

Disciplinary Disproportionality

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Overview

- Disciplinary disproportionality and the Organization of Power
 - Findings
 - Implications of the model
- Framework for investigating and problem-solving disciplinary disproportionality

Disciplinary Disproportionality and the Organization of Power

- One middle school

- Students: 63% White, 21% Black/ African Am., 10% Hispanic, 5% Multi-racial, and 2% Other
- Staff: 89% White and 11% Black/ African Am. (72% female)
- Teachers only: 93% White, 7% Black/ African Am. (70% female)

- Methods:

- Comprehensive disciplinary data analysis
- Disciplinary policy crosswalk
- Whole-school staff survey*
- 7 staff member interviews

*staff members were asked to offer responses about the whole school

What are we really talking about?

Disciplinary

- Behavior
- Policies & Procedures
- Rules & Expectations

Disproportionality

- Inequitable outcomes
- Race

Can we discuss
disciplinary
disproportionality without
discussing race?

The Challenge: Color-blind Racism

Racism Without Racists

- “racial norms disallow the open expression of racial views, [and as a result] whites have developed a concealed way of voicing them”
- white participants none-the-less conveyed racialized ideology in a “very careful, indirect, hesitant” and “coded language”
- Central frames: Abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization



SEEING SKIN COLOR IS NOT A PROBLEM.

The messages attached to skin color are what need to be examined.

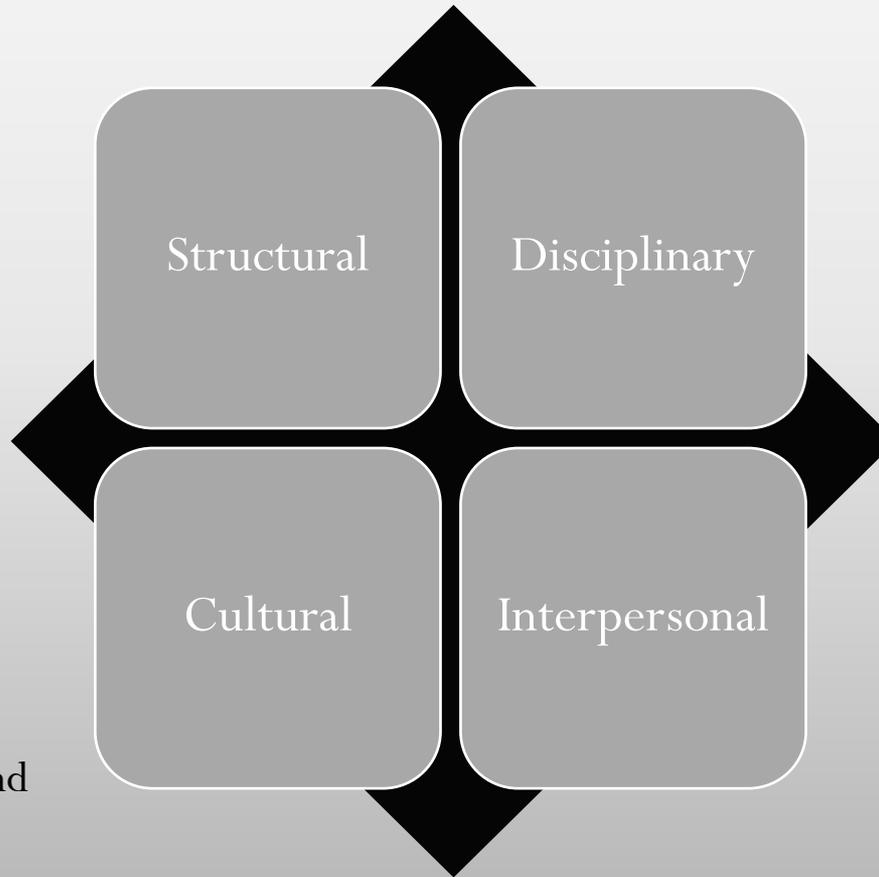
Color-blind Racism and Power

- Patricia Hill-Collins asserts **“racism is a system of power with four domains”** which are: structural, disciplinary, cultural, and interpersonal (Hill-Collins, 2009, p. 53).
- Racism is “produced and resisted within each domain of power as well as across all four domains” (Hill-Collins, 2009, p. 55).

4 Domains of Power (Hill-Collins, 2009)

“how racism as a system of power is set up,” and “organized” through “social institutions”

“manufactures the ideas that justify racial hierarchy” by “constructing representations, ideas, and stories about race and racism”



“use the rules and regulations of everyday life to uphold the racial hierarchy or to challenge it” and is organized through “bureaucracies” and rely on “surveillance”

“shapes race relations among individuals in everyday life” during “ordinary social interactions”

Proposed Model for Examining Disciplinary Disproportionality

Disciplinary policies
and procedures

*-Discipline Handbook
-Code of Conduct*

Structural

Disciplinary

Disciplinary practices,
expectations, behaviors,
and events/outcomes

*-School-wide
discipline data
(ODR, ISS, OSS,
Expulsion)*

Cultural

Cultural beliefs and
perceptions

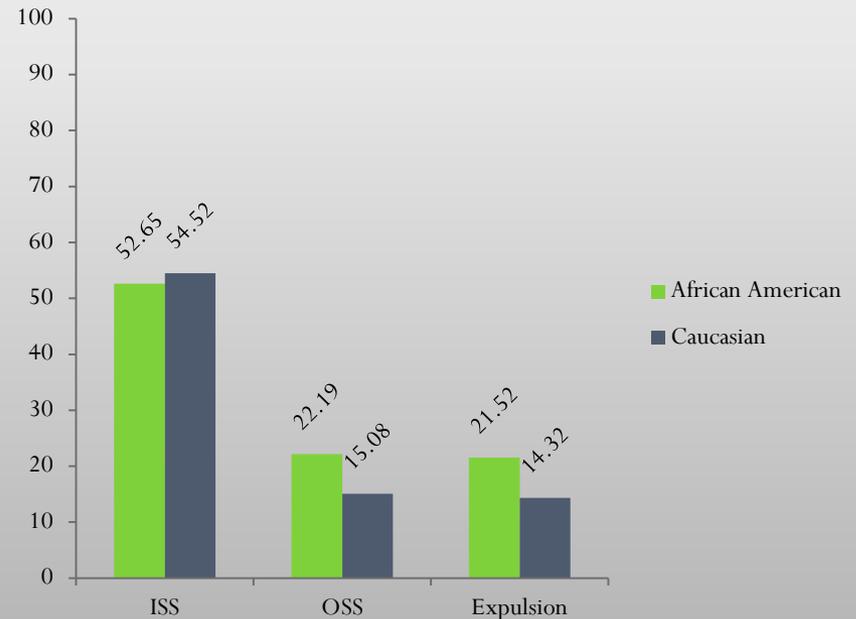
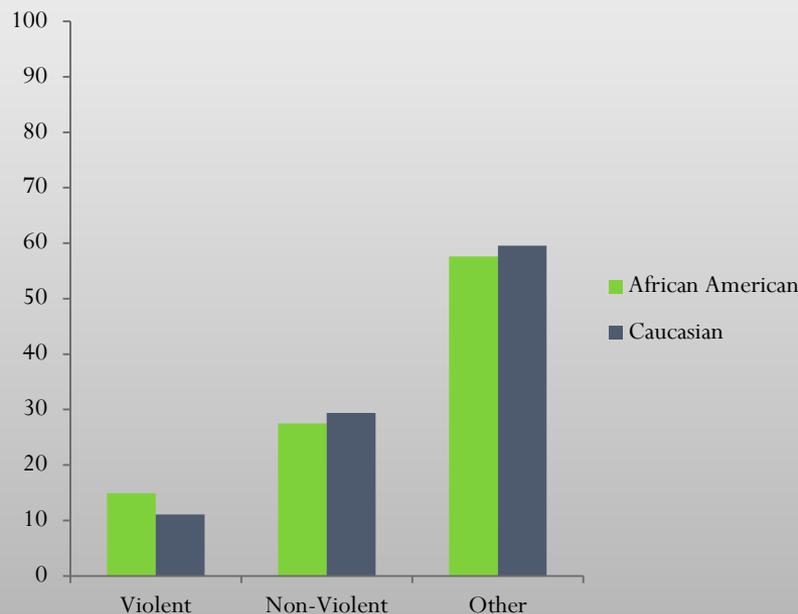
Interpersonal

Perceptions of the
relationships between
staff members and
students

*-Staff survey
-Staff interviews*

Disciplinary Domain

- 21% (N=127) of the population is Black/African American
- Account for 37% of referrals
- 56% referred one or more times (N=71)
- Risk ratio=1.83

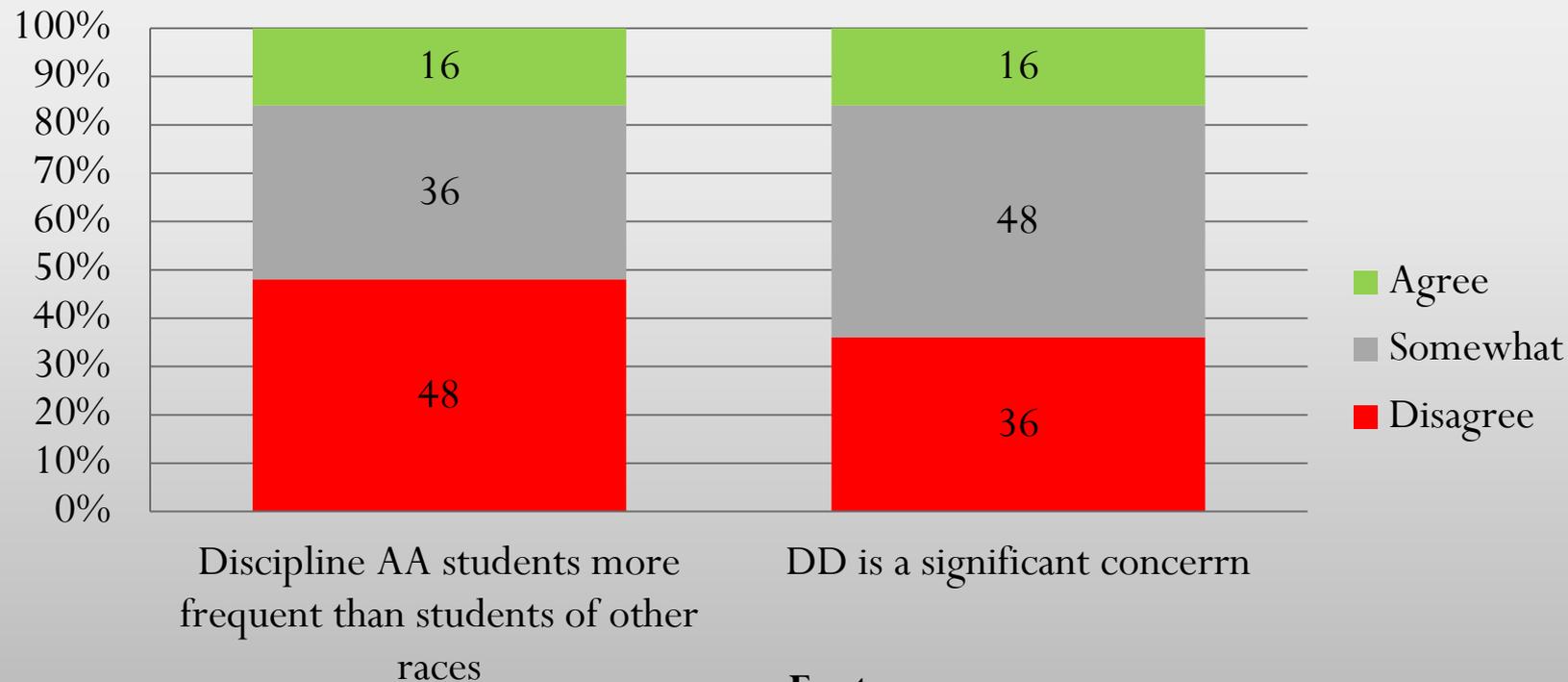


Specific behaviors: Disruptive, disrespectful language, bus misbehavior, other school defined offense

Disciplinary Domain

-Staff was presented 2 years of trend data demonstrating overrepresentation.

Response to survey questions about disproportionality

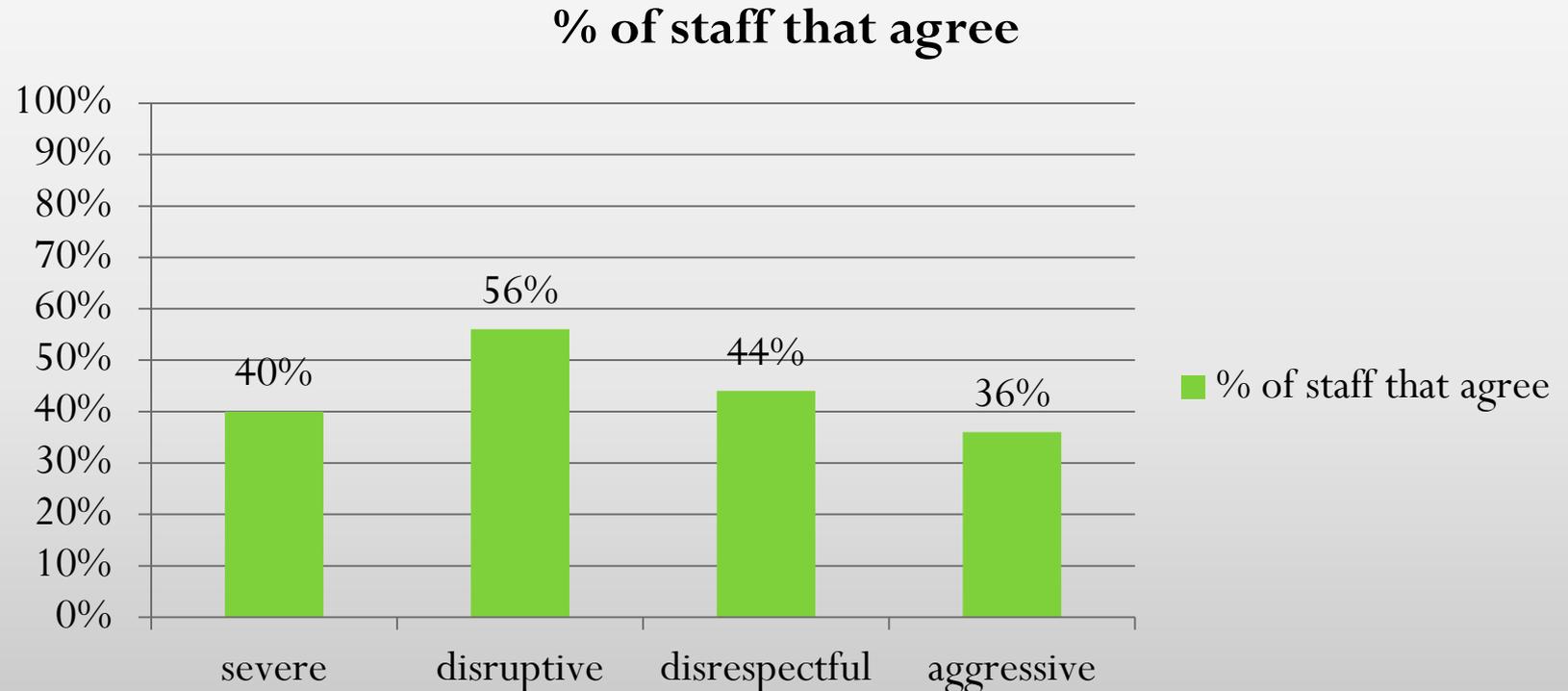


Factors:

Questions about quality and accuracy of the data.
What is disciplinary disproportionality?

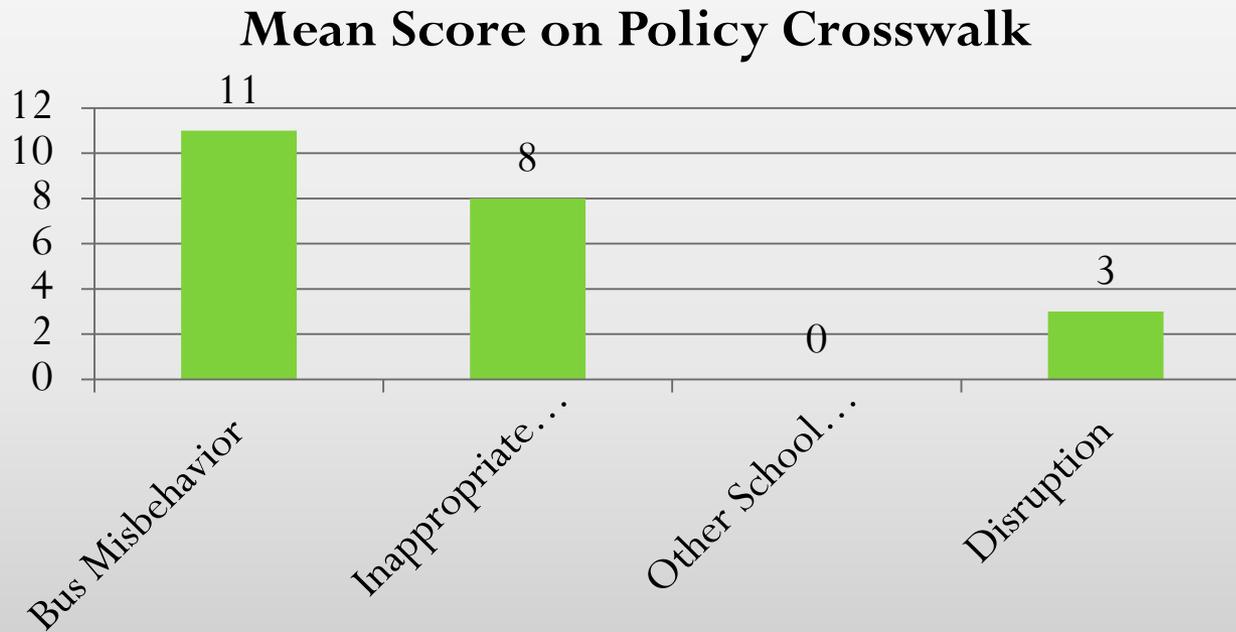
Disciplinary Domain

-Staff perceptions of African American student behaviors



Further Analysis: Black/ African American staff offered significantly different responses indicating they do not view the behavior of Black/ African American students as more “disruptive” ($t(23) = -2.89, p < .05$), “disrespectful” ($t(23) = -2.20, p < .05$), “aggressive” ($t(23) = -2.12, p < .05$), or more “violent” ($t(22) = -3.44, p < .05$).

Structural Domain



Ratings:
0 = not listed
6 = listed,
defined,
outlines
consequences,
and offers
examples.

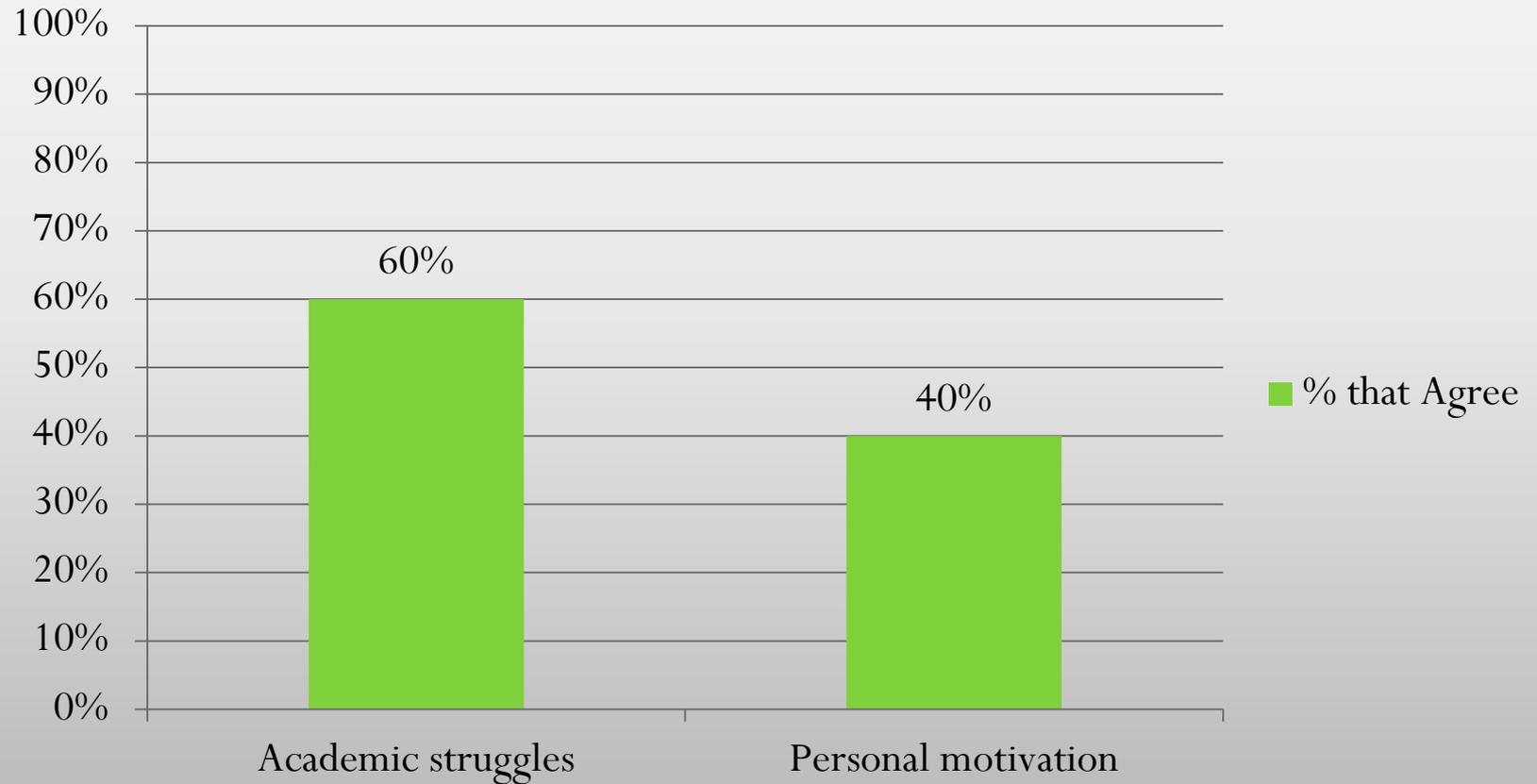
20 possible
points

- Disruption is not listed in the District Code of Conduct
- Lack of clarity and consistency
- Most clearly defined behavior was Dress Code=19.

Cultural Domain

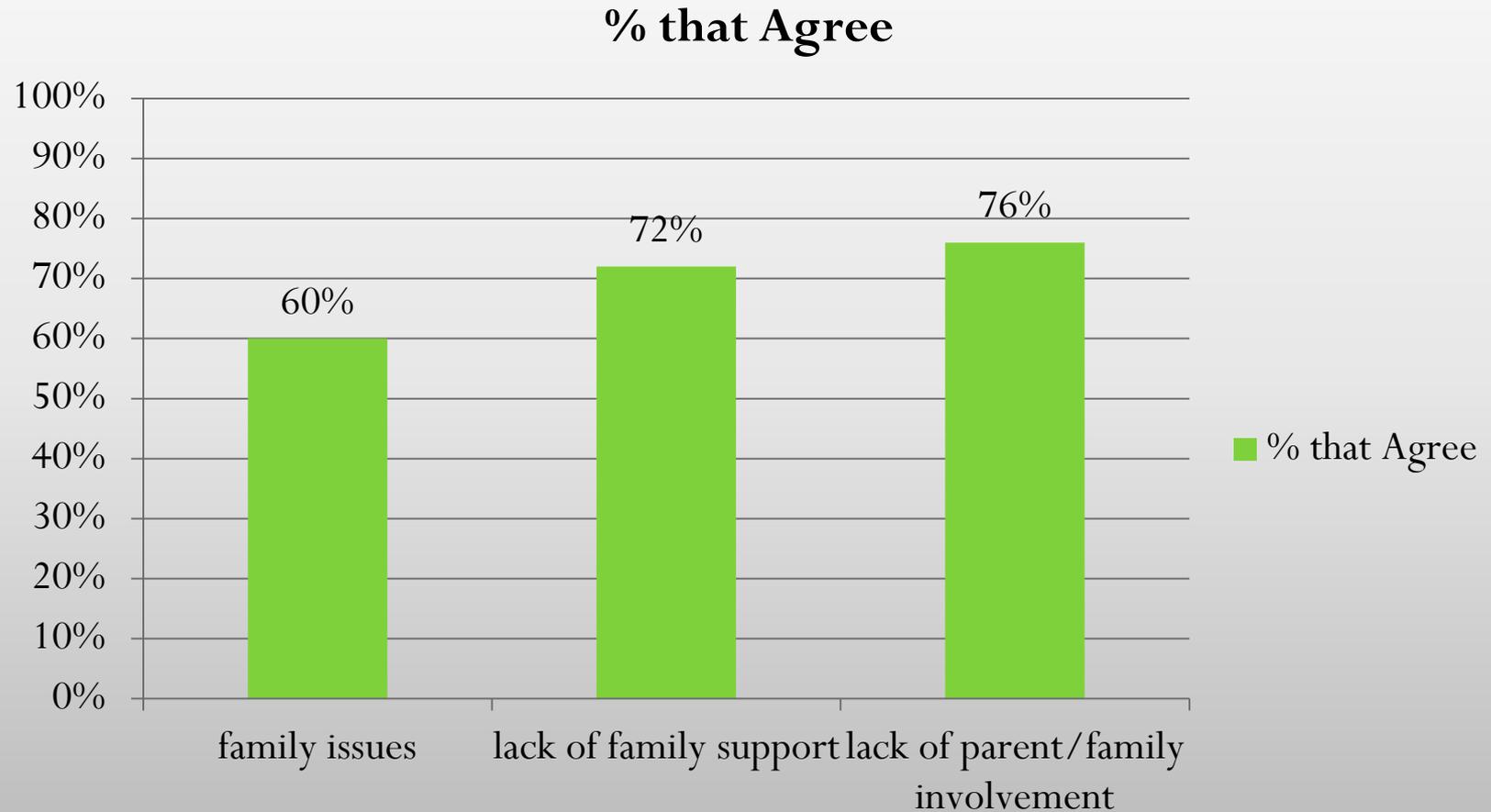
-It's the student.

% that Agree



Cultural Domain

-It's their family.



“Family values are a significant predictor of behavioral challenges at this school” (72%)

Cultural Domain

- Culture and race are confusing, but it's not race (72%)
- 24% poverty is a factor- interviewees tended to interject class and gender to avoid race
- Volume-Culture (not race)-Disruptive-Punished for culture
- Factors thought to be most significant contributing factors associated with disproportionality were within the cultural domain

Interpersonal Domain

- 40% somewhat agreed and disagreed that most teachers develop meaningful relationships with Black/African American students
- Not viewed as a part of their job/not valued
- Students with significant behavioral challenges have no relationships
- Black/African American administrator (mixed feelings)
- Projects, black-cent, and rap music

Findings from the Four Domains of Power Analysis

- Inconsistency and lack of clarity
- Omissions

Structural

Disciplinary

- Inconsistency and lack of awareness
- Disciplinary practices that do not account for cultural/racial differences
- Defensiveness/denial

- Believed to be most significant factors
- Cultural beliefs appear to have replaced racial beliefs
- Lack of awareness
- Avoidance of race

Cultural

Interpersonal

- Lack of value for establishing relationships

Implications

- Findings are contextually relevant
- Offers a framework for expanding efforts beyond disciplinary data analysis
- Creates opportunity for dialogue about race-related issues within a color-blind context
- Provides a basis for strategically responding or implementing interventions to address disproportionality

Responding to Disciplinary Disproportionality

Phase II: Problem Solving

- Working with PBIS problem-solving team(s)
- Utilizing the TIPs Problem-solving process
- Support teams with engaging in the problem-solving process with a focus on the data related to each domain
- Identify and implement strategies that respond to needs revealed within each domain

*Team
Initiated
Problem
Solving
(TIPS)
Mode*

Structural Domain

Data:

Did we achieve our goal?
If not, why not?
Continue the process for this or other Domains.

Structural Domain

Data:

Are our disciplinary policies consistent and include clear definitions?
Do we have a problem?

Structural Domain

Data:

“Disruptive” and “Other” behavioral offenses are not clearly defined or even listed in the policies.

Structural Domain

Structural Domain

Data:

Who is doing what by when?
What is the goal?
How will we measure fidelity?

Structural Domain Data:

Clearly define “disruptive” behavior and train staff, avoid “other,” and propose policy revisions to include “disruptive.”

Additional Considerations for Responding to Disciplinary Disproportionality

- Revise disciplinary policy
- Revise Code of Conduct
- Revise district policies

Structural

Disciplinary

- Clearly define behaviors related to DD
- Implement alternatives to OSS
- Ensure quality of data
- Train staff about DD

- Cultural Responsivity Training
- Conversations and Training related to: Race, Whiteness, Privilege, Power, Racism, Culture, etc.
- Examination of specific beliefs

Cultural

Interpersonal

- Identify and implement strategies to enhance student/teacher relationships
- Emphasize the importance

Summary and Conclusion

- Context matters- data is relevant to each school
- Changes in our understanding of racism should inform our efforts to address race-related topics
- Disciplinary disproportionality is complex and efforts to respond must consider a variety of factors
- Transitioning from mere data collection to actual responses requires a problem-solving process

References

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