2011; Hemphill et al., 2006; Losen, 2014; Marchbanks et al., 2015; Skiba et al., 2014; Wolf & Kupchik, 2014). Second, the students most impacted are from low-income families, racial-ethnic minority groups, and urban communities (Anyon et al., 2014; Skiba & Raucsh, 2006; Skiba et al., 2002). The disproportionate effects on these populations make studying popular support for RPIs in Baltimore relevant given the demographic characteristics of the Baltimore metro-area.

Despite the growing prevalence of RPIs, the best practice of involving the public for their success, and the policy implications associated with a lack of understanding of the public's readiness for change, the public's support or opposition of RPIs as an alternative to the status quo, punitive disciplinary approaches, remains an understudied area of research (McCluskey et al., 2008).

Therefore, motivating this study are the twin issues of the proliferation of RPIs nationally, and in Baltimore, and the importance of public support for the success of policy implementation. Since the 1990s, in K-12 schools, a promising shift in the landscape of school discipline has occurred with the progressively rapid implementation of RPIs (González, 2016). A 2016 national survey found that in the United States, schools in more than half the states and the District of Columbia were implementing RPIs (González, 2016). Baltimore City and Baltimore County are ideal for studying school discipline and related reforms. The State of Maryland adopted new disciplinary guidelines in 2014 to reduce exclusionary disciplinary (MSDE, 2014), and within the state, LEAs are implementing alternatives to punitive discipline, including RPIs. Additionally, Baltimore City and Baltimore County Schools have a history of using alternative responses to punitive discipline, and districts have begun implementing RPIs with plans to expand their use of these practices within their jurisdictions.

Additionally, buy in from the public is important for policy implementation in general. From a policy implementation perspective, engaging stakeholders eases fears and builds trust in the implementation process and contributes to sustaining reform (Kidde & Alfred, 2011). Public buy-in is especially important for RPIs because a best practice in the implementation of RPIs is the involvement of all school stakeholders students, staff, and educators in the school and communities and the support of other school stakeholders who could directly connect with the school's day-to-day operations (Hopkins, 2003; Morrison, 2007). Fronius et al. (2016) suggested that school leaders conduct readiness assessments in communities where RPIs are being implemented in schools to develop a plan for successful implementation.

Baltimore Context

`   The study of attitudes toward school discipline is essential because the outcomes

and consequences of reforms have wide-ranging impacts for the public. A local

community's priorities, populations, and problems influence the more extensive

educational system's agenda and priorities. Therefore, identifying the attitudes within

local communities is a starting point.

         This study took place in Baltimore City and the surrounding Baltimore County.

Baltimore City Schools is a large urban school district in the mid-Atlantic United States,

with 80,591 students in 172 schools in the Spring of 2019 (MSDE-DAAIT, 2018). In

2017, more than half of the students enrolled in Baltimore City Schools were low-income

(52.7%) and children of color, self-identifying as 79.4% Black, 10.4% Hispanic, 1%

Asian, 0.9% multiracial, 0.2% Native/Pacific Islander Americans, and 8% White

Americans. Drop-out rates in city schools ranged from 5.0% to 94.1% (including

alternative schools), with a mean of 19.3% in 2017-2018. The suspension and expulsion

rate in city schools in 2017-18 was 5.1%, trending down from a district high of 16.1% in

2003-2004, and consistently lingering between 11.3% and 12.5% for 2004 to 2008

(MSDE -DAAIT, 2018).

         Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is a large suburban school district that

borders Baltimore City. In 2018, BCPS reported enrollment of 113,814 students in 174

schools. In this student population, 43.7% received free and reduced-price meals. BCP

Schools are majority-minority schools that are 39.1% African American, 9.7% Hispanic

American, 7.2% Asian American, 4.8% multiracial American, 0.4% Native/Pacific

Islander American, and 38.7% White students (MSDE-DAAIT, 2018). The suspension

and expulsion rates in BCPS schools in 2017-18 was 5.8%, higher than Baltimore City,

and have increased from district-low rates during 2013 to 2016 when the rates were 4.5 to

4.9%. Between 2003 and 2011, the district had the highest historical rates of 10% to

12.2% (MSDE -DAAIT, 2018).

Baltimore City School's use of RPIs traces to a 1997 grant formalizing a

relationship with Baltimore City's Community Conferencing Center to perform

restorative conferencing (Open Society Institute Baltimore, 2016). Baltimore City

Schools began implementing restorative justice techniques in pockets in the 1990s. In

2016 in partnership with Open Society Institute, Baltimore, the Baltimore City Schools

CEO committed to making the schools a restorative district over a three to five-year

period beginning in 2018 (Open Society Institute, Baltimore, 2016). In 2017 Baltimore

City School officials, including the Board of School Commissioners and the CEO of

Baltimore City Schools, agreed to large-scale change, implementing RPIs as an

alternative to traditional, punitive, exclusionary discipline and pledging to make

Baltimore City a restorative district. In 2018 the Baltimore City Schools Blueprint for

Success Initiative outlined a plan for 15 schools to receive intensive training and

coaching in RPIs as the first phase of implementation (Baltimore City Schools Blueprint

for Success, 2017). Notably, the plan included all internal stakeholders. For example, the

Chief of the Baltimore City School Police Force in 2017 notably reformed officers'

training and involvement in daily disciplinary matters. In Baltimore City, School

Resource Officers (SROs) must have intensive training in child development, trauma-

informed care, de-escalation, implicit bias, cultural competency, and RPIs (Maryland

Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline Report, 2018).

Baltimore County Public Schools (Baltimore County) has utilized Maryland-state health and well-being grants to support RPIs since 2017 (Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline Report, 2087). As of 2017, the restorative practices initiative included 174 schools in Baltimore County. Educators and administrators from those schools were trained using the IIRP curriculum. The Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline report identified a team of educators to certify to train others. The district partners with national and local consultants, including the IIRP, and outside consultants, including the Center for Dispute Resolution at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, which assists in developing the district plan and implementation (Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline Report, 2018).

The promising steps toward discipline reform in Baltimore City and Baltimore County are balanced by the growing concerns about Baltimore's school-to-prison pipeline and increasing crime rate. Baltimore is experiencing a critical moment as violent crime is at an all-time high, and the public, policymakers, and politicians are searching for solutions. As a result, the state formed a commission to review and recommend reducing and eradicating the school-to-prison pipeline (Maryland Commission on the School to Prison Pipeline, 2018). The resulting report focused heavily on using RPIs in schools and communities.

Definitions

Punitive disciplinary practices are strategies meant to punish or deter behaviors. Typically, criminal justice researchers conceptualize punitiveness in the context of law-breaking. Both sanctions, such as jail time or the death penalty, and processes or policies can be considered punitive, for example, mandatory three-strikes laws (Tyler &

Boeckmann, 1997). Other researchers define punitiveness as an attitude which informs the public's preferences for punishments that includes "retribution, incapacitation, and a lack of concern for offender rehabilitation" (Courtright & Mackey, 2004, p. 317).

Punitive discipline strategies can include physical, verbal, and exclusionary discipline. Physical discipline includes slapping, spanking, or hitting in response to misconduct. Exclusion or isolation is also a strategy associated with punitive discipline. Exclusionary discipline describes actions that remove a person from their usual community or setting (Courtright & Mackey, 2004). The most common school exclusionary discipline practices include in- or -out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, and expulsion (Kidde and Alfred, 2011).

A restorative approach to discipline is defined by the Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline (2018) as the combination of a "relationship-focused mindset and distinctive tools that create a school climate and culture that is inherently just, racially equitable, and conducive to learning for all students" (p. 78). RPIs utilize this approach. The strategies associated with RPIs exist on a continuum from prevention to intervention or proactive to responsive (Anyon, Gregory, Stone, Jenson, McQueen, Greer, Simmons 2016; IIRP, 2020). On the prevention end of the continuum, the techniques include affective statements and questions and talking or decision-making circles. These techniques involve trust-building, interpersonal skills, and communication. On the intervention end of the continuum, techniques such as affective questions, restorative circles, and conferences have two critical features. First, those involved identify how they were harmed, and second, those affected come together to problem-

solve how to repair the harm (Anyon, 2016; Blood & Thorsborne, 2006; McCluskey et al., 2008; IIRP, 2020). Table 1 is an overview of the continuum and techniques.

Table 1

Preventative and Intervening Elements of Restorative Practices

Domain	Elements	Description
Prevention (building relationships and developing community)	1. Affective Statements	Use in response to negative or positive events in the classroom and school
	2. Proactive Circles	Run on daily or weekly basis (e.g., students sit in a circle and discuss a topic that helps build community)
	3. Fair Process	Engage students in decisions, explain the rationale
	4–5. Restorative Staff Community/ Restorative Approach with Families	Model and use restorative practices among school staff and with student families
	6. Fundamental Hypothesis Understandings	Provides a framework to guide daily interactions with the appropriate mix of control and support
Intervention (repairing harm and restoring community)	7. Restorative Questions	Address negative behaviors using questions (e.g., "Who has been affected by what you have done?"; "What do you think you need to do to make it right?")
	8. Responsive Circles	After a moderately serious incident, students sit in a circle and address who has been harmed and what needs to be done to make things right
	9. Small Impromptu Circles	Address negative behaviors by asking the wrongdoer and those harmed to answer restorative questions in front of each other.
	10. Restorative Conference Circles	Respond to a serious incident using a scripted approach to facilitate accountability and repair harm
	11. Reintegrative Management of Shame	Acknowledge the emotions of the wrongdoers and those impacted by the wrongdoing

Note: Adapted from *The Promise Of Restorative Practices To Transform Teacher-Student Relationships And Achieve Equity In School Discipline*. By, Gregory, A., Clawson, K., Davis, A., & Gerewitz, J. (2016) p. 329.

There is an important distinction between exclusionary and restorative strategies in relation to their focus. In RPIs, because the community is valued as much as the individual, when incidents of harm or misconduct occur tools and strategies which give voice to the community's needs are used. In exclusionary discipline measures, the focus

is on the offender, and the needs of the institution, or the state. Therefore, RPI advocates

have asserted that conventional justice processes are insufficient, and RPI is more

effective at promoting individual and relationship restoration within the community.

Theoretical Framework

In the study of public opinion, peoples' attitudes refer to their evaluation of a

policy issue or phenomenon and the subsequent expression of their agreement or

disagreement (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). Research on attitudes occurs at the population

level using responses to opinion questions about a specific policy issue to express the

public's attitude. Responses are an indicator of the magnitude of the attitudes of

respondents. Respondents' attributes and environments can explain the variation in

attitude level among individuals (Roberts & Indermaur, 2007; Dowler, 2003). Limited

research has been conducted in the United States examining predictors of punitive

attitudes concerning school misconduct. Understanding the public's attitudes to discipline

or punishment in other sectors may shed light on the factors that influence opinions,

toward school discipline. Therefore, this study examines the theories and previously

established evidence which may contribute to an understanding of popular support for

RPIs.

Generally, the public's attitude toward deviance in the United States tends toward

punitiveness (Garland, 1990). Punitive justice is based on the notion that punishment

restores harm and deters future misconduct (Doble, 2002). This orientation to justice

derives from the idea that a central authority ensures that offenders receive deserved

punishments, and fairness in the process. This model contains two essential concepts of

crime. First, those who engage in crime are 'criminals,' and criminals are stigmatized

through the state's legitimate role in restraining, punishing, or excluding them. Second,

crimes are violations of the law. Therefore, in a retributive justice model, violations of

the law or code of conduct are violation of authority, or the state. Alternatively, a

restorative orientation to justice views crime or misconduct as a violation of people and

relationships (Zehr, 1995). In this view, the process of justice involves the victim, the

offender, and the community. Those most affected by a crime engage in repairing,

promoting reconciling, and trust-building (Zehr, 1995). How the public internalizes these

competing orientations to justice leads to varying conclusions about how to respond to

misconduct in any form, thereby accounting for punitive or restorative attitudes among

the public.

Parental Status

In the broadest sense, self-interest is a factor identified in the literature as having

an influence over the public's policy preferences based on the idea of rational choice. A

person's relative position in the social and economic milieu, such as their skills,

occupation, role, as a student or parent, affects their policy preferences. If people benefit

from a specific policy based on their role or status, they often favor the policy

(Busemeyer et al., 2009; Garritzmann et al., 2015).

In the case of education policy, self-interest could apply to parents and students.

For example, Garritzmann (2015) analyzed individual attitudes towards education

policies that provide subsidies to students. Students and parents who benefited from the

subsidy were more likely to support the policy than those who did not benefit and were

taxed on income. Following this logic, because parents of school-aged children believe

they have a more significant stake in school discipline, they favor restorative discipline

policies. Non-parents, especially those who assume that changes in school reform will lead to increased spending, will likely exhibit more punitive attitudes concerning discipline. However, for school discipline, self-interest could be interpreted another way. Parents' attitudes could be linked to two self-interest factors that predict punitive attitudes. The first is preserving the status quo/modeling (Graziano & Namaste, 1990). The second factor is concern over the state of violence in schools.

Age

The research concerning age and attitudes toward punitiveness have mixed findings. Some researchers found no consistent differences across age groups versus the punitiveness of their attitudes (Kury & Ferdinand, 1999). Others provided evidence that age is a factor in predicting harsher punishments for law-breaking (Roberts & Indermaur, 2007) and in corporal punishment for children (Gagné et al., 2007). Criminology researchers also found that older respondents generally believed that society lacks discipline, leading to preferences for tighter social control in the form of more punitive consequences for crime (King and Maruna, 2009).

Education

Huang et al. (2012) found that individuals with higher levels of education were less likely to hold punitive attitudes toward school discipline. Additional studies provide evidence that higher levels of education predict support for restorative responses in criminal contexts (Roberts, 2004). Researchers studying parental discipline found that parents are likely to favor discipline strategies modeled for them in childhood (Bower-Russa et al., 2001). Traditionally punitive discipline policies exclude students from the education system. Therefore, a reasonable expectation is that respondents who have

lower levels of education might have experienced suspensions or expulsions, and therefore, favor exclusionary discipline as tenable for handling misconduct in schools. Alternatively, respondents with higher levels of education might have less punitive attitudes, either due to socialization or knowledge of alternative responses.

Religion

The results of several studies showed that religious perspectives affected public attitudes toward punishment and rehabilitation. Researchers investigating the relationship between religion and punitive attitudes have found that individuals who identify as religiously more conservative also hold more punitive sentiments toward offenders (Herzog, 2003; Zaller, 1992).

Other investigators identified specific religious beliefs, such as compassion and forgiveness, predicted opposition to the harshest criminal punishment, the death penalty (Applegate et al., 2000; Unnever et al., 2005). Applegate et al. (2000) and Unnever et al. (2005) found those who hold a rigid and moralistic approach to religion are more likely to harbor punitive sentiments toward offenders. The criminal justice literature is not clear which dimensions of religion are related to punitive attitudes, and what effects religious variables may have when tested against secular variables about punitive attitudes. This study begins by exploring the mechanism of religion and secularism and their impact on attitudes toward discipline in schools. Then, the study explores the interaction between religion and conservative or liberal ideology to examine if there is a difference between those who identify as religious and conservative, compared to those respondents who identify as religious and liberal.

Race

The research concerning how race impacts policy preferences and attitudes is complex. The criminal justice research indicates that people of various races could have similarly punitive attitudes, but different motivations and priorities explained these attitudes (Cohn et al., 1991; Johnson, 2008; O'Hear & Wheelock, 2016). Whereas punitive attitudes among White Americans are motivated by racial bias, African Americans' attitudes toward punishment link to fear of crime (Cohn, 1991). However, the criminal justice studies have included evidence for a deep divide along racial lines concerning trust in the criminal justice system and rehabilitation (Johnson, 2008; O'Hear & Wheelock, 2016). Findings regarding the death penalty reflect this racial divide—one of the consistent predictors of support for the death penalty is race, with African Americans significantly less likely to support capital punishment (Bobo & Johnson, 2004). Additionally, the criminal justice research finds similarities in respondents' attitudes toward reform across races. Results from public opinion polls on criminal justice show that White and Black people both tend to prioritize reforming the criminal justice system (O'Hear, 2016).

Attitudes may differ when it comes to education policy, especially in a large urban center with a high crime rate and high rates of juvenile incarceration. Black and Hispanic Baltimoreans may be more likely to distrust traditional justice processes due to the history of racial bias in the criminal justice and education discipline systems. Moreover, as a result, they might be more motivated than their White counterparts to reduce racial bias in the educational system. Alternatively, some research shows that, compared to White Americans, Black American report higher use of authoritarian

parenting styles which may result in authoritative beliefs about discipline (Reitman et al., 2002).

Political Affiliation

The research concerning political party affiliation and public attitudes is growing. Although partisanship is not highly correlated with race, gender, or age, the public filters their opinions on policy issues through their political party affiliation. This filter impacts how people make sense of their environment and experiences which informs policy attitudes. Some scholars suggested that this filter is so strong that policy attitudes are not shaped by respondents' lived experience as much as their political preferences and exposure to trusted politicians' views (Zaller, 1992). How the media impacts policy attitudes is an example of the workings of this filter. For example, Democrats and Republicans do not use the same news sources; cues obtained from politicians and media influencers through these increasingly polarized sources provide shortcuts about issues on which the general population lacks information or is ambivalent (Rade et al. 2016; Zaller, 1992). A review of the political science research found that even when exposed to content online through social media or other media mechanisms, people tend to self-select into polarized environments where information is either neutral or filtered through partisan lenses (Iyengar et al., 2009).

For example, considering views on the punishment of offenders outside of the school context, Republicans and Democrats tend to agree that safety is essential but disagree on the policy mechanisms to achieve it. Recent public opinion polls show that Republicans tend to be more punitive than Democrats and give significantly less support to helping victims and rehabilitating offenders (O'Hear & Wheelock, 2016).

Republican and Democratic politicians have different agendas and have taken different stands on school discipline, school climate, and school safety in recent history. Both parties discuss school safety in their national party platforms. Democrats have embraced a ban on exclusionary discipline due to the history of disproportion use and outcomes for some racial-ethnic minority groups and the school-to-prison pipeline (Democratic National Convention, 2016). In his presidency, former President Barack Obama focused extensively on the need for alternatives to exclusionary and punitive discipline policies (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Republicans have emphasized school security and have argued that school safety officers, tighter security, and zero-tolerance policies lead to less school violence (Republican National Convention, 2016). In contrast to the Obama presidency, the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General under former President Donald Trump scaled back civil rights investigations and federal guidance on school discipline. On December 21, 2018, the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education withdrew the entirety of the 2014 guidance (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2018).

Ideology

A large body of public policy research found that the public's attitudes toward consequences for crime tend to diverge around ideological beliefs (Costelloe et al., 2009; Iyengar et al., 2009; King & Maruna, 2009; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997; Zembroski, 2011). Criminal justice studies of the public's attitude to crime are often theoretically based in the Relational Model, which takes a systems view, suggesting that preferences for punitiveness reflect the larger patriarchal social system (Costelloe et al., 2009; King

& Maruna, 2009; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997). The relational model contributes to explaining the link between ideology and punitive responses to crime or rule-breaking (Jost et al., 2009) by situating beliefs and values as the social structures that inform identity, ideology, and policy preferences.

Tyler & Boeckmann. (1997) tested this theoretical framework by investigating public support for the California "Three Strikes, and You're Out" policy. Factors such as morality and a desire to assert social values emerged as robust predictors of support for the punitive legislation. Alternatively, values of restorative justice, such as restoration, rehabilitation, and social control stemming from community authority were linked with restorative attitudes. Evidence from this and similar subsequent studies (e.g. King & Maruna, 2009) converge to support the idea that the desire to reassert social values or concerns about the breakdown of community norms and values is the foundation for punitive attitudes within the public sphere. In this framework, punishment is a symbolic commitment to norms and values and is therefore influenced through ideology.

Like the filter metaphor used by scholars studying how partisanship influences public attitudes, research on ideological values and beliefs and public attitudes suggests that ideology is akin to a screen through which people view policy issues (Jost et al., 2009). This screen impacts how people make sense of their environment and experiences which informs policy attitudes and behaviors. Thus, the consensus is that people who identify as politically conservative are likely to embrace punitive attitudes (Cullen et al., 2000; Unnever & Cullen, 2007).

Braithwaite (1989, 1998) explored the value orientations underlying liberalism-conservatism and linked support for restorative justice with ideological values and beliefs

using the seminal reintegrative shaming theory. A foundational element of Braithwaite's

theory is that the public's social and personal values exist along two dimensions. The first

dimension includes the value of security through status. The second value includes values

of community, harmony, and relationships. Braithwaite (1998) hypothesized that these

value orientations significantly explain liberalism and conservatism. Braithwaite tested

this hypothesis in a series of multi-country studies. The results showed that people living

in countries with values that emphasize the interests of the whole over the interests of the

individuals are more likely to support restorative justice as a response to crime than

people in countries with predominantly individualistic values (Braithwaite, 1998).

Huang et al. (2012) used nationally representative samples from two countries,

Japan and Australia, to explore the concept of value orientation by testing whether a

communitarian ideology predicts support for restorative justice. Respondents were

supportive of restorative justice principles when they believed restorative justice served a

reintegrative or rehabilitative purpose or when they prioritized victim benefits. Factors

that predicted support for restorative justice included higher education levels, higher

levels of social capital, and social liberalism.

In a follow-up study using a sample of college students at one university in the

Northeastern United States, Ahlin et al. (2015) examined Braithwaite's theory by

hypothesizing that younger respondents have fewer social ties than older people, and

respondents with typically conservative beliefs were less likely to support restorative

justice. Ahlin et al. (2015) concluded that rather than societal values, individual-level

values and ideology must be a part of evaluating support for restorative justice; the results

supported that the link between respondents' ideology and personal attitudes toward

punishment impacted their support for restorative justice. Those who were less likely to support restorative justice were more likely to favor punitiveness in discipline and believed in maintaining the status quo. Like Huang et al.'s (2012) results, respondents who believed in personal responsibility and decaying traditional values were less supportive of restorative principles.

The link between ideology and preferences for punitive or restorative consequences to rule breaking extend to the research on parental discipline and corporal punishment. For example, Jackson et al. (1999) used a nationally representative data set and showed that conservative ideology linked to favorable attitudes toward corporal punishment. A more recent study of online comments indicating favorability toward corporal punishment found that conservative ideological beliefs such as "today's society is worse off" linked with the use of corporal punishment (Taylor et al., 2016).

The ideological underpinnings of the tendency to favor punitive or restorative attitudes and consequences for crime, and punitive or restorative parenting styles, may align with how the public views disciplinary reforms in schools. For example, the desire to reassert social values or concerns about the breakdown of community norms, or a conservative ideology, may drive the desire for harsh punishments toward school-based misconduct. Alternatively, because liberal values have been linked to preferences for reform in the criminal justice system, i.e., rehabilitative or treatment-focused attitudes (Jost et al., 2009; Kriesi, 2010), liberal respondents may demonstrate more support for a restorative approach to school misconduct.

However, more research is needed to determine whether the variations along ideological lines identified in the criminal justice and parenting literature holds for

misconduct in educational settings. It may be that restorative attitudes toward school discipline reflect traditional ideological and political divides. Alternatively, bi-partisan support for school safety, a dismantling of the school-to-prison pipeline, and the well-being of children could transcend ideology such that political variables are not predictors of school discipline preferences in Baltimore, suggesting a universal embrace of restorative discipline as a response to misconduct in a school setting.

Methods

To determine the factors that emerge as statistically significant predictors of public attitudes of support for RPIs in K-12 schools, the current study collected survey data using the Baltimore Metro Area study. Researchers studying punitive attitudes typically use surveys to collect data on public attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors about the goals of punishment (Ahlin et al., 2015; Cullen et al., 2000; Huang et al.'s, 2012; King & Maruna, 2009; Unnever & Cullen, 2007). Respondents who support punishments for retribution, incapacitation, and deterrence are viewed as more punitive than those who support rehabilitation and restoration as the primary goals of punishment (Doble, 2002; Jost et al., 2009; Matthews, 2005; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997).

The current study utilized the Baltimore Metro Area Survey (BMAS), an online survey of a representative random sample of approximately 1,500 adults over 18 years old, living in the Baltimore metropolitan area, including Baltimore City and the surrounding Baltimore County area. The firm responsible for distribution and sampling, Qualtrics, oversampled hard-to-reach populations, including young adults, Hispanic Americans, and African Americans (Henderson and Herring, personal communication, 2017).

The data were weighted in two stages. First, panel base weights were calculated for every household and assigned to each adult in each household. Second, the sample demographics were weighted to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race, and Hispanic ethnicity, division (U.S. Census definitions), housing type, and telephone usage. The sample included Baltimore metro area residents, including Baltimore City and Baltimore County residents. All respondents were weighted the same regardless of their location in the Baltimore metro area (Henderson, personal communication, May 31, 2019). The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the National Health Interview Survey (L. Henderson and C. Herring, personal communication, February 2017).

A sample of the population that completed the BMAS survey completed the education module, which contains the survey items used in this study. This random sample was 884 respondents who completed the BMAS survey. All other cases were dropped from the sample.

Survey Design

The survey questions are intended to measure public preferences by asking respondents to choose either a restorative response or punitive response to student misconduct. Previous studies have used surveys in a similar way, to gauge public attitudes toward crime response (Ahlin et al., 2015; Bazemore, 2000; Huang et al., 2012).

Dependent Variable

The survey begins with the baseline measurement question (Q1): When students engage in misconduct at school, what do you believe should happen? Respondents were presented with two possible responses to this question. Each choice of response presented

respondents with options regarding the relationship between restorative discipline and punitive exclusionary discipline policies. These dimensions are expressed as the preference to exclude and punish students based on deviant behavior or the preference to restore the community, rebuild relationships, and repair harm. The purpose of the wording in response option A is to provide participants a baseline understanding of the values and processes associated with RPIs without naming restorative practices. Similarly, the wording in response option B provided participants a baseline understanding of a punitive/exclusionary response without naming it a punitive response.

a. Students should be removed from the classroom even if their chances of graduating are reduced.

b. Students should be allowed to remain in the classroom and make things right by repairing the harm resulting from their misconduct.

Responses were collapsed into a binary variable to represent a respondent's restorative attitude. Respondents with restorative attitudes preferred the option that students should be allowed to remain in the classroom and make things right to all the questions. Conversely, respondents with a punitive attitude chose the option that students should be removed from the classroom after they engage in misconduct even if their chances of graduating are reduced to one or more of the questions.

Independent Variable

This study included several independent variables that potentially predicted the influence of the respondents' demographic traits on their response to restorative school discipline. These variables were age, education, parental status, religiosity, political affiliation, and ideology.

Respondents were asked to identify their political party affiliation by responding to the question, "What is your political party affiliation?" Response choices included: Democrat, Green Party, Republican, Libertarian, Independent, Something else (Please specify)." Due to sample size, the three political parties included in this study are Democrat, Republican, and Independent. These variables were coded as a series of dichotomous variables (Republican = 1, all others = 0; Democrat = 1, all others = 0, Independent = 1, all others = 0).

Ideology was a binary variable derived from the traditional left-right dimension (Mair, 2007). Respondents answered the question, "In general, would you describe your political views as Very Conservative, Conservative, Moderate, Liberal, Very liberal" In this analysis, ideology was coded as a binary variable: (Conservative/Very Conservative = 1; Liberal/Very Liberal = 0). Those identifying as moderate were excluded from this variable.

To determine whether respondents had school-aged children, respondents were asked if they currently had a child under the age of 18 living in their household. (Is a parent = 1, Is not a parent = 0)

Respondents were asked to identify their religion. The responses were grouped based on whether respondents identified as religious or secular (1 = identifies as not religious/secular, 0 = identifies as having a religion).

The age of respondents in the study was skewed younger. Therefore, age was coded both as a continuous variable in years and as a categorical variable using the following categories (0/29 = 1, 30/39 = 2, 40/49 = 3, 50/59 = 4, 60/69 = 5. 70/max = 6).

Respondents indicated their personal and household income. This study used personal income as a predictor variable over household income because the respondents' ages skewed to younger ages, and personal income could account for unmarried respondents. Personal income was initially coded as a continuous variable in dollars and recoded as a categorical variable using percentile ranks: low (0 to $25,000), medium ($25,001 to 49,999), and high (> $50,000).

Respondents also indicated the highest level of education completed. Education was initially coded as a continuous variable in years (some high school = 9, high school degree = 12, some college = 13, Associate's degree = 14, Bachelor's degree = 16, Master's degree = 18, Professional or Doctoral degree = 20), and was recoded as a series of dichotomous variables (some high school = 1, all others = 0, completed high school = 1, all others = 0, complete bachelor's degree = 1, all others = 0, completed a masters, professional or doctoral degree = 1, all others = 0).

Analysis

The researcher used linear probability modeling to analyze patterns in the resulting data. Although the typical approach to modeling dichotomous dependent variables is logistic regression to predict the logged odds of an event, marginal effects have shown little difference in the coefficients of linear models and the odds ratio in a logistic regression model. Therefore, consistent with the literature on interpreting dichotomous variables using linear probability modeling, the researcher used linear probability modeling (Hellevik, 2007; Pohlman & Leitner, 2003).

The linear probability model, with predictor variables had the following general format:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \qquad (1)$$

In formula (1), Y is a restorative response, β_0 is the intercept, Xs are a vector of variables, which describe predictor variables and are detailed below, and ε is the error term.

To determine the effects of the variables, four models were developed. The first included only demographic factors including age, race, education, religiosity, personal income and parental status. The second model added political affiliation. The third model removed political affiliation and added ideology. The full model included all the demographic variables and political affiliation and ideology together.

Results

The results from this study show that residents of the Baltimore metro area generally hold restorative attitudes toward RPIs in schools. Table 2 shows the overall frequency of responses.

Table 2

Frequency of Restorative and Punitive Responses

Response	Frequency
Always/Sometimes Punitive	63.50% (n=322)
Always Restorative	36.50% (n=562)

Note. N=884

Table 3 shows the uncontrolled differences in the restorative response by demographic group. Consistent with past research, demographic variables do not drive these findings. Instead, three predictors –respondent's ideology, religiosity, and political

affiliation – were associated with attitude. Respondents who identified as Republicans

held significantly less supportive views of RPIs than Democrats.

Table 3

Uncontrolled Differences in Restorative Response

Gender	Male	Female	Diff	Stat Sig			
	64.70%	61.73%	2.97%	ns			
	(n=527)	(n=358)					
Religiosity	Secular	Religious	Diff	Stat Sig			
	71.21%	62.15%	9.06%	*			
	(n=132)	(n=753)					
Parental Status	Parent	Non-parent	Diff	Stat Sig			
	65.20%	62.93%	2.27%	ns			
	(n=250)	(n=634)					
Pol. Affiliation	Democrat	Republican	Diff	Stat Sig			
	67.75%	52.25%	15.50%	***			
	(n=676)	(n=209)					
Ideology	Conservative	Liberal	Diff	Stat Sig			
	52.29%	76.15%	23.86%	***			
	(n=262)	(n=281)					
Income	Low	Medium	High	Stat Sig			
	64.11%	64.89%	62.84%	ns			
	(n=248)	(n=131)	(n=506)				
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Stat Sig		
	70%	62%	61.01%	63.3%	ns		
	(n=79)	(n=201)	(n=74)	(n= 504)			
Education Level	Some HS	HS Diploma	Bach.	Post Bach.	Stat Sig		
	72.22%	57.25%	61.92%	63.50%	ns		
	(n=18)	(n=131)	(n=260)	(n=82)			
Age	0/29	30/39	40/49	50/59	60/69	70+	Stat Sig
	65.56%	65.97%	61.00%	57.57%	57.58%	61.49%	ns
	(n=151)	(n=191)	(n=126)	(n=165)	(n=148)	(n=104)	

*Note. $p >.001$***, $p > .01$**, $p >.05$**
Results of t-test for bivariate relationship and chi-square tests for categorical variables. HS = High School Diploma, Bach. = Bachelor's Degree, Post Bach = Post Bachelor's Degree, Pol. Affiliation= Political Affiliation, Income=Personal Income. Results of t-test for bivariate relationship and chi-square tests for categorical variables.

The results from the linear probability model are shown in Table 4. These results

reveal a new dimension of the literature which until now has focused on the criminal

justice sector; punitive attitudes along ideological lines extend beyond attitudes toward

criminal justice to discipline in schools. The results also demonstrate that these attitudes

are aligned with ideology and are not changed by demographics.

Table 4.

Linear Probability Model Estimates of Supporting Restorative Practices

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Political Party				
Republican		-0.203***		-0.119**
		(0.043)		(0.046)
Independent		-0.039		-0.003
		(0.040)		(0.041)
Parental Status	0.014	0.029	0.044	0.049
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.037)
Age	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Male	-0.024	-0.010	0.006	0.008
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Education	0.015**	0.012*	0.009	0.009
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Secular	0.084*	0.059	0.050	0.038
	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Race				
Black	-0.015	-0.079*	-0.023	-0.057
	(0.044)	(0.046)	(0.044)	(0.046)
Hispanic	-0.023	-0.066	-0.015	-0.042
	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.063)
Asian	0.036	0.000	0.032	0.009
	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Other Race	0.108	0.067	0.089	0.066
	(0.095)	(0.094)	(0.093)	(0.093)
Income				
High	-0.044	-0.034	-0.030	-0.027
	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.048)
	(0.053)	(0.052)		
Low	0.004	0.004	0.027	0.023
	(0.053)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.052)
Scale of Conservativeness			0.004***	0.003***
			(0.001)	(0.001)
Constant	0.444***	0.558***	0.303**	0.391***
	(0.119)	0.120)	0.119)	0.125)
Observations	879	879	877	877
R-squared	0.015	0.041	0.053	0.062

Note. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The dependent variable in this analysis is restorative response coded so that 0=did not preference a restorative response to misconduct in K-12 and 1 = preferred a restorative response to misconduct in K-12 schools. Scale of Conservativeness=1-100, 1 is very conservative, 100 is very liberal. Education = Highest Level of Education. Reference group is a religious white female democrat who is a parent and has an income between $25,001 and $49,999.

Overall Restorativeness or Punitiveness

More than half, 63.5% of Baltimore metro-area respondents consistently reported that the restorative response was appropriate in K-12 schools. In contrast, only 36.50% of respondents could conceive of a time when RPIs were not appropriate, such as a school shooting, and referenced the punitive response. Table 2 shows the frequencies for these results.

Next, data on respondents' attitudes are presented using a comparison of the means based on the primary independent variables Table 3 contains these results. In this sample, 482 were female and 358 were male. More men chose punitive responses than women. The average age of respondents in the study was 47.9 years, and younger respondents more often chose the restorative response than older respondents. Two hundred fifty-one respondents, or 28% of the sample identified as a parent of a school-aged child. Parents more often chose the restorative response than non-parents.

Sixty-three and a half percent of respondents identified their political party as Democrat. Democrats chose the restorative responses more often than any other political affiliation. Among respondents who chose the restorative response, 51.6% were Democrats and 48.39% non-Democrats. Democrats who chose restorative responses had a mean age of 46.6 years old, 15.8 years of education (meaning they reported holding a college or post-bachelor's degree), and a mean personal income of $67,110.7. Democrats who chose the punitive response (40.8%) tended to be older, have less education, and lower personal incomes. Republicans were more likely than any other political affiliation to choose a punitive response. When comparing Republicans who chose the punitive

response to the restorative response, respondents did not differ much across age, education, and personal income.

Respondents also identified their ideology, with 29.64% of respondents as conservative or very conservative, and 31.79% of respondents identified as liberal or very liberal. Just over half (52.29%) of the respondents who identified as conservative preferred the restorative response compared to 76.15% of liberal respondents who preferred the restorative response.

Parental Status

While findings were ambiguous, the previous literature indicated a likelihood that current parents of school-aged children (less than aged 18 years) and non-parents preferences for punitive discipline would differ. The outcome variable indicated that respondents preferred a restorative response to misconduct in K-12 schools (1 = yes, 0 = no). The parent predictor was coded as 1 = parent and 0 = not a parent. The distribution of parents to non-parents in the sample skewed toward non-parents with 28.28% (n = 250) parents and 71.71% (n = 634) non-parents.

Among parents, 34.8% preferred a punitive response to school discipline, and 65.2% preferred a restorative response. Among non-parents, 37.1% preferred a punitive response, and 62.93% preferred a restorative response. A regression model showed no significant association between parents and restorative responses to school discipline.

An additional Chi-square test was used to determine if race of a parent was associated with restorative attitudes. The results indicated that attitudes of respondents who were both a parent and non-white were not statistically different from the attitudes of respondents who were white parents.

Age

The respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 92 years old. The average age of

respondents was 48 years old. The mean age of respondents who preferred a restorative

response to school discipline was 47.5 years, while the mean age of respondents who

preferred a punitive response was 47.9 years. Age was coded as a continuous variable,

with a year representing a one-unit increase. The regression results showed no

statistically significant difference between the mean age for respondents who preferred

restorative responses and those who did not.

Education

The initial linear probability model showed a positive relationship between the

variables, i.e., as years of education increased, support for restorative discipline also

increased $\beta = 0.015$ ($SE = 0.007$). The results were statistically significant ($p < .050$).

This finding supports previous research indicating that as education level decreases,

punitiveness increases (Roberts, 2004). However, education was no longer a significant

predictor when political affiliation and ideology were added.

Religion

Without controls, there was a statistically significant difference in the level of

support between those respondents who self-identified as religious and those who did not.

Fifteen percent of respondents indicated that they are secular. Of secular respondents,

71.21% indicated a supportive attitude toward RPIs in schools. The regression analysis

showed that excluding political affiliation and ideology, identifying as secular

significantly predicted participants' preference toward a restorative outcome, $\beta = 0.84$ (SE

$= 0.05$), $p < .050$. The literature indicated that Americans who identify as religiously

conservative are more likely to hold punitive views compared to their counterparts. To test this in the context of the current study, an independent group t-test was conducted to compare means between religious respondents who identified as ideologically conservative and religious respondents who identified as ideologically liberal. The difference in restorative attitudes between the two groups was different from zero $t(883)$ = 4.35, p < 0.000).

When controls for other demographic factors were added to the model, secularism and education dropped out of the model as significant predictors. A limitation of this study is that the respondents do not identify their beliefs or religious conservatism. Instead, respondents are asked to identify whether they identify their religion. This is a limitation because a religion predictor variable may be subject to measurement error.

Race

22.71% of respondents identified as Black, 8.36% as Hispanic, 8.93% as Asian, and 3.05% identified as another race. White respondents comprised 56.95% of the respondents and are the reference group. Among racial/ethnic groups, the support for RPIs in schools was relatively consistent. Black and White respondents held similar attitudes; 62% of Black respondents and 63.3% of White respondents supported a restorative approach. Among Hispanic respondents, a majority preferred exclusionary discipline. Unexpectedly, linear probability modeling showed a non-significant relationship between identifying as Black or Hispanic and restorative attitudes. The political affiliation among Black respondents showed that only 0.05% ($n = 11$) identified as Republican.

A Chi-square test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between in restorative attitudes between respondents who are Non-White parents and those who are White parents. The results of the test indicated that there was no significant difference between the attitudes of the two groups.

Political Affiliation

A regression analysis was conducted to test the relationship between the independent variable, political affiliation, and the dependent variable restorative. The results show that identifying as Republican was associated with less support for a restorative preference toward school discipline. $\beta = -0.20$ ($SE = 0.043$), $p < .001$.

Ideology

The data consisted of preferences about school discipline for 885 respondents. Respondents were asked to identify their ideology by responding to the question "What are your political views?" using a set of 5 response items from Very Conservative to Very liberal. Of these respondents, 29.72% (n = 263) identified as very conservative or conservative.

These respondents were grouped into the dichotomous variable conservative (coded 1 = conservative, 0 = not conservative). The liberal or very liberal respondents were 31.75% of the sample (n = 281). These respondents were grouped into the dichotomous variable liberal (coded 1 = liberal, 0 = not liberal). The remaining respondents identified as moderate or something else.

Of the respondents who identified as conservative, 20.10% (n = 125) answered the question "when a student engages in misconduct in school, what do you think should happen?" punitively by indicating that [the student] should be removed from the

classroom even if it means their chances of graduating are diminished. Of those

respondents who did not identify as conservative, 31.8% (n = 198) chose the punitive

response.

The consensus of researchers is that traits associated with conservative ideology,

including punitiveness, are also likely predictors of support for punitive responses to

crime. Therefore, for a more precise interpretation of the relationship between ideology

and respondents' preference for school discipline, a scale was developed to place

respondents on a spectrum from very conservative (1) to very liberal (100). The results of

linear probability modeling showed a positive, significant relationship between the two

variables $\beta = 0.004$ ($SE = 0.001$), $p < .001$. Because the Ideological Scale variable is

coded from very conservative (1) to very liberal (100), according to the model, having a

restorative response increases with every unit increase in the scale. In other words, a

respondent who identifies as more conservative is likely to hold a more punitive attitude

toward school discipline. Finally, the results show that ideology and political affiliation

are closely related indicators of attitude.

The literature on attitudes about deviance indicates that political affiliation and

ideology are closely related predictors. The question becomes, what is the magnitude of

the partisan divide about attitudes toward discipline. The results from the current study

give some indication on the magnitude of the difference of the attitudinal gap between

democrats and republicans as it relates to ideology. The average Republican is 6

percentage points on the ideological scale from the average Democrat.

Discussion

The results from this study show that people are largely supportive of RPIs in urban centers like Baltimore, which has been an open question in the literature. The findings also demonstrate that these attitudes are aligned with ideology and political affiliation and are not changed by demographics. A body of research has demonstrated that Americans' attitudes toward deviance is deeply intertwined with ideology. The researcher used linear probability modeling to observe the magnitude of relationships between support for restorative discipline in K-12 (dependent variable) and specific demographic characteristics, including those relating to political affiliation and ideology in the United States (independent variables), while statistically controlling for the other factors in the model. The current results are consistent with past research showing that partisan and ideological differences are the most robust predictive variables in the study of attitudes toward deviance. These results reveal a new dimension of this relationship; punitive attitudes along ideological lines extend beyond attitudes toward criminal justice to discipline in schools.

In the first model, which excluded partisan attitudes, two variables were statistically significant predictors of support for RPIs in schools, secularism/non-religiosity and education. Consistent with Dowler (2003), respondents with more years of education were more likely to support RPIs and being a self-reported secular or non-religious respondent was predictive of restorative attitudes. Notably, being a parent did not predict support for, or opposition to, RPIs in schools.

Party affiliation doesn't tell the full story on Baltimore metro area community's attitudes toward discipline; there are ideological issues at play too. While most

Republican's in the survey identified as conservative, more than a third held moderate ideological views. Republicans respondents were more heterogenous than Democrats, 32% of whom held moderate views. The next model added political ideology, and it was found as a significant predictor of attitudes toward RPIs. Respondents identifying as Republicans expressed less support for RPIs in K-12 schools than Democrats. The next model included the ideological scale, a significant predictor of attitudes toward RPIs. Respondents who indicated they were more liberal on the scale indicated more supportive attitudes for restorative responses to school misconduct.

Interestingly, education dropped out as a statistically significant predictor once ideology was added to the model. The effects of religion appear reduced to non-significance with the introduction of the ideology predictor. In the full model, which includes respondent's political affiliation and the ideological scale measure, political affiliation remained statistically significant but lost some of its predictive power, suggesting that at least some of the importance of political affiliation is related to the values and beliefs that make up respondent's ideology.

While these results show that ideology is the most significant predictor of attitudes toward school discipline, it's notable that the average Democrats and Republicans in the Baltimore area are only 6 percentage points away from one another ideologically. That the ideological divide in the Baltimore metro area is not as polarized as many of the other policy issues in the U.S will be of interest to policymakers and school administrators who are looking to build momentum as RPIs are implemented in Baltimore.

These results may also fill a gap in understanding of attitudes in large urban centers with high crime rates, and high rates of juvenile incarceration. Baltimore City Schools is a school district composed primarily of United States racial-ethnic minority groups in a city that identifies heavily with the Democratic Party. The evidence from this study is that Baltimore Metro Area residents who identify as Democrats or Liberal respond favorably to framing restorative responses to misconduct as "allowing students to stay in the room to repair harm." Future studies should determine if this evidence is unique to Democrats and Liberals living in Baltimore City, or if this messaging appeals to similarly affiliated residents in other cities. Due to parents' vested interest in their children's education, it may be assumed that parents of school-aged children would be more likely to support RPIs than the public. There is some evidence in the literature to support this (Holden et al., 1997), however, the evidence in this study suggests that ideology transcends even parent's interest in their student's experience.

This study also examined how parents and the broader population's stance on school discipline compared with the positions held by Black and Hispanic respondents, who arguably have the most to gain from discipline reform. Data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights showed that Black students in K-12 public schools are nearly four times as likely to be suspended and twice as likely to be expelled as White students (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The results showed that most people in the Baltimore metro area prefer restorative responses to students' behavioral issues as their default or gut reaction. Black and White respondents mostly hold similar views concerning support for restorative

discipline, with 61.2% of Black respondents and 63% of White respondents supporting a restorative approach.

Policy Implications

Taken together, the results from the study indicate that ideology, more than race, predicts a respondent's support for restorative discipline in schools. In fact, this study found that the ideology and attitudes were so strongly aligned, that even being a parent and being non-White together did not impact respondent's attitudes toward school discipline. However, the ideological divide around attitudes toward school discipline reform in Baltimore is one of relative consensus, which means bridging the divide to build support for RPIs in Baltimore schools is realistic for policy makers and educators.

Future studies should explore the kinds of information that cause changes in the public's attitude toward school discipline. Future studies may benefit from exploring this further and determining what type of information leads to a change in thinking. In addition, future research could progress by asking about restorative responses to discipline in different ways to determine how sensitive public opinion is to the wording of a question or the specific information made available to

Linking the fates of schools with the communities that surround them builds social capital, and a constituency of community members invested in addressing mutual issues of structural inequality in schools (Jeynes, 2007). Education leaders and policymakers can use the results from the current study to target school constituencies, and to motivate consensus building. Because public opinion is an essential potential determinant of policy agendas (Kingdon, 2011), an invested constituency impacts policy agendas more powerfully. School officials ' reports demonstrate the movement toward

community collaborations to ensure successful discipline reform. By involving all stakeholders in policy development and responding to the concerns about discipline reform, schools can build consensus within diverse communities to make discipline practices accepted and effective. Reciprocally, these practices present an opportunity to transform the community by reducing truancy, students spending time out of school, and the number of community members coming in contact with the criminal justice system.

For example, in a 2014 study of 500 superintendents, more than half of the respondents indicated that parental involvement in school discipline reform could have the most significant impact on reducing exclusionary discipline. Sixty-five percent of the respondents stated that they partner with entities outside of the school, including parents, local social service agencies, law, and student advocacy organizations, to improve school discipline (Pudelski & Director, 2014). The implications of this study are vital for reform advocates working on sustainable alternatives to punitive discipline. Reformers could find traction if they focus on community partnerships, how alternatives to punitive discipline have common community and school interest, and gain community buy-in by exposing community members to information, training, and workshops.

Baltimore already has a strong foundation of non-partisan community partnerships with organizations such as the Open Society Institute, Baltimore, working on building a political constituency for education reform to address the profound inequalities in public education. The results from this study emphasize that these organizations could further support for RPIs in schools by engaging the public in activities that lead to consensus-building around discipline. These could include community and parent

education workshops and training sponsored by schools allow the public to participate directly in policy implementation.

Understanding typical ideological concerns and identifying areas of overlapping community-interest is another way for reformers to anticipate resistance and shift attitudes. For example, conservatives are typically concerned for a break-down of traditional values and order; administrators could expect fear that such discipline practices are too soft or do not effectively change behavior, thus contributing to the anxiety that safety and security are too relaxed. School administrators could review recent federal data showing that school safety is steady, and the reports of victimization of students in schools have trended down since 2001 when trying to gain buy-in. School officials, powerful community-school organizations, and influential politicians should appeal to the shared values of safe, strong school communities and share this data with community constituents. Additionally, educators could tout areas is RPIs that align with the joint best interests of the community when sharing information about non-punitive discipline policies. For example, focusing on data that supports students' ability to engage and succeed in the classroom is influenced by how safe, supported, and connected they feel at school. Discipline policies impact all three of these factors.

Limitations

These findings should be considered with some limitations. This study adds to the research due to the sample of a diverse population of metro-area residents in the United States, compared to past studies conducted among college students or populations outside of the United States, which limited generalizability. While the sample in the study is diverse, the sample tended to skew toward a more high-income population. Future studies

should include a more economically diverse sample of participants. Future studies could also improve by using a larger sample, which would give the model more explanatory power.

In addition, while the study included several demographic characteristics that have been shown in previous research to influence public attitudes, the model only explains only 6.5% of the variance of attitudes toward discipline in schools. More research is needed to fully understand the adoption of attitudes toward punitive discipline, how these attitudes contribute to the sustainability of alternatives in schools, and how attitudes change when information about alternatives is available.

Conclusion

Policy experts advise that those who support school discipline reform should consider the attitudes of their constituents (Kingdon, 2011). The results provide a new understanding of public attitudes toward school discipline policy. In many previous studies, researchers viewed public attitudes toward education reform as primarily a function of parental status or the economy, and little attention was paid to the potential effects of political and ideological context. However, the evidence from this study supports that the effects of ideology and political affiliation on public attitudes toward school discipline issues appear to be more important than previously suggested. These findings suggested that policymakers and educators aiming to implement alternatives to punitive discipline should carefully consider and plan for resistance, at least initially, from some segments of the community. In particular, they should anticipate and seek to address resistance from community members who identify as ideologically conservative or politically affiliate with the Republican party.

The results also offer insights into the challenges for schools in an increasingly politically polarized time. As the United States becomes more polarized and segmented, tension within school districts may arise regarding how schools use strategies to improve climate and safety and lower suspension and expulsion rates proportionally across student groups. Findings from the linear probability model support that conservative ideology and Republican political affiliation were predictors of dis-favorable attitudes toward RPIs in K-12 school discipline. The result is unsurprising and consistent with previous research showing that attitudes are deeply rooted in values and beliefs which stem from ideological positions (Hilton & Liu, 2008). Conservative respondents might hold punitive attitudes toward disciplining younger generations because they typically fear that social values are eroding. Notably, in the literature on ideological attitudes and corporal punishment, a parallel exists with punitive attitudes and conservative ideology. Researchers found that conservative ideology is also a predictor of support for punitive discipline practices for children (Jackson et al., 10995; Taylor et al., 2016) and punitive policies in criminal justice contexts (Ahlin et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2012). Conversely, respondents who identify as liberal or Democrats typically hold rehabilitative values regarding criminal justice policies. These respondents may have applied this mindset in thinking about effective school discipline for youth.

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Essay 3: Changing Public Attitudes Toward School Discipline: The Effects Of Information About Restorative Practices Initiatives

Introduction

An area of education reform that has received much attention in the recent past is school discipline. Calls for reforming school discipline are ubiquitous as school shootings raise questions about school safety and how to manage students' behavioral issues appropriately. These concerns are amplified by research indicating that traditional, punitive and exclusionary, school discipline practices hurt students' academic prospects, result in disproportionate outcomes, and fuel the school-to-prison pipeline (Curran, 2016; Fabelo et al., 2011; González, 2012; Gregory, 2011, 2016; Losen, 2014). Restorative Practices Initiatives (RPIs) are a school discipline reform that are becoming increasingly popular due to their potential to address these negative impacts. The purpose of this study is to identify whether public support can be built for RPIs and identify the identity characteristics of those who are open to reform.

The public's support or opposition for RPI reforms, and whether that support or opposition is open to change, is an issue that deserves examination. Public opposition or support for a reform contributes to its success or failure (Kingdon, 2011). As RPIs grow in popularity among school leaders and policymakers, which results in rapid implementation (Zakszeski & Rutherford, 2021), evidence on how policymakers and school practitioners can build support among the public will be valuable (Kingdon, 2011). Theory and prior research motivates this study. First, using conceptual change theory as a theoretical framework, this study approaches the formation of attitudes as dynamic process, rather than a fixed idea. Second, to better understand the complexities

of attitudes toward punitiveness, criminal justice research has examined factors associated with the public's support for and perceptions of sentencing reform. This body of literature examines identity factors such as race, religion, gender, age, religion, ideology and political affiliation. Little is known about the factors associated with punitive attitudes toward school discipline or what motivates attitude change in this context. Using survey data from the Baltimore Metro area, the research questions ask: Does providing information to the public about RPIs as an alternative to punitive discipline impact respondent's preference for a restorative disciplinary approach in K-12 schools? And do, findings from the criminal justice research hold in a school discipline context? Specifically, are race, gender, age, religion, income ideology and political affiliation factors significantly associated with a change in support for RPIs?

Definitions

RPIs utilize a restorative approach to discipline. A restorative approach to discipline involves a mindset as well as a practice (Hopkins, 2015). Together, the mindset and tools create a school climate and culture that is "inherently just, racially equitable, and conducive to learning for all students" (A Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline, 2018, p. 78). The RPI mindset comes from its emergence from restorative justice (RJ). Restorative justice is defined by a philosophical approach to wrongdoing based in centering the needs of a victim and collaborative problem solving to repair harm and build relationships (Zehr, 1995). Where restorative justice is applied in response to wrongdoing, restorative practices are applied both to prevent wrongdoing, and to respond to it. RPIs are therefore distinct from restorative justice in that they embrace prevention as a core philosophy, in addition to responding to harm.

Restorative practices are a contested concept in the literature as they lack a common definition and are referred to using various terms (Cremin, et al., 2012). For the purposes of this paper, restorative practices are referred to as RPIs and conceptualized as elements which strengthen relationships between individuals and social connections within communities (IIRP, 2020). This conceptualization comes from the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and is well utilized in the literature (Gregory, 2011). Importantly, RPIs are more than policies and procedures (Gregory, 2011). Accordingly, the IIRP identifies 11 essential elements of RP (IIRP, 2018). The elements work together to increase opportunities for connection through community building circles, encourage responsibility taking, accountability and the appropriate expression of emotion expression through affective communication, and engage all community members in ownership of learning environments using tools based in fair processes (Gregory, 2011 IIRP, 2011; A Maryland Commission for the School to Prison Pipeline, 2018). Table 1 shows the elements and provides examples of their use in schools.

A punitive approach to discipline emerges from retributive justice which is defined by punishment and exclusion (Hough & Park, 2013). A punitive attitude is a person's preferences for punishments that includes "retribution, incapacitation, and a lack of concern for offender rehabilitation" (Courtright & Mackey, 2004, p. 317). Traditional punitive discipline approaches are disciplinary strategies that are primarily intended to punish or deter undesirable behaviors. Punitive discipline can include physical discipline and verbal discipline. Exclusionary discipline describes actions that remove a person from their usual community or setting (e.g., in- or out-of-school suspensions and expulsions) (Courtright & Mackey, 2004).

Table 1

Essential Elements of Restorative Practices

Domain	Elements	Description
Prevention (building relationships and developing community)	1. Affective Statements	Use in response to negative or positive events in the classroom and school
	2. Proactive Circles	Run on daily or weekly basis (e.g., students sit in a circle and discuss a topic that helps build community)
	3. Fair Process	Engage students in decisions, explain the rationale
	4–5. Restorative Staff Community/ Restorative Approach with Families	Model and use restorative practices among school staff and with student families
	6. Fundamental Hypothesis Understandings	Provides a framework to guide daily interactions with the appropriate mix of control and support
Intervention (repairing harm and restoring community)	7. Restorative Questions	Address negative behaviors using questions (e.g., "Who has been affected by what you have done?"; "What do you think you need to do to make it right?")
	8. Responsive Circles	After a moderately serious incident, students sit in a circle and address who has been harmed and what needs to be done to make things right
	9. Small Impromptu Circles	Address negative behaviors by asking the wrongdoer and those harmed to answer restorative questions in front of each other.
	10. Restorative Conference Circles	Respond to a serious incident using a scripted approach to facilitate accountability and repair harm
	11. Reintegrative Management of Shame	Acknowledge the emotions of the wrongdoers and those impacted by the wrongdoing

Note: Adapted from *The Promise Of Restorative Practices To Transform Teacher-Student Relationships And Achieve Equity In School Discipline*. By, Gregory, A., Clawson, K., Davis, A., & Gerewitz, J. (2016) p. 329.

Theoretical Framework

Conceptual change provides a theoretical model for understanding how attitudes about school discipline may change when a person is confronted with information about alternatives (Posner et al., 1982). Conceptually, attitude refers to a person's evaluation of a policy issue or phenomenon and the subsequent expression of their support or opposition (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). Conceptual change theory concerns how a person's beliefs or attitudes are influenced when evaluating, for example, a policy, and are confronted with new information.

Conceptual change theory was originally developed to explain knowledge acquisition when presented with science in instructional contexts (Posner et al., 1982). Since its inception, the model was expanded to explain belief change in addition to knowledge acquisition (Chinn & Brewer, 1993). The use of strategies grounded in conceptual change theory to influence attitudes has been studied extensively in science education (Guzzetti, 2000), but only one known use exists for education policy (Aguilar, 2019). Meta-analyses of studies using conceptual change as a theoretical framework find convincing evidence that strategies grounded in theory effectively influence beliefs (Tippett, 2010), and facilitate long-lasting change (Guzzetti et al., 1993).

This study first sought to determine respondents' default preference toward school discipline to align with conceptual change theory (Posner et al.,1982). First, an individual must become dissatisfied after realizing that their existing concept cannot explain a new situation. They must comprehend and find a new idea plausible. Second, the learner must realize that the new concept is more fruitful than the status quo (Posner et al., 1982).

RPIs emergence from restorative justice explains the conceptual link with attitudes toward crime and punishment. Restorative justice emerged from a re-examination of the nature of crime and justice by researchers in the criminal justice field of the late 1990s and early 2000s (Hopkins, 2003). Restorative justice scholars offer restorative justice as a wholly different paradigm to the traditional concept of justice and conflict resolution (Zehr, 1995). Whereas retributive justice concerns crime as a violation of laws, restorative justice consists of perspectives on crime as a violation of relationships and communities (Zehr,1995). Restorative attitudes then are concerned with eliminating the underlying causes of misconduct, reparation to the victim and rebuilding trust in the offender (Braithwaite, 2001). Those with restorative attitudes generally do not support the use of punitive, exclusionary strategies for all but the most serious forms of misconduct (McCold, 2008). However, even in the most serious of criminal cases, criminal justice research shows people with restorative attitudes will favor restorative sentences such as life without parole and restitution, over retributive punishments like the death penalty (Hough & Park, 2002).

Previous literature in the criminal justice system demonstrates how conceptual change theory may explain people's shifts in attitudes toward discipline when presented with alternatives. For example, studies on criminal sentencing reform show that when the public receives information about alternatives to punitive consequence for crime, they are likely to consider the alternative a viable option (Doble, 2002; Hough & Park, 2002; Hough & Roberts, 1998). In addition, a study using British Crime Survey data established a causal link between awareness of alternative sentencing options and support for a decline for imprisonment (Hough & Park, 2002). What is more, the results from this

research show that not only does support for punitive consequences decrease, informing the public about alternatives shifted preferences toward more restorative consequences.

Additional studies in the criminal justice literature indicate that increasing familiarity with alternatives may increase public acceptance of restorative responses to misconduct and crime, even if that information is limited. Studies show that providing the public with an example of an alternative or just a sentence about the consequences of punitive responses to crime shifts support away from punitive responses. For example, Bowers et al., (1994) compared whether respondents' level of support changed from their baseline response, when presented with a short description of four alternative sentences for death penalty cases. The results indicate that most of those who initially favored the death penalty, the most serious of punitive consequence, changed their preference to less punitive consequences, after being presented with four alternatives. A similar result has been reported by McGarrell and Sandys (1996).

Literature Review

Research on RPIs in K-12 schools has examined it's prevalence (Zakszeski & Rutherford, 2021), and positive outcomes in schools (Augustine et al., 2018; Acosta et al., 2019; Jain et al., 2014; Lewis, 2009; McCluskey et al., 2008). Yet, the scholarly literature on RPIs has, to date, overlooked the critical issue of public support for it as a reform in K-12 schools. This literature review has two parts. Part one is the state of existing research on public opinion on RPIs and respondent characteristics. In the second section, I review the literature on the factors that might shift public opinion.

Respondent Characteristics, Public Opinion and the Policy-Making Process

Perceptions of what constitutes acceptable responses to school misconduct are related to public attitudes about what is tolerable in how society responds to offenders who violate the law. Because individuals hold different views in this context, attitudes toward punitive or restorative school discipline practices will likely vary accordingly. The literature on the current state of the public's attitudes about discipline in K-12 education consists almost entirely of public surveys. The most well-known sources are the public opinion polls conducted by Phi Delta Kappa and EdNext. PDK has conducted an annual poll through Gallup on education issues since 1969, and EdNext has conducted polling on education policy since 2006. Data from these sources provide a mixed picture of attitudes about discipline in America's public schools.

PDK poll data indicate that the way schools respond to discipline issues consistently rates as critical to public school parents and all respondents (e.g., Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup, 2017; Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup, 2018; Phi Delta Kappa International, 2019). The poll consistently asks, "What do you think are the biggest problems facing the public schools in your community?" The poll offers respondents a list of potential responses. Between 1969 and 1986, the response "lack of discipline/ behavior of the children" was the most frequent choice. Since 1986, only school funding concerns have surpassed that choice as the top concern (Franklin et al., 2006; Phi Delta Kappa, 2018). The 2018 PDK poll further explored the public's concern about school discipline using the question, "Why would you not like to have a child of yours take up teaching—what's the main reason?" The second most frequent response was lack of discipline and student behavior issues (Phi Delta Kappa, 2018, p. 9).

Posner et al. (1982) stated that people must be dissatisfied with the current state to consider changing their beliefs. The polling data from PDK and EdNext indicate the public's attitudes about reforming punitive, exclusionary disciplinary approaches in K-12 schools. Responding to the question, "[What] do you think is the more effective way of dealing with misbehavior by students?" (Phi Delta Kappa, 2018, p. 8) more than half of respondents preferred interventions other than suspensions and expulsions, typically aligned with punitive discipline, for common behavioral issues (Phi Delta Kappa, 2018).

Some empirical studies also exist which examine the public's support for alternatives to punitiveness. These studies do not look at reforms to punitive discipline in schools. Instead, they investigate punitive attitudes and beliefs toward responding to criminal behaviors in communities. These studies tend to link punitive or restorative preferences to ideological positions (Ahlin et al., 2015; Gromet & Darley, 2006; Huang et al., 2012). In a study of two nationally representative groups, Huang et al. (2012) tested whether the conservative ideology of Japanese and Australian respondents could predict support for restorative justice. Respondents in the Huang et al. (2012) study supported restorative justice principles when they also believed restorative justice served a reintegrative or rehabilitative purpose, or when they prioritized victim benefits. In addition, the results linked supportive attitudes with gender, higher education levels, social capital, and social liberalism.

Ahlin et al. (2015 replicated Huang et al.'s (2012) study by surveying a sample of college students at one university in the Northeastern United States. Ahlin et al. showed evidence supporting the association between a conservative ideology and punitive attitudes. Similar to Huang et al.'s (2012) findings, respondents who believed in personal

responsibility, or believed that traditional values are decaying were less supportive of

restorative principles (Ahlin et al., 2015). In addition to ideology, Huang et al. (2012) and

Ahlin et al. (2015) both showed that the public often lacks knowledge of alternatives to

traditionally punitive responses, and when they are aware, respondents with more

traditionally liberal predispositions are more likely to support restorative justice practices

than conservatives (Ahlin, 2015; Huang et al., 2012).

In 2014, the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice issued a

"Dear Colleague" letter calling for removing or modifying punitive policies consisting of

exclusionary practices such as suspensions and expulsions (U.S. Department of Justice

and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Among other concerns, the guidance

highlighted years of evidence indicating that the differences in behavior did not explain

the discipline gap (Skiba & Williams, 2014) and pointed to the disproportionate use of

exclusionary discipline on racial-ethnic minority students, including students of color,

low-income students, and students with disabilities (Rocque & Paternoster, 2011;

Rocque, 2010; Skiba et al., 2012; Skiba & Williams, 2014; U.S. Department of Justice

and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Researchers suggest that the drivers of these

disparities in exclusionary discipline outcomes are multiple and complex. Some have

demonstrated that punitive exclusionary discipline policies create an over-reliance on

suspensions and expulsions, which are ultimately applied unfairly, further marginalizing

students based on race or ethnicity, ability, and socioeconomic status (Anderson & Ritter,

2017; Anyon et al., 2014; Barrett et al., 2018; Kinsler, 2011; Losen et al. et al., 2015;

Losen & Skiba, 2010; Ritter & Anderson, 2018; Sartain et al., 2015; Skiba et al., 2011;

Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba &Williams, 2014; et al., Welch & Payne, 2010).

Due to the adverse outcomes associated with punitive, exclusionary discipline practices, personal or vicarious experience with the school disciplinary system may increase support for disciplinary reform. Because punitive, exclusionary discipline has historically disproportionately impacted Black and Hispanic students, race may be associated with shifting attitudes. Additionally, a close relationship to students in K-12 through occupation or parental status may be associated with shifting attitudes. The literature provides insight into how respondents' race may be associated with the public's punitive or restorative preferences. A 2019 study by the Fordham Institute, provides insight into the attitudes of school personnel toward school discipline (Griffith & Tyner, 2019). The 2019 study found that teachers perceive alternatives to punitive disciplinary practices as inadequate to address behavioral issues, especially those teachers working in high-poverty schools. Additionally, while the teachers in the study acknowledged that recent disciplinary reforms are promising, they did not attribute reductions in suspensions to these reforms but to increased tolerance of misconduct or under-reporting. Notably, Black teachers in the study stated that they both believed punitive discipline is racially biased and that "exclusionary discipline" methods should be used more often (Griffith and Tyner, 2019). Griffith and Tyner (2019) did not explain this paradox but did recommend a reform that resonated with Black teachers in the study; keeping the most chronically disruptive students within the learning environment but directing them to those teachers who can help them.

EdNext data also provides insight into the characteristics associated with the public's punitive or restorative preferences. Pondiscio (2016) found that results from 2015 showed that 49% of Democrats favor a policy that prevents schools from expelling

or suspending students at disproportionate rates compared to 24% of Republicans. When sorted by race, the same data shows that 65% of Black respondents favored policies preventing disproportionality, but this percentage decreased to 48% in 2016. Among Hispanic respondents, 39% supported punitive, exclusionary policies (Pondiscio, 2016). Although knowledge can be helpful regarding the demographic factors associated with preferences for alternatives, these polls do not measure attitudes about specific reforms.

Factors that Shift Public Opinion

Limited research has been conducted in the United States examining predictors of punitive attitudes concerning school misconduct. Understanding how the public evaluates responses to discipline or punishment in other sectors may shed light on the factors that influence their opinions, which may apply to their opinion toward school discipline. Previous literature has studied changes in public attitudes toward deviant behavior in how parents treat their children and how offenders should be treated in the criminal justice system.

The research concerning political party affiliation and public attitudes is growing. Although partisanship is not highly correlated with race, gender, or age, the public filters their opinions on policy issues through their political party affiliation. This filter impacts how people make sense of their environment and experiences which informs policy attitudes. Some scholars suggested that this filter is so strong that policy attitudes are not shaped by respondents' lived experience as much as their political preferences and exposure to trusted politicians' views (Zaller, 1992). How the media impacts policy attitudes is an example of the workings of this filter. For example, Democrats and Republicans do not use the same news sources; cues obtained from politicians and media

influencers through these increasingly polarized sources provide shortcuts about issues on

which the general population lacks information or is ambivalent (Rade et al. 2016;

Popkin, 1991; Zaller, 1992). A review of the political science researchers found that even

when exposed to content online through social media or other media mechanisms, people

tend to self-select into polarized environments where information is either neutral or

filtered through partisan lenses (Iyengar et al., 2009). Considering views on the

punishment of offenders outside of the school context, Republicans and Democrats tend

to agree that safety is essential but disagree on the policy mechanisms to achieve it.

Recent public opinion polls show that Republicans tend to be more punitive than

Democrats and give significantly less support to helping victims and rehabilitating

offenders (O'Hear & Wheelock, 2016).

The literature on corporal punishment indicates that the perception of the extent of

a social problem may influence people's concern, sense of responsibility to change the

current circumstances, and acceptance of alternatives. For example, beliefs in corporal

punishment as appropriate or inappropriate parenting behavior may also influence public

concern and the sense of responsibility to support change. For example, Ashton (2001)

found that approval of corporal punishment was related to the lower likelihood to report

maltreatment, compared to disapproval which motivated respondents to take action to put

a stop to it.

The literature base on corporal punishment also indicates that rather than the

codification of a policy or law, people's perceived severity or pervasiveness of corporal

punishment is the trigger that evokes change. For example, a multi-national European

study on corporal punishment found that respondents' attitudes from countries where

corporal punishment was illegal did not differ in their beliefs from respondents in

countries where corporal punishment of children is legal (Sajkowska, 2007). These

findings are reinforced by a systematic review of the international literature on corporal

punishment, which identified that parents' beliefs and behaviors regarding corporal

punishment with children were affected by social norming more than by legislation

(Zolotor & Puzia, 2010). The results were consistent across the country of origin,

occupation, and parental status. This finding is relevant to the current study. It provides

evidence that providing information to the public that includes the problems with punitive

school discipline and the benefits of restorative school discipline may be more effective

in shifting beliefs than information about the codification or implementation of policy

reform itself. The state of the public attitude toward school discipline reform should be

considered in the context of public knowledge of the alternatives.

     Across the studies where corporal punishment was declining before banning this

punishment via formal legal or regulatory changes, support continued to decline after the

ban (Zolotor & Puzia,, 2010). The change could highlight that legislation does not work

in a vacuum but is part of a larger cultural, political, and social dynamic. These findings

provide valuable insight to the current study regarding the social and political forces in

the United States concerning school discipline and the potential impacts on the public's

attachment to punitive discipline.

     The current study fills a gap regarding the state of the literature on public

opposition or support for discipline reform in K-12 schools. First, while Huang et al.

(2012) and Ahlin et al. (2015) studied college students' preferences, the context of the

studies was related to crime rather than school discipline. Additionally, due to their non-

representative samples, the results are not necessarily generalizable to the American public. The current study aims to use a more representative sample to study discipline preferences in the school context. Additionally, where PDK and EdNext polling data provide insight on the state of the public's opinion about school discipline, this study seeks to determine whether increasing familiarity with alternatives may increase public acceptance of reform. Finally, this study seeks to determine if demographic characteristics associated with support or opposition for punitive responses to crime and discipline identified in criminal justice and corporal punishment studies hold in the context of school discipline.

Method

To address the research question, and examine attitude change, a treatment was developed. The treatment is a statement which provided information to the reader about RPIs as an alternative to punitive discipline and aligns with conceptual change theory. The treatment statement was: "Schools reduce suspensions when they allow students to stay in the classroom and make things right by repairing the harm resulting from their misconduct. When misconduct occurs in the classroom, what do you think should happen?" Specifically, the statement contains an outcome associated with RPIs. The information about RPIs provided in the item is intentionally concise, as previous research demonstrates that even the provision of very little information about an alternative to the status quo can evoke a shift in attitudes toward reform. Additionally, the statement was designed to align with conceptual change theory.

The following considerations were made in the design of the treatment to evoke each of the four conditions of change. First, the statement provides information which

makes RPIs plausible, suggesting an alternative, and second, that the outcomes associated

with the alternative could be more fruitful than the status quo. Second, the phrasing of the

statement is simple, understandable and allows the reader to consider the potential for

RPIs to address a problem (Posner et al., 1982). The terms RPIs and punitive are

unmentioned in the survey to prevent distraction arising from policy language. Third, by

providing an outcome of RPIs, the reader may consider the potential of the RPIs to create

change relative to the status quo. Fourth, the information about RPIs is phrased so that

survey-takers gain insights into the outcomes of RPIs.

This study used a survey methodology to deliver the treatment and collect data

from a random sample of Baltimore Metro Area residents. The relevant survey items

were designed by the researcher. Linear probability modeling was used to identify the

statistically significant predictors of attitude change and whether those shifts were

associated with demographic characteristics.

Data Source

The results presented in this study are based on analysis of data collected using

the 2017 Baltimore Metro Area Survey (BMAS). The BMAS is an online survey of a

representative random sample of approximately 1,500 adults aged 18 years and over

living in Baltimore. Qualtrics was responsible for distribution and sampling, and they

oversampled hard-to-reach populations, including young adults, Hispanic Americans, and

African Americans (L. Henderson and C. Herring, personal communication, April 2018.

The data were weighted in two stages. First-panel base weights were calculated

for every household and assigned to each adult in each household. Second, the sample

demographics were weighted to match target population parameters for gender, age,

education, race, and Hispanic ethnicity (U.S. Census definitions), housing type, and telephone usage. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the National Health Interview Survey (L. Henderson and C. Herring, personal communication, April 2018).

A sample of the population that completed the BMAS survey completed the survey's education module containing the survey items for this study. This random sample included 884 respondents ($N = 884$). All other cases were dropped from the sample. Table 2 contains descriptive statistics of the samples for this study.

The sample was slightly under 60% women; the racial-ethnic demographics showed 8.9% Asian American, 22.7% African American, 8.4% Hispanic American, and 56.9% White American. The average age of respondents in the study was 47.6 years old.

Baltimore Context

This study took place in Baltimore City and the surrounding Baltimore County. Baltimore City Schools is a large urban school district in the mid-Atlantic United States, with 80,591 students in 172 schools in the Spring of 2019 (MSDE-DAAIT, 2018). In 2017, more than half of the students enrolled in Baltimore City Schools were low-income (52.7%) and children of color, self-identifying as 79.4% Black, 10.4% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0.9% multiracial, 0.2% Native/Pacific Islander Americans, and 8% White Americans). Drop-out rates in city schools ranged from > 5.0% to 94.1% (including alternative schools), with a mean of 19.3% in 2017-2018. The suspension and expulsion rate in city schools in 2017-18 was 5.1%, trending down from a district high of 16.1% in 2003-2004, and consistently lingering between 11.3% and 12.5% for 2004 to 2008 (MSDE -DAAIT, 2018).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max
Age	884		47.64	16.973	18.000	92.000
Race						
Black	884	22.74	0.23	0.42	0	1
Hispanic	884	8.37	0.08	0.28	0	1
Asian	884	8.94	0.09	0.29	0	1
White	884	56.90	0.57	0.50	0	1
Other Race	884	3.05	0.03	0.17		
Political Party						
Democrat	884	47.74	0.48	0.50	0	1
Republican	884	23.53	0.24	0.42	0	1
Conservative	884	29.64	0.30	0.46	0	1
Liberal	884	31.79	0.32	0.47	0	1
Ideological scale	882	51.25	51.25	25.54	1	100
Education						
Some HS	884	20.36				
HS Grad	884	14.82	0.15	0.36	0	1
Bachelor's	884	29.30	0.29	0.46	0	1
Post-Grad	884	9.28	0.09	0.29	0	1
Is not religious	884	14.93	0.15	0.36	0	1
Male	884	40.38	0.40	0.49	0	1
Is a Parent	883	71.69	0.72	0.45	0	1
Personal Inc	882		$110,241.00	$66,942.13	$2500	$250001
Household Inc	881		$686,52	$56,217	$2500	$250001

Note. Some HS = less than 12 years and no degree, HS grad = high school graduate, Bachelor's = completion of a college bachelor's degree, Post-Grad = study after the undergraduate college degree is attained. Inc = Income.

Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is a large suburban school district that borders Baltimore City. In 2018, BCPS reported enrollment of 113,814 students in 174 schools. In this student population, 43.7% received free and reduced-price meals. BCP Schools are majority-minority schools that are 39.1% African American, 9.7% Hispanic American, 7.2% Asian American, 4.8% multiracial American, 0.4% Native/Pacific Islander American, and 38.7% White students (MSDE-DAAIT, 2018). The suspension and expulsion rates in BCPS schools in 2017-18 was 5.8%, higher than Baltimore City, and have increased from district-low rates during 2013 to 2016 when the rates were 4.5 to 4.9%. Between 2003 and 2011, the district had the highest historical rates of 10% to 12.2% (MSDE -DAAIT, 2018).

Baltimore City and Baltimore County are ideal for studying school discipline and related reforms. The State of Maryland adopted new disciplinary guidelines in 2014 to reduce exclusionary discipline (MSDE, 2014), and within the state, LEAs are implementing alternatives to punitive discipline, including RPIs. Additionally, Baltimore City and Baltimore County Schools have a history of using alternative responses to punitive discipline, and currently, districts have begun implementing RPIs with plans to expand their use of these practices within their jurisdictions. These promising steps toward reform are balanced by the growing concerns about Baltimore's school-to-prison pipeline and increasing crime rate (Maryland Commission on the School to Prison Pipeline, 2018). Baltimore is experiencing a critical moment as violent crime is at an all-time high, and the public, policymakers, and politicians are searching for solutions. As a result, the state formed a commission to review and recommend reducing and eradicating the school-to-prison pipeline. The resulting report focused heavily on using RPIs in

schools and communities (Maryland Commission on the School to Prison Pipeline, 2018).

Constructing a Measure of Attitude Change

Two survey items in the BMAS relating to consequences for misconduct were combined to produce a measure of punitiveness. Combined, these two items produce an indicator of change. The design of the items reflects best practices in survey design, the theoretical framework for this study. The first survey item used to establish baseline attitudes is: "When a student engages in misconduct in the classroom, what do you think should happen?" For the purposes of reporting results, this item is labeled Q1. The second survey item, which contains the treatment, is: "Schools reduce suspensions when they allow students to stay in the classroom and make things right by repairing the harm resulting from their misconduct. When misconduct occurs in the classroom, what do you think should happen?" This item is labeled Q2.

To align with conceptual change theory, the first item is meant to determine a respondent's default preference toward school discipline. The second item is meant to provide information about RPIs as an alternative to punitive discipline. The survey items were placed back-to-back in the survey, with no intervening questions or information. Respondent's baseline attitude, or response to Q1 relative to their attitude after the treatment, or Q2 was used to determine change.

The survey questions were designed as semi-bipolar favor/oppose questions. The bipolar approach sometimes results in acquiescence bias and yields a different pattern of results than open-ended questions. The altered pattern can be especially prominent among less-educated respondents (Kiley, 2017; Groves et al., 2011). Because the study goal is

obtaining attitudes from respondents who may not know what RPIs are, less emphasis

was on measuring the strength of their attitudes or an array of possibilities; instead, the

emphasis was on ascertaining a gut reaction about whether participants favored or

opposed RPIs after the treatment.

Measurement and Classification

Respondents were grouped into four categories, representing the four dependent

variables in this study. The variables represented changes, or the lack thereof, in

respondents' preferences based on the treatment. Respondents who chose the response

that aligns with RPIs, that "they should be allowed to remain in the classroom to make

things right" as a baseline (Q1), and after the second item (Q2) are considered

consistently restorative. Conversely, respondents who chose the response that aligns with

a punitive disciplinary approach, that "they should be removed from the classroom" as a

baseline (Q1), and after the second item (Q2) are categorized as consistently punitive. If

respondents answered Q1 punitively but then answered Q2 restoratively were grouped

into the changed to restorative category. Respondents who answered Q1 restoratively but

then answered Q2 punitively were grouped into the changed to punitive category.

Analytic Design

The analytic design of the current study was quantitative with descriptive and

explanatory analyses. The study used linear probability modeling to identify the

statistically significant predictors of attitude change and whether those shifts were

associated with demographic characteristics. The linear probability model, with predictor

variables had the following general format:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon \qquad\qquad (1)$$

In formula (1), Y is a restorative response, β_0 is the intercept, Xs are a vector of variables, which describe predictor variables, and ε is the error term. The predictor variables of interest were race, education, age, religion, political affiliation, ideology and parental status.

Results

The results were entered into a series of Sankey Diagrams to graphically visualize the various punitive and restorative paths of respondents' attitudes at baseline and after treatment. Sankey diagrams visually depict a flow or change from a set of values. Sankey diagrams are useful for interpreting the flow of data, in this case, responses, from a source to a target, in this case, default attitudes captured in responses to Q1, introducing the information about RPIs in Q2. See Figure 1.

Figure 1 maps the various paths of responses from Q1, "When misconduct occurs in the classroom, what do you think should happen?" to question two, "schools reduce suspensions when they allow students to stay in the classroom and make things right by repairing the harm resulting from their misconduct. When misconduct occurs in the classroom, what do you think should happen?" The vertical bars in a Sankey diagram represent a source or target. In this diagram the two vertical bars represent the response types to each question. In the diagram, yellow represents punitive, and grey represents restorative.

The curved bands represent the quantity of each type of response for each question and are color-coded to identify the associated target. The width of each band is proportional to the quantity represented. In this diagram, the bright yellow line and dark grey vertical lines on the far left depict the original response clusters from Q1.

Figure 1

Sankey Diagram for Q1 and Q2

Note: Left – Q1 (pre-treatment) Right – Q2 (treatment)

Respondents responding with, "Students should be removed from the classroom when they misbehave" are captured in the yellow bands, labeled punitive. Respondents answering with, "Students should be allowed to stay in the classroom and make things right by repairing the harm resulting from their misconduct. and restorative" are captured in the grey bands, labeled restorative. The four paths, or curved bands extending to the bright yellow line and the dark grey vertical lines on the right, depict respondents who maintained consistently punitive or consistently restorative answers or changed their answers from punitive to restorative or vice versa.

Sankey diagrams emphasize dominant response types. Figure 1 shows that most respondents who answered Q1 punitively also answered Q2 punitively. It also shows that most respondents who had restorative attitudes at baseline, also held restorative attitudes after Q2. Notably, the diagram also shows that while most respondents are committed to a perspective on discipline, attitudes change in both directions. The size of the bands indicates that more respondents switched from punitive to restorative attitudes toward school discipline. These results are surprising. Descriptive statistics show that of the total sample, only 4.98% of respondents changed from punitive to restorative compared to 8.82% of respondents who switched to a punitive attitude after Q2. These descriptive results suggest that the information provided, changed respondents' attitudes to support a punitive discipline approach. These results motivate further analysis.

Additional Sankey diagrams were used to explore shifts in attitude based on various demographics. For example, Figure 2 depicts the flow of responses by parents and by non-parents. The blue and green flows on the top represent parents, while the purple and red flows represent non-parents. The first flow on the left represents
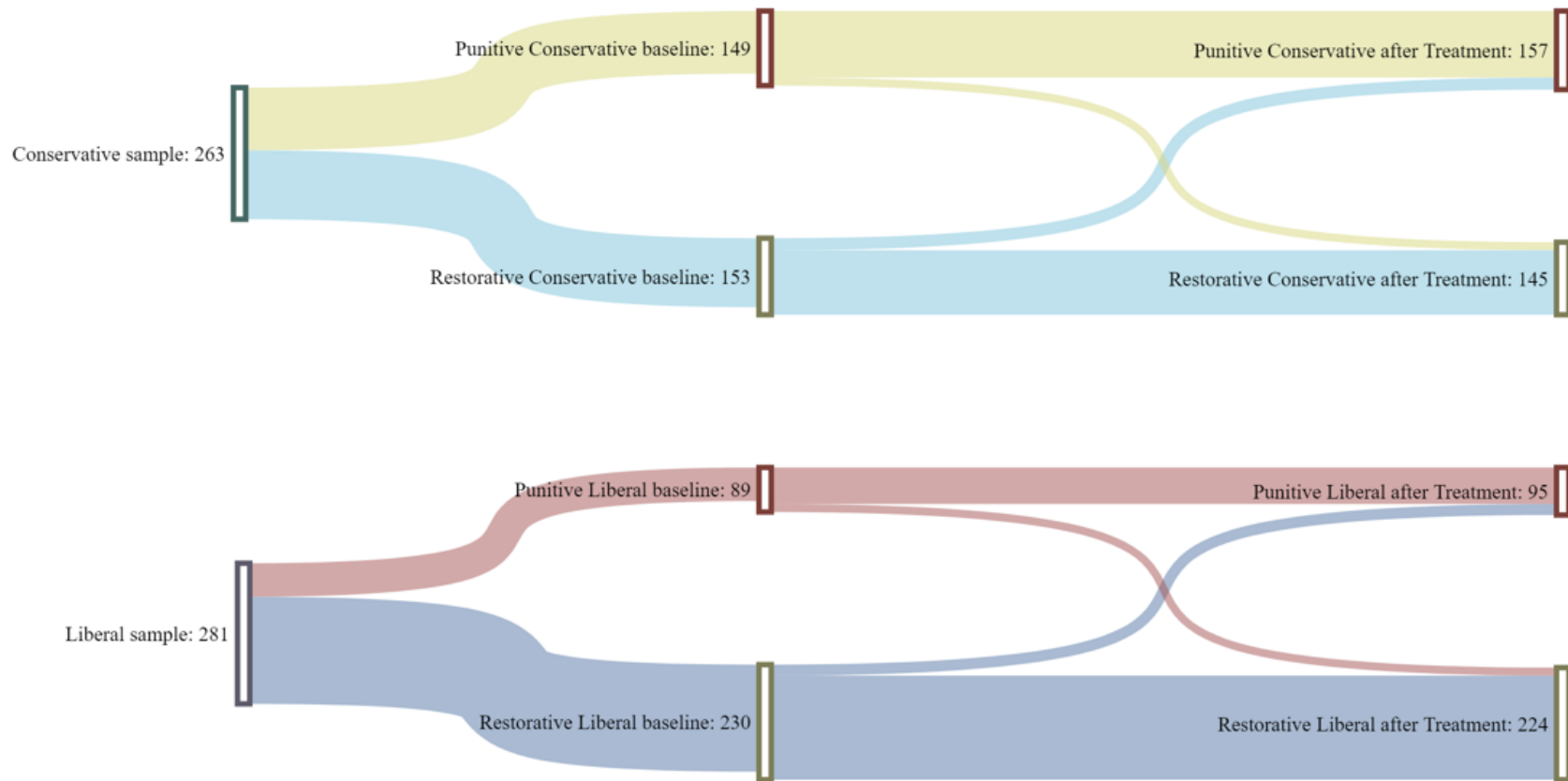
Figure 2

Flow by Parental Status
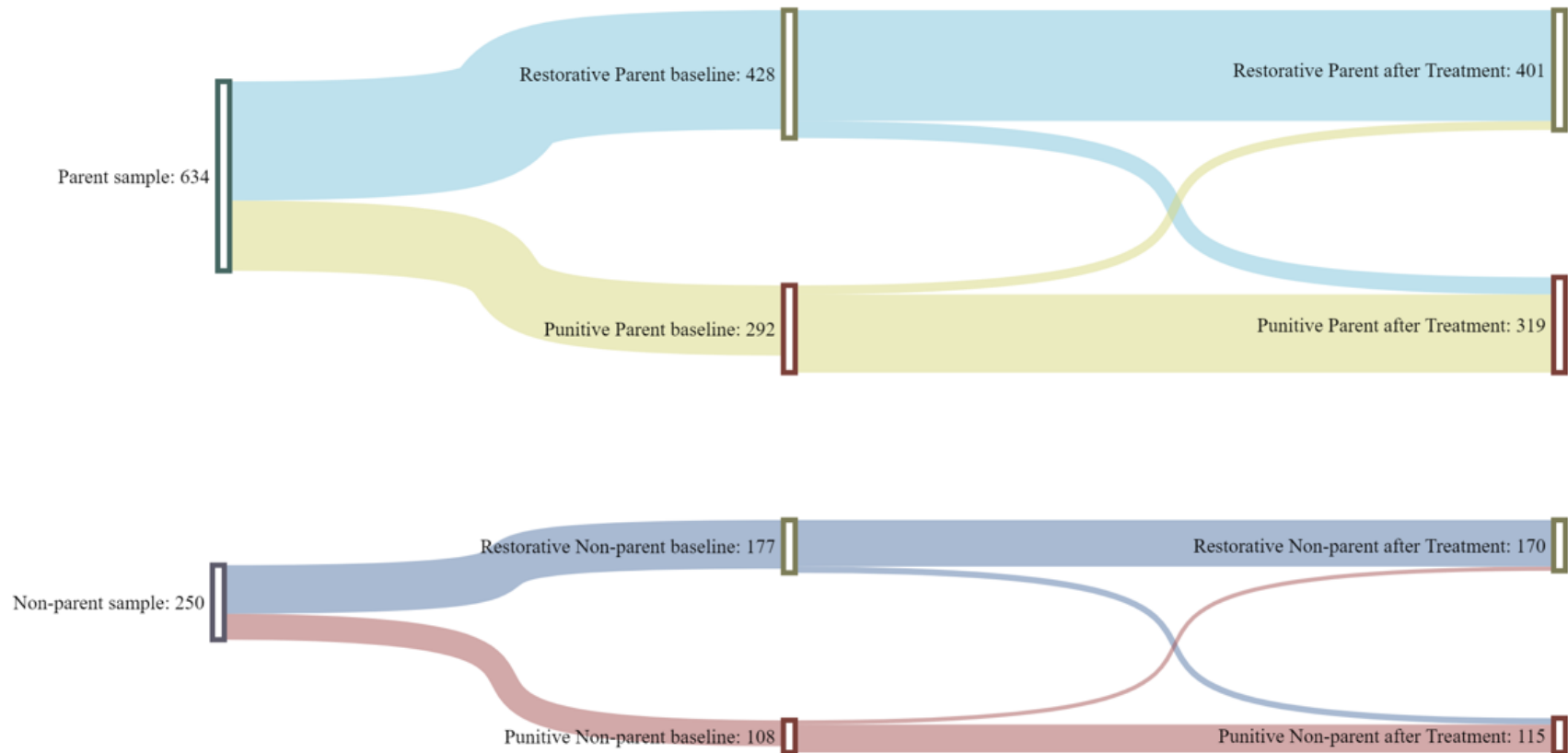
Note. The first flow on the left represents restorative or punitive attitudes at baseline. The middle node represents the treatment

restorative or punitive attitudes at baseline. The middle node represents the treatment.

Following the node that represents the treatment, there are four flows for each group.

Each flow represents the group of respondents whose attitudes remained consistent, and

those who shifted their attitudes. The pattern seen in Figure 2 shows that at baseline, most

parents and non-parents held restorative attitudes, and in both groups, most respondent's

attitudes remained consistent after treatment. Figure 2 also shows that after the treatment,

both the parents and non-parent groups, some respondents shifted from restorative to

punitive, and punitive to restorative. Additionally, Figure 2 shows that a larger share of

parents moved from restorative to punitive relative to the non-parent group. Figure 3

shows patterns based on ideology. Like the pattern in the parent and non-parent samples,

most conservative and liberals maintained their baseline attitudes after treatment. Also

like the parent sample, both conservative and liberal respondents shifted from punitive to

restorative and restorative to punitive after treatment. In both groups, more respondents

shifted from a restorative to punitive attitude. These diagrams further explain the results

in Figure 1, which indicated that attitudes are fungible in either direction. These findings

motivate additional analysis of the data.

  To further examine these patterns, a comparison of the means by attitude change,

and by respondent characteristics were developed. Table 3 shows the overall comparison

of group means. Table 4 shows means by respondent characteristics, i.e., race, gender,

socio-economic status, religiosity, parental status. The table also shows respondent's

characteristics based on the four dependent variables Among most groups, most attitudes

remained what they were at baseline. Of the 884 respondents, only 44 shifted from

Figure 3

Flow by Ideology

Note. The first flow on the left represents restorative or punitive attitudes at baseline. The middle node represents the treatment

punitive to restorative attitudes after treatment, and 78 shifted from restorative to

punitive after the treatment.

Table 3

Pre and Post Treatment Means

Pre-Treatment		Post-Treatment	
Restorative	63.46%	Changed to restorative	4.98%
Punitive	36.54%	Changed to punitive	8.82%
		Consistently restorative	53.62%
		Consistently punitive	31.56%
Total restorative	63.46%	Total restorative	58.60%
Total punitive	36.54%	Total punitive	40.38%

However, some populations shifted from punitive to restorative attitudes. Of the

respondents who shifted from punitive to restorative, 38.63% of those who shifted to

restorative were White respondents and 38.63% were Black respondents, shifted to

restorative attitudes. This represents a larger share of respondents, than those who shifted

from restorative to punitive, but only slightly. Of those who shifted from restorative to

punitive, 34.62% were Black and 38.46% were White. Additionally, a larger share of

respondents with a bachelor's or post-bachelor's degree, and respondents who identified

as secular, Democrat, conservative and liberal all shifted from punitive to restorative

attitudes than restorative to punitive. Those groups which saw a larger share of

respondents shift from restorative to punitive included respondents who identified as

Republican, Hispanic and high school graduates. This comparison of the means warrants

further examination of the relationship observed in attitudes and demographic

characteristics after the treatment.

Table 5 shows the results of the formal test of the impact of the treatment.

Table 4

Pre and Post Treatment Means by Sociodemographic Characteristics

Variable	All Respondents	Punitive Pre-test	Restorative Pre-test	Consistently Restorative	Consistently Punitive	Post-test Punitive to Restorative	Post-test Restorative to Punitive
Age	47.6	47.91	47.48	48.7	48.69	42.97	42.08
Race							
Black	22.74	24.15	21.92	19.20	21.86	38.63	34.62
Hispanic	8.37	8.97	8.02	7.17	86.02	11.36	12.82
Asian	8.94	7.43	9.80	9.70	71.68	9.10	11.54
White	56.90	57.27	56.68	60.13	60.21	38.63	38.46
Other Race	3.05	0.02	3.57	3.80	2.15	2.27	2.56
Political Party							
Democrat	47.74	40.87	51.69	51.48	37.28	63.63	48.72
Republican	23.53	32.51	18.36	18.78	36.56	6.81	17.95
Conservative	29.64	38.70	24.42	23.42	39.07	36.36	30.77
Liberal	31.79	20.74	38.15	40.08	18.28	36.36	28.21
Ideological Scale	51.25	44.17	55.30	56.47	43.34	49.51	49.00
Education Level							
Some HS	20.36	1.54	2.31	2.10	1.43	2.27	1.28
HSGrad	14.82	17.34	13.37	10.55	17.56	15.90	29.49
Bachelor's	29.30	30.65	28.52	30.59	17.56	29.55	19.23
Post-Bachelor's	9.28	8.05	9.98	10.97	7.88	9.10	5.13
Is not religious	14.93	11.76	16.75	17.51	12.18	46.15	11.54
Male	40.38	42.41	39.21	39.24	42.29	29.10	37.18
Is a Parent	71.69	72.98	70.94	70.04	73.74	47.12	73.08
Personal Inc	686,76.32	67,072.99	69,598.24	71,159.07	68,390.3	$57,750.00	59,711.55
Household Inc	110,243.5	108,150.2	111,451	115,119.6	110,448.1	$93,579.00	88,814.13

Note. Some HS = less than 12 years and no degree, HS grad = high school graduate, Bachelor's = completion of a college bachelor's degree, Post-Grad = study after the undergraduate college degree is attained.

Table 5.

Linear Probability Model

Variables	Post-treatment Changed to Restorative	Post-treatment Changed to Punitive
Political Affiliation		
Republican	-0.172***	0.016
	(0.053)	(0.044)
Independent	-0.082	0.038
	(0.051)	(0.036)
Scale of conservativeness	0.000	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Parental Status	-0.028	0.053
	(0.045)	(0.034)
Age	-0.002	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Male	0.042	0.012
	(0.040)	(0.032)
Education	0.005	-0.007
	(0.008)	(0.006)
Secular	-0.040	-0.053
	(0.062)	(0.040)
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	0.030	0.100**
	(0.054)	(0.042)
Hispanic	0.009	0.113*
	(0.074)	(0.058)
Asian	0.023	0.069
	(0.078)	(0.054)
Other Race	0.045	0.001
	(0.131)	(0.080)
Income		
Low	0.020	0.017
	(0.051)	(0.040)
Middle	0.039	-0.006
	(0.060)	(0.044)
Constant	0.198	0.277**
	(0.154)	(0.119)
Observations	318	559
R-squared	0.075	0.054

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Scale of conservativeness from 1-100, 1 is very conservative, 100 is very liberal. Education =
Highest level of school completed. Reference group is a religious white female democrat who
is a parent and has an income less than $49,999.

As shown in the table, the treatment failed to cause an increase in supportive attitudes for RPIs. Specifically, the negative coefficient in column 1 indicates that there is a 17%-point decrease in the probability that Republicans who demonstrated punitive attitudes at baseline, will respond to the treatment in Q2 and change their attitudes from punitive to restorative. Further, the results indicate that among Black and Hispanic respondents, the treatment potentially motivated a shift from restorative to punitive responses.

Discussion

This analysis aimed to examine whether sharing information about the benefits of RPIs corresponds with a shift in public opinion. The study results supported Ahlin et al.'s (2015) and Huang et al.'s (2012) findings. Specifically, those respondents identifying as Republican are unlikely to exhibit restorative thinking and shift their attitude when presented with an alternative. Other findings did not align with previous literature which suggest that providing alternatives for punitive consequences to law-breaking can increase support for the alternative (Gainey & Payne, 2003; Hough & Roberts 1998; Roberts & Stalans 2002). Like the current study, these studies explore attitude shifts resulting from the information provided in pre- and post-format. Based on this literature, the expectation after preliminary data collection in this study was that the provision of information about RPIs would correspond to a shift in attitudes away from punitive attitudes toward restorative, which was not the pattern observed.

At baseline over half of respondents thought a restorative response was appropriate to misconduct in K-12. After the treatment while over half of respondents maintained their restorative attitude, a larger share of respondents shifted their attitude from restorative to punitive than from punitive to restorative. This pattern resulted in less

support overall for RPIs in schools in Baltimore after treatment. Additionally, the treatment appeared to motivate a significant shift from restorative to punitive attitudes for those who identified as Republican, Black Americans, and Hispanic Americans. These outcomes raise questions about this study in context of the existing literature and highlights the need for future research.

The findings highlight the complexity in studying attitudes toward deviance. The results highlight several areas of opportunity for policy makers, educators and researchers to continue to investigate support for RPIs. Policymakers and school leaders in Baltimore can utilize these findings to understand that more than half of constituent's support RPIs in schools, and then attempt to build support through modification to the strategy used in the current study. Additionally, researchers could modify the study design to ascertain whether the results explain shifts in views or if the shifts are attributable to other factors.

One factor to consider is that the treatment in the current study did not align enough with conceptual change theory to evoke change in the respondent. Posner et al.'s (1982) theory on conceptual change originated from the idea that change occurs when new information meets two criteria, this instructive information prompts dissonance in the learner in four phases. The two criteria are a commonly held misconception and an explanation of the correct concept (Tippett, 2010). While the second part of the treatment explains the alternative's potential impact or outcome, the first part of the statement does not refute a misconception. Instead, it provides an alternative to punitive responses to misconduct in schools, the misconception being that the public rarely realizes that there is an alternative at all (Ahlin, 2015; Huang et al., 2012). Future studies may first attempt to

ascertain whether there are misperceptions about RPIs among school stakeholders and design a treatment to target those misperceptions.

Further, the design of the treatment may have caused respondents to conflate RPIs with poor classroom management, or less safety, which could account for the shifts from restorative to punitive attitudes after the treatment. Most people, regardless of race support safety and equitable practices in schools. The design of the treatment may have caused respondents to see these interests pitted against one another. This is particularly true for Black and Hispanic respondents in the BMAS, who reported deeper concerns about discrimination in schools than their White and Asian counterparts. Forty-one percent of Black parents and 59% of Hispanic parents reported that their child's school has unfair disciplinary practices compared to just 28% of White parents. It is also possible that despite Black and Hispanic respondents' concerns about discrimination, they may prioritize other interests of students, such as maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Black and Hispanic respondents may have viewed the interests of students as advanced more by removing students who engage in misconduct from the classroom, than by reforming disciplinary procedures to keep them in the classroom, contributing to the shift from punitive to restorative attitudes. Therefore, future studies may benefit from providing more nuanced information about RPIs.

A stronger appeal may be to show indicators that RPI is more effective at reducing problem behaviors than traditional discipline. For example, a treatment for a future similar study might read: "many people believe that suspensions are effective in curbing misbehavior. Evidence shows that suspensions do not prevent or deter misbehavior. In this jurisdiction, we have seen suspension rates increase while

misconduct rates remain the same. However, there are alternatives to suspension, which are associated with a decrease misconduct rates. One alternative is Restorative Practice Initiatives"

Additionally, a modified treatment might ask respondents to put themselves in the place of a parent with a child who engaged in misconduct. Some research supports that, when the public is asked to imagine that their child is disciplined, they may be more likely to favor an intervention such as counseling or mediation over suspension (Phi Delta Kappan International, 2019). Further, future studies could include recent empirical evidence related to RPIs in K-12 schools. For example, information that focuses on the equitable outcomes of RPIs may prompt a shift in attitudes among respondents more than text concerning non-equitable outcomes. Finally, future studies could examine how various descriptions or outcomes of RPIs drives attitude change. Doing so may also provide information about whether attitude shifts can be attributed to factors other than race, or partisan ideology.

Social and contextual factors may have contributed to resistance to support for RPIs. One example is the publication of government and media reports on negative outcomes associated with discipline in Baltimore-area schools at the time the BMAS was distributed. For example, in 2017, the Maryland General Assembly established the Maryland Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices to study current disciplinary practices in Maryland public schools. The Commission studied the issue for 18 months and published the findings in December 2018. The timing of the publication was aligned with the dissemination of this survey and pointed to systematic

disproportionalities in discipline practices in public schools in Maryland, precisely,

harsher punishments for students of color and students with disabilities.

Furthermore, two months prior to this survey distribution, the Baltimore Sun

published an article stating that while Baltimore City Schools suspensions had decreased

by 20% due to disciplinary reforms, Black and Hispanic students were suspended at

higher rates than their White counterparts (Richman, 2019). In addition, the Maryland

State Department of Education reported that during the 2017–2018 school year, 3,167

students were arrested in Maryland's public schools. In Baltimore City Schools, Black

students made up 79.4% of the enrollment, 81.6% of in-school suspensions, 92.4% of the

out-of-school suspensions, 100% of expulsions and 91.1% of arrests (U.S. Department of

Education, 2017). In other words, they were overrepresented in the data on exclusionary,

punitive disciplinary practices, while their white counterparts are underrepresented. The

public discourse regarding school discipline marginalizing students of color may have

had an entrenching effect on respondents' attitudes toward discipline reform. With these

issues forefront in the Baltimore metro area, providing different information about the

outcomes of RPIs, for example, information related to the equitable outcomes of RPIs,

may have strengthened the appeal of RPIs.

The study design may also have contributed to the non-significant findings.

Future studies should use an experimental design with some respondents receiving

information about alternatives to punitiveness in schools while others do not. This design

allows for an experimental approach, which supports interpretations of observed

differences in outcomes between the groups after Q2.

Additionally, future studies should consider distributing surveys across multiple jurisdictions to account for characteristics in the population that may result from events, or public discourse, in particular localities at that time of the survey's distribution. If researchers observe effects, future studies should also study the longevity of those shifts. While results from the current study indicate the possibility of impacting individuals' conceptions of punitiveness at the moment, whether these changes are sustained remain unknown.

Conclusion

Studying the public's attitudes toward RPIs is critical for assessing public support when they are implemented in schools. The purpose of the study was to identify whether providing information about RPIs as a treatment prompted a shift in attitudes toward school discipline for respondents in the Baltimore metro area. Such a shift would be consequential for public policy because studying the public's attitudes toward restorative principles and practices is critical for assessing the support the practices might receive if implemented in schools. This study also sought to examine what characteristics of respondents, if any, emerge as significantly associated with a change or lack thereof for school disciplinary approaches.

Previous research and conceptual change theory suggest that the provision of intentionally designed text which elicits dissonance in the reader, refutes a misconception about the effectiveness of punitive discipline, and includes evidence about the positive outcomes of a restorative approach, should result in a shift in attitudes toward restorative discipline, and increase the likelihood that some groups will change their thinking. While

this study did not detect a significant change in respondents' preferences for RPIs based on the information provided, and found significant shifts in the other direction, the findings suggest several conclusions that are directly relevant to policy. First, there is support for RPIs in the Baltimore-metro area. While the information about RPIs did not significantly shift attitudes toward a preference for restorative, over half of the respondents, 53.62%, consistently preferred a restorative approach to a punitive approach. Specifically, over 60% of parents favored a restorative approach before and after Q2. Over half of the respondents identified as independent, and over a third of respondents identified as liberal supported restorative approaches before and after Q2. This is promising information for the Baltimore metro area, which is in the throes of a multi-year implementation of RPIs.

With decisions about school policy made locally, public opinion about school discipline will continue to play an influential role. This study provides descriptive evidence that there may be agreement on and support for a path forward in RPIs when the public is informed about the benefits. The next step is to examine whether the public responds to explicit evidence about the benefits of restorative practice.

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