Spring 2-2017

Missouri Public High School Principals Perception of Zero Tolerance

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Recommended Citation

Missouri Public High School Principals Perception of Zero Tolerance

by

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February 2017

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

High School Administrators' Perception of Zero Tolerance

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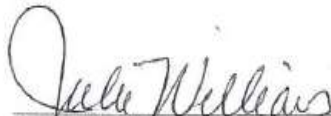
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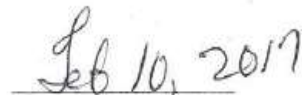
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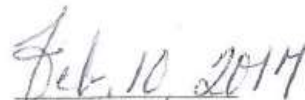
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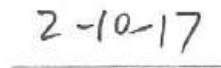
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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

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Signature: _Sherry McMasters_ Date: _March 6, 2017_

Abstract

School administrators develop, recommend, and carry out policy for school districts. The policy can have long lasting effect on students. Ideology and gender of the administrator can influence adoption and implementation of individual school's policy. A study consisting of quantitative and qualitative measures was utilized to determine the difference of opinion between male and female administrators through a survey about zero tolerance discipline policy. Missouri public high school principals were the focus of the study, each receiving the opportunity to participate in the survey via email. The results of this study are consistent with previous studies, but enhance the knowledgebase with new evidence. Data analysis resulted in identification of gender preferred discipline methods related to zero-tolerance discipline policy in the areas of: (a) acceptability of zero-tolerance as a discipline policy, (b) academic outcome differences of students suspended more than, compared to less than, 90 days, (c) ability of the threat of suspension and expulsion to deter negative behavior, and (d) positive or negative lasting effects for zero tolerance on students.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The arbitrary use of zero tolerance by school administrators is a concern the Obama administration identified and encouraged schools to reconsider (Alvarez, 2013). What began as an effort to make schools safe from drugs and weapons in the 1980s and early 1990s (Jones, 2013) led to a system known as the school-to-prison pipeline (Wilson, 2014). The problem began prior to the Columbine shooting when the United States federal government required all primary and secondary schools to adopt the zero-tolerance policy on weapons in order to continue receiving federal funding (Mongan & Walker, 2012). The mandated zero-tolerance policy required expulsion in all cases, regardless of severity, except in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) cases or in extreme circumstances (Mongan & Walker, 2012). However, according to Jones (2013), the zero-tolerance policy has caused school administrators to "throw common sense out the window" (p. 740). In an effort to promote social control and to prevent violence in the school system, policies on zero tolerance were created (Mongan & Walker, 2012).

Theoretical Framework

There are many theories about personality development as one aspect of human growth. Concerns about personality are linked to social systems which have found it necessary to classify individual differences by labelling students as defiant, gifted, and disruptive, to name a few. (Sloan, 2016). Freud's psychoanalytic theory still holds importance today when clinicians see "the impact of trauma shows up in patients' apathy, lifelessness, somatization, addiction, weak notions of self, and inability to fantasize or to act at all in real life" (Moreno & Coelho, 2013, p. 17).

Although Freud's description of trauma included war, imprisonment, and torture, it was not limited to those events (Lewis, 2012). Freud's explanation of trauma included any event, not only constrained to physical injury, but anything that caused the self to be surprised and its sovereignty to be interrupted (Huang, 2016). Trauma contains surprise and is unrelated to brutality (Huang, 2016). Trauma is an unexpected event that "cannot be placed within the schemes of prior knowledge" (Huang, 2016, p. 372). Trauma "is an interruption of a system of knowledge on which rests a coherent ego who masters and predicates the external world" (Huang, 2016, p. 372). In essence, trauma is an injury to one's ego (Huang, 2016).

There are vulnerable time periods within students' lives which can be affected by a multitude of events (Spark, 2014). An important formative period for individuals is from early childhood into adolescence (Haan, Deković, den Akker, Stoltz, & Prinzie, 2013). Ego-control and ego-resilience are linked with three personality types and can be affected by traumatic events (Haan et al., 2013). Ego-control is associated with contain versus express impulses (Haan et al., 2013). The level of ego-control is determined by the level of resiliency; moderate equals high resiliency, yet both high and low are associated with low resiliency (Haan et al., 2013). The personality types are resilient, undercontroller, and overcontroller (Haan et al., 2013).

The three personality types combine ego-control and ego-resilience (Haan et al., 2013). The ability to adjust impulse control to the demands within one's environment is resiliency (Haan et al., 2013). Those with low impulse control are undercontrollers (Haan et al., 2013). The overcontrollers have a mixture of resiliency levels and control levels; they have high impulse control, yet little ability to regulate impulse control to

environmental demands (Haan et al., 2013). Since personality types, to some extent, account for personal life outcomes, it is important to understand how traumatic events may affect individuals with specific personality types (Haan et al., 2013).

During student development, trauma, such as expulsion or suspension, may create fissures in the psyche (Moreno & Coelho, 2013). Gutierrez (2016) found suspension to be linked to behavioral problems, and "detachment from social interaction with peers and adults" (para. 6). Ferenczi maintained, "The early impetus toward abnormal lines of development was always thought of as having its origins in actual psychic traumas and in conflicts with an individual's surroundings" (as cited in Moreno & Coelho, 2013, p. 18). The primary investigator utilized the theories of Freud's psychological development and interruption of that development to consider the long-term effects of trauma to the human psyche as a result of zero-tolerance policies.

Background of the Study

The term zero tolerance grew out of drug enforcement laws and was adopted by schools in the early 1990s (Skiba, 2008). DeMitchell and Hambacher (2016) asserted, "Zero tolerance policies became prominent in U.S. schools after the passage of the federal Gun-Free School Act of 1994, which mandated expulsion for possession of weapons" (p. 5). The Gun-Free Schools Act began during a time when low-level offenses received tough punishments (Shah & McNeil, 2013a, p. 4). The purpose of the zero-tolerance policy was to send a message to students that certain behaviors would not be allowed at school (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016).

Schools took the zero-tolerance policy and expanded it to include not only drugs and weapons, but also willful disobedience, disrespect, and dress code violations (Fergus,

2015). Weapons were interpreted to include water guns, toys, and even nail clippers

(Jones, 2013). Students were suspended and expelled for taking multifunctional tools to

school, playing with imaginary guns, possessing nail clippers (DeMitchell & Hambacher,

2016), having a butter knife in a lunch box, using cell phones to talk to their parents

(Skiba, 2008), wearing midriff shirts, stealing $2.00, participating in a food fight (Skiba,

2014), swearing, and being verbally disrespectful (Gutierrez, 2016). Jones (2013) stated,

"Zero tolerance results in the unnecessary criminalization of what many consider to be

typical adolescent behavior" (p. 741).

Zero tolerance was mandated by the federal government for the purpose of

reducing drugs and weapons violations; it was the school administrators who expanded

the realm of its domain (Fergus, 2015). Gutierrez (2016) reported suspension as the most

common form of discipline in current years, "With the U.S. Department of Education's

(DOE) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) reporting that 2.8 million K-12 students received at

least one out-of-school suspension (OSS) in a 2013-2014 nationwide survey" (para. 1).

Between the seventh and 12th grades, 60% of Texas students had been suspended or

expelled at one point (Gutierrez, 2016).

School administrators were given the task of keeping students safe, educating

them, and promoting their well-being (Mongan & Walker, 2012). Given the

responsibility of seeing to the safety of numerous students, administrators seldom used

their discretionary power to disseminate discipline proportionate to the offense (Mongan

& Walker, 2012). Instead, administrators began suspending students for behavior they

would have ignored or addressed through counseling or minor punishments in the past

(Black, 2015). Zero tolerance was broadened to address so many other behavioral

problems that only a small percentage of suspensions and/or expulsions were due to dangerous or serious disruption (Black, 2015). In fact, Mongan and Walker (2012) argued, "Perpetrators and non-perpetrators alike would stand equal chance of being convicted under this type of policy" (p. 238).

Statement of the Problem

Students have been suspended for non-threatening, non-dangerous behavior such as disrespect, absence, noncompliance, swearing (Denti & Guerin, 2014), class disruptions, truancy, and tobacco use in the name of zero tolerance (Jones, 2013). Since the law's conception in 1994, the federal education department has recorded over 25,000 student expulsions (Shah & McNeil, 2013a). Shah and McNeil (2013a) indicated, "Research connects suspension with dropping out, or at least with a decline in academic success" (p. 9). A single suspension doubles a student's chance of failing a grade, and failing a grade is a formidable predictor of dropping out (Gutierrez, 2016). It is important students be in school every day in order to be successful (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Students who are removed from the classroom usually do not receive an alternate form of education and therefore have a deficiency in their education which "can impact the student's continued success in life" (Gutierrez, 2016, para. 5). When students miss too much school they are unable to reach academic milestones which can cause them to fail and eventually drop out (Chang & Jordan, 2011). Not only do those students who have experienced suspension and/or expulsion risk falling behind academically and dropping out of school, they are also more likely to experience unemployment, substance use, and delinquency as adults (Chase, Hilliard, Geldhof, Warren, & Lerner, 2014).

Failing academically is minor compared to the psychological damage that can be caused by the zero-tolerance policy (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). Skiba (2014) told of an athlete who "committed suicide after his removal from school for possession of a legal but controlled substance" (p. 29). Wilson (2014) reported, "The causal link between educational exclusion and criminalization of youth is called the school-to-prison pipeline" (p. 49). The educator's job, according to Holder, is to "build pathways to success rather than pipelines to the criminal justice system" (as cited in Blad, 2014, p. 3). Not only does removing students from school increase negative outcomes for the students, it also increases the probability of negative outcomes for the students' families, schools, and communities (Teske, Huff, & Graves, 2013). Out-of-school suspension can cause a financial strain on the family when a parent or guardian must stay home or find alternate child care for students who are not allowed at school (Gutierrez, 2016).

A student's attendance rate tends to correlate with the student's socioeconomic status; the lower the student on the poverty-level scale, the more the student will likely miss school (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Although all students need instruction, it is the poor, impoverished students who are in greatest need of an education (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Students from poverty have many reasons for not attending school: illness, family responsibilities, involvement with the justice system, housing, fear of bullying or embarrassment, or they and/or their family do not value education (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research on zero tolerance was to examine the perceptions of zero tolerance from the viewpoint of Missouri high school administrators. Do Missouri

public high school principals believe suspensions or expulsions due to zero tolerance work? Do Missouri public high school principals believe the long-term effects of suspension or expulsion are beneficial or detrimental to the success of a student? The study involved comparison of those administrators who feel zero tolerance is an important discipline tool that should be used consistently to deter violence to those administrators who feel zero tolerance is a discipline tool that should be exercised with reason after reviewing the facts of each case. The research was designed to determine which gender, male or female, implement zero tolerance the most. Alternative disciplinary tactics to zero tolerance that allow students to stay in school were also investigated.

Rationale

The original intent of the zero-tolerance policies by the National Association of School Psychologists was to assure consistent and firm consequences for dangerous student behaviors (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). However, others noted consistency is not necessarily a substitute for rationality (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). The researcher attempted to provide insight into the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals on zero tolerance and its effect on students. The primary investigator aimed to find additional suggestions from professional survey research on possible alternative disciplinary actions for improved student retention.

Research questions and hypotheses. The following research questions guided the study:

1. Do Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations?

H1₀: The majority of Missouri public high school principals do not find zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations.

H1ₐ: The majority of Missouri public high school principals do find zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations.

2. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?

H2₀: There is no significant difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer than 90 days for violating school policy.

H2ₐ: There is a significant difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer than 90 days for violating school policy.

3. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior?

H3₀: Missouri public high school principals do not believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior.

H3ₐ: Missouri public high school principals do believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior.

4. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative?

H4$_a$: Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance has negative or no lasting effects on students who were expelled or suspended.

H4$_0$: Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance has positive lasting effects on students who were expelled or suspended.

Limitations and Assumptions

Politics. The United States has grappled with the complexities of social differences and the existence of intergroup conflict fomenting bias, intolerance, and discrimination (Carter, 2010). These complexities are evident when considering differences in the political voting outcomes of different regions in the United States (see Figure 1). The targeted population for this study was 583 Missouri public high school principals as listed in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MODESE) (2016a) Missouri School Directory 2014-2015 Statistics of Missouri Public Schools. Missouri is considered primarily a Republican state from historical electoral outcomes (270towin, 2016a).

According to Republican Views (2016), "The Republican Party supports a more conservative school structure like single-sex classes, full-day school hours, etc." (para. 7). Republicans do not see education as a one-size-fits-all institution and tend to support parental rights to make educational decisions for children, taking the federal government, and to some extent, state government, out of the decision-making process for districts ("Highlights of the 2016 Democratic and Republican Platforms," 2016). The Republican Party also opposes nationally required standardized tests ("Highlights of the 2016 Democratic and Republican Platforms," 2016). Republicans fear over-federalization of

the justice system ("Highlights of the 2016 Democratic and Republican Platforms,"

2016).

Unlike the Republican conservative approach to education, "The Democrats

believe in developing a more progressive education structure" (Republican Views, 2016,

para. 7). Democrats view global competition as a noble pursuit of education and plan to

make WiFi free to the public ("Highlights of the 2016 Democratic and Republican

Platforms," 2016). Democrats want to reform the justice system and end mass

incarcerations ("Highlights of the 2016 Democratic and Republican Platforms," 2016).
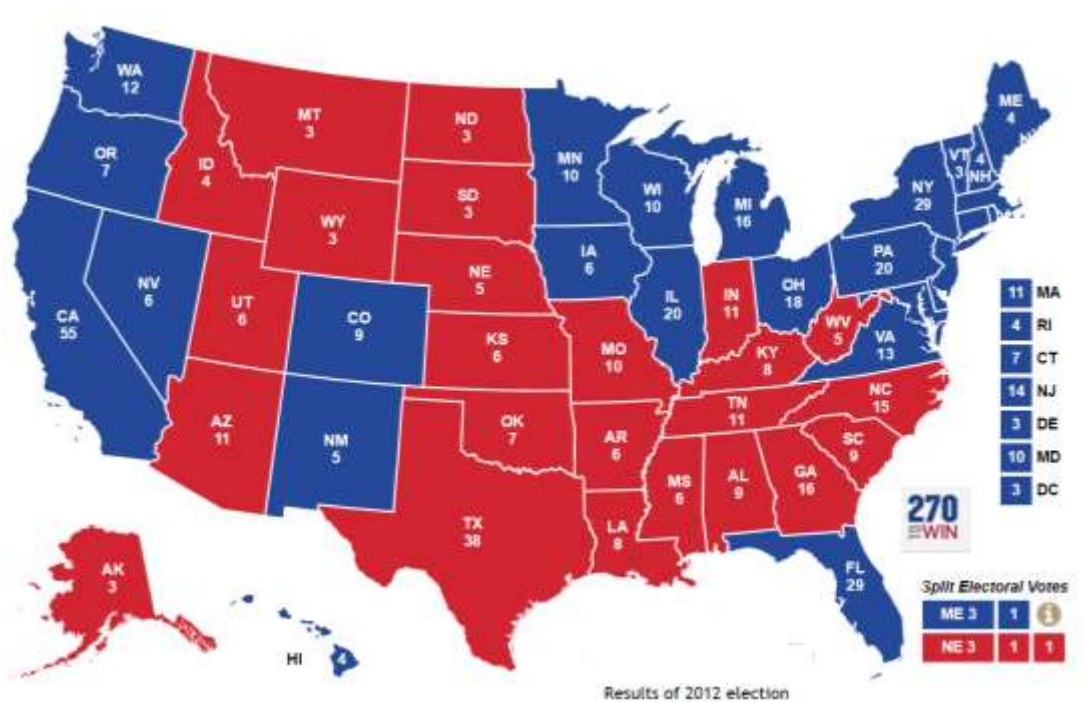
Figure 1. 2012 presidential Electoral College map. Adapted from "2012 Presidential

Election Map," by 270towin, 2016b. Copyright 2016 by 270towin. Retrieved from

http://www.270towin.com/

Public schools are the battle grounds for constituents on subjects that concern them; discipline is only one topic of deliberation (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007). Zero tolerance is an example of policy implemented by the federal government after periods of debate between republicans and democrats (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007). Within the zero-tolerance policy are provisions that require administrators to protect the rights of individual students, place violators in alternative school settings, and ensure school safety (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007). Questions of interest include the following:

Do administrators articulate an awareness of their responsibility to protect the common good and the rights of individual students in their implementation of discipline policies? What strategies do administrators use to respond to the tension between the common good and individual rights in the implementation of discipline policies? (McCarthy & Soodak, 2007, p. 459)

School officials should be completely devoted to their work in public education, because it is the foundation of civilization ("Politics and Public Schools," 1907).

In 1907, politics was a topic related to public education; "politics should not be allowed to interfere in the work of the public schools" ("Politics and Public Schools," 1907, p. 453). It was the goal even then to create well-rounded students ("Politics and Public Schools," 1907). The purpose of education was, and continues to be, for every student to become successful in life ("Politics and Public Schools," 1907).

Elementary versus high school principals. Another limitation is the difference in the demographic makeup between elementary principals and high school principals. According to Dwyer (2016), even though each have some of the same basic duties, there are structural and developmental behavioral differences between each age group:

The majority of elementary school principals are women—56 percent. The majority are also over 55 years old. Sixty-percent of elementary school principals have master's degrees. The vast majority of elementary school principals attend workshops and conferences. Forty-five percent of elementary school principals have given presentations at conferences. About half of elementary school principals earn over $75,000 year.

The majority of secondary principals are men—74 percent. They also tend to be younger than elementary school principals. Only 30 percent are aged 55 and older. This is, however, an increase from the prior decade where only 17 percent were aged 55 and older. About six-percent more secondary school principals receive salaries over $75,000 than do elementary school principals. (paras. 3-4)

Polling only Missouri public school principals and only high school principals may be considered a limitation for this study. These limitations are factors which may affect the results of the study and are beyond the control of the researcher (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011).

Gender. Women may historically have found some limitation in professional progression; however, as noted by Dwyer (2016), many females now serve as elementary-level principals in the United States. Gender-typing may influence the belief females hold different values in regard to discipline than do males (Cuadrado, García-Ael, & Molero, 2015). Fewer women are in administrative positions than men due to a variety of reasons, two of which include unconscious biases and gendered socialization (Beddoes & Pawley, 2014). Women, who are the primary caregivers at home, find it

difficult to balance the responsibilities of home with the responsibilities of a time-consuming career (Beddoes & Pawley, 2014). Relocation required for certain administrative positions has the potential to cause relationship problems if the female in the relationship causes the relocation (Beddoes & Pawley, 2014). The informal social network of men may also play a role in the underrepresentation of women in the demanding position of high school principal (Beddoes & Pawley, 2014). This may be considered a limitation for this study.

Survey research with the questionnaire. When considering limitations, the questionnaire itself may pose a risk (Seidman, 2006). Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015) presented four main threats to internal validity in survey research: 1) mortality, 2) location, 3) instrumentation, and 4) instrument decay. However, informed consent is the first step toward avoiding embarrassment or loss of reputation for interviewees (Fraenkel et al., 2015).

Due to the brevity of the data collection window, no loss of subjects occurred, therefore eliminating the limitation of mortality. It is assumed there is limited location decay as the questionnaire was submitted online and completed at the convenience of the administrator in his/her own location. Instrument decay was minimized as the questionnaire was not timed and took only an average of five minutes to complete, therefore diminishing chances of the respondent feeling tired or rushed.

Definition of Key Terms

Expulsion. In this study, expulsion refers to a student's permanent removal from a school system (Wikipedia, n.d.). The student is expelled by an action of the school

board of trustees from all school settings for the duration of the expulsion, with total

cessation of educational services (Wikipedia, n.d.).

Long-term suspension. Under Missouri Revised Statute 167.161.1 (2016):

The superintendent is authorized under state statute to suspend a student up to 180

days based upon the district's disciplinary code. However, state statute requires

that a student who has been determined to bring a weapon to school shall be

suspended for not less than one year, or expelled. (para. 7)

For this research, long-term suspension means 180 days or more.

Short-term suspension. Under Missouri Revised Statute 167.161.1 (2016):

The school board of any district, after notice to parents or others having custodial

care and a hearing upon charges preferred, may suspend or expel a pupil for

conduct which is prejudicial to good order and discipline in the schools or which

tends to impair the morale or good conduct of the pupils. (para. 1)

For this study, short-term suspension means suspension for fewer than 180 days.

Zero tolerance. A "zero-tolerance policy" is a school or district policy that

mandates predetermined consequences or punishments for specific offenses intended to

be applied regardless of the seriousness of the behavior, mitigating circumstances, or

situational context (Skiba, 2008, p. 2).

Summary

The purpose of this research project was to determine how Missouri public high

school principals feel about zero tolerance and its effectiveness in disciplining students.

Arne Duncan (2014) asserted:

Students want and need clear boundaries, structure, and consistency. They need

to feel safe, cared for, and respected. It is always the right thing to set high

expectations for students, not just in academic terms, but for their behavior and

conduct. (para. 42)

However, there are those who believe the Safe Schools Act of Missouri and zero-

tolerance policies are not an effective approach and have limited success with negative

consequences for suspended and expelled students (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016).

In Chapter Two, the primary investigator presents the review of existing

literature. A presentation of studies on zero tolerance, motivational theories, and

alternatives to current practice are offered.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Determined to make schools safe from drugs and weapons in the 1980s and early

1990s (Jones, 2013), the school-to-prison pipeline was inadvertently created through the

Safe Schools Act (Wilson, 2014).   Although the Columbine shooting is blamed for the

enactment of the Safe Schools Act, the problem started even before that when the United

States federal government adopted the zero-tolerance policy requiring all primary and

secondary schools to adopt policy on weapons in order to continue receiving federal

funding (Mongan & Walker, 2012). Cases related to the IDEA or other extreme

circumstances are the only exceptions to the mandated zero-tolerance policy which

requires expulsion in all cases, regardless of severity (Mongan & Walker, 2012). The

zero-tolerance policy caused school administrators to "throw common sense out the

window" (Jones, 2013, p. 740). Mongan and Walker (2012) affirmed, policies on zero-

tolerance were established in an effort to promote social control and prevent violence in

the school system.

History of Zero Tolerance

The term zero tolerance grew out of drug enforcement laws and was adopted by

schools in the early 1990s (Skiba, 2008). Monahan, VanDerhei, Bechtold, and Cauffman

(2014) pinpointed 1989 as the first year zero tolerance appeared. Zero tolerance

expanded into schools as a result of mass shootings (Denti & Guerin, 2014). The intent

of zero tolerance was to send the message to students, parents, and communities that

violence and drugs would not be tolerated on the campuses of any school (Monahan et

al., 2014). However, zero tolerance had not been considered in the school system at the

time of the supreme court case *Goss v. Lopez* in 1975, in which the supreme court

"applied procedural due process to student discipline" (Black, 2015, p. 826).

DeMitchell and Hambacher (2016) said, "Zero tolerance policies became

prominent in U.S. schools after the passage of the federal Gun-Free School Act of 1994,

which mandated expulsion for possession of weapons" (p. 5). The Gun-Free Schools Act

began during a time when low-level offenses received tough punishments (Shah &

McNeil, 2013a). That piece of legislation was pivotal in forcing U.S. school districts to

adopt zero-tolerance policies (Mongan & Walker, 2012). The purpose of zero-tolerance

policies was to assure a safe place for students to learn so they would in turn become

contributing members of society (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). Initially zero-

tolerance laws were considered to be a consistent and firm form of consequence for

dangerous behavior (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). Legislation, which included a ban

on firearms, offered schools incentives through federal funding for implementing zero-

tolerance policies (Jones, 2013).

Role of School Administration in Zero-Tolerance Expansion

Individual states and school districts expanded on the zero-tolerance policy to

include bans on tobacco, drug, and alcohol use; truancy; disrespect; noncompliance; and

disruption; along with other items considered to be weapons such as water guns, nail

clippers, and toys (Jones, 2013). The definitions of weapons and threatening behavior

were broadened; a spitball became a deadly missile, and pushing on the playground

became assault (Fuentes, 2003). Fighting, insubordination, and dress code violations

were also added to the list of infractions that demanded zero tolerance in the name of safe

schools (Wilson, 2014).

The theory behind zero tolerance is based on the premise by removing bad examples, the remaining students will adhere to the rules (Skiba, 2008). In an attempt to assert authority, schools embraced zero tolerance (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). Not only were principals and administrators concerned with making and keeping their campuses safe, they wanted to get rid of any student causing a disruption in an effort to increase test scores required by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) enacted by President Bush (Fuentes, 2003). Suspension and expulsion became a knee-jerk reaction by administrators when handling minor offenses (Alvarez, 2013). According to Black (2015):

> Suspension and expulsion are now mandatory in many instances. This mandatory approach, or "zero tolerance," is almost uniform in regard to serious behavior. Ninety-one percent of schools have adopted zero tolerance toward weapons, and just short of ninety percent have adopted zero tolerance toward drugs and alcohol. Those percentages may seem reasonable if by "weapon" one means a gun, or by "drugs" one means marijuana. But schools have given those terms expansive meaning, ensnaring students who either do not pose a danger to anyone or have not engaged in behavior that an objective observer would perceive as a violation of the schools' policies. (p. 837)

Mandating suspension and expulsion for minor offenses in the name of zero tolerance and safe schools encroaches on the principal's leadership role (Fergus, 2015).

In some schools, due to statutes and policies, the school administrator can no longer use his or her discretion in determining whether a student should be suspended or should receive another form of discipline (Black, 2015). According to Teske et al.

(2013), the United States is a nation in crisis; laws are in place to promote education for all, yet state and school policies push students out. To ensure education for all students and to inforce consistent yet fair discipline, Black (2015) listed four due process principles that should be adhered to: 1) dissimilar individual infractions cannot be punished the same; 2) students who make good faith mistakes cannot be punished severely; 3) intent, culpability, and harm will be considered before punishment is issued; and 4) punishment for an infraction will be issued based on the evidence presented and not predetermined.

The Surgeon General said the connection between a student and school was the student's protection against risk factors for violence (Teske et al., 2013). An aspirin is not drugs and clippers are not weapons, which is why due process must be utilized to sort the guilty from the innocent and to determine whether punishment is warranted (Black, 2015). Students need to be in school, and schools should pay attention to a student's social emotional skills to help him or her succeed later in life (Spengler et al., 2015). Fergus (2015) gave four strategies schools should utilize when developing policy. One, know what the actual problem is before assigning a solution to it (Fergus, 2015). Two, look deeper than just at the suspension; look at the referrals and when and where the behaviors are happening (Fergus, 2015). Three, confirm reliability of implementation (Fergus, 2015). Four, focus on educational principles, instructional methods, and discipline strategies to improve behavior (Fergus, 2015).

Examples of Zero Tolerance

Zero-tolerance policies have no age limit; students from kindergarten through the 12th grade are vulnerable to being targeted for suspension and expulsion (Fuentes, 2003).

A 12-year-old student playing a cops and robbers game in Oklahoma pointed his finger like a gun at a fellow student and was suspended from school for five days and then placed in an alternative school program (Fuentes, 2003). The student did not want to return to school and ended up having to see a psychologist (Fuentes, 2003). A 14-year-old Kentucky student with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) said in passing "he wished the school would burn down and take the principal with it" (Fuentes, 2003, p. 17). The student was interrogated by police with the intention to arrest him for terroristic threats (Fuentes, 2003). A New York student was handcuffed and led through the halls of her school for doodling on her desk and was then issued community service (Aull, 2012). A 13-year-old in Florida was arrested for passing gas in class and for turning a fellow student's computer off (Aull, 2012).

Importance of Attendance

While school is important in the development of academic knowledge, it is also vital to the development of skills that allow an individual to function in society (Mahoney, 2015). Henry, Knight, and Thornberry (2012) reported, "Academic underachievement has lasting negative consequences for the individual, his or her family, and society at large" (p. 156). Being absent, regardless of the reason for the absence, is detrimental not just to the student, but also to society (Mahoney, 2015). Tanner-Smith and Wilson (2013) agreed, "In a global marketplace, education has critical importance as a primary factor in allowing young adults to enter the workforce and advance economically. To receive the full benefits of education, students must be present and engaged in school" (p. 468).

Without an education, society can expect students to earn less, have poorer health than graduates, be dependent on public assistance, and be at greater risk of involvement in crime (Henry et al., 2012). Mahoney (2015) revealed only 63% of students who are absent six to nine days of school graduate on time. This makes absenteeism a societal problem that affects everyone: school, community, state, and nation (Mahoney, 2015).

Students miss school for various reasons including the following: reacting to stressors, participating in other activities that are more interesting to them, family transitions, separation anxiety, health problems, avoiding bullying, and suspension and expulsion due to behavior (University of California, 2006). Regardless of the reason for absence, students who are not in class cannot be taught and therefore increase their risk of failing and eventually dropping out of school (University of California, 2006). The University of California (2006) identified four components to increasing student attendance that could be utilized to help students stay in school: "Clarifying student perceptions of the problem. Reframing school learning. Renegotiating involvement in school learning… [and] Reestablishing and maintaining an appropriate working relationship" (p. 12).

Poverty

Poverty is a tenacious problem that influences all parts of family life and outcomes for the children living in it (Engle & Black, 2008). In 2013, Abramsky released information on poverty in America; while some Americans are earning more and doing better than ever, tens of millions claim impoverishment and uncertainty as their new standard of living. The definition of poverty used by the researcher was the absence of material effects, health, social belonging, respect, dignity, cultural identity,

information, and education (Engle & Black, 2008). Abramsky's (2013) data on the 2013

American population revealed 15% were living in poverty. While poverty is a subject

that stands alone as a topic to be addressed, its connection with society, government, and

education makes it a critical topic of concern in an effort to pull individuals and families

out of the perils of destitution so they are not forced to choose between applying to

college or taking low-paying, low-skill jobs because they dropped out of school

(Abramsky, 2013). To put these numbers in perspective, Abramsky (2013) provided

facts from major cities in the United States:

> In New York City, as Democratic mayoral candidate Bill de Blasio has pointed
>
> out, nearly half the city's residents are economically insecure. In Detroit, more
>
> than a third of residents live below the official poverty line. In New Orleans, two-
>
> thirds of African-American kids under the age of 5 live in poverty. (para. 11)

Abramsky (2013) called American poverty "the greatest moral challenge facing

America's leaders" (para. 11).

Poverty is listed as the main factor in achievement gaps between groups of

students (Gorski, 2013). It affects the development and outcome of the child's life (Engle

& Black, 2008). Although many people and organizations need to get involved to

eliminate poverty, the achievement gap must be tackled by educators (Gorski, 2013).

The technology revolution, although beneficial to many, has become the downfall of

others merely because they do not have access to technology due to their socioeconomic

status or location of housing (Gorski, 2013). Technology, as it pertains to the

achievement gap, puts low-income families at a disadvantage when they do not have

access to it, yet knowledge of technology is detrimental to the student's life-long success

as more jobs require use of technology from applying for the position to the day-to-day duties on the job (Gorski, 2013). The achievement gap will never be eliminated as long as poverty remains a constant (Gorski, 2013). Peguero, Shekarkhar, Popp and Koo (2015) contended, "School discipline facilitates the criminalization of poor students in order to establish and maintain a criminal class to legitimate systems of inequality in modern capitalist states" (p. 202).

Research provides evidence of successful classroom strategies to eliminate the achievement gap: engaging pedagogies, family involvement, incorporating arts, incorporating movement, focusing on student and family strengths, analyzing class material for bias, promoting enjoyment of literacy, and starting early (Gorski, 2013). The strategies are successful because they do not expect a one-size-fits-all solution to the problem of the achievement gap (Gorski, 2013). Classroom strategies to eliminate the achievement gap start with identifying students at risk of dropping out and then setting high expectations with a learner-centered approach to teaching each student as an individual (Gorski, 2013). Standards cannot be lowered for students of low socioeconomic status (Gorski, 2013). Being present in school, hearing and participating in dialogue, and engaging in learning are the primary strategies (Gorski, 2013).

Another classroom strategy involves creating opportunities for parents and guardians to be engaged in their student's school and learning (Gorski, 2013). Parents, due to lack of income, lack of transportation, and/or lack of child care, may not be able to be present at all school events involving their child (Gorski, 2013). Educators should create opportunities for parental involvement (Gorski, 2013).

The third classroom strategy looks at the inability of some families to provide students with knowledge of or access to musical instruments, theater, or art (Gorski, 2013). Educators should remember the impoverished student when planning curriculum so each student has access to the arts (Gorski, 2013). Having access to the arts reinforces learning (Gorski, 2013).

The fourth classroom strategy involves recess and physical education or the lack thereof (Gorski, 2013). For some students, specifically those of low socioeconomic families, recess and physical education classes are their only access to sports, green spaces, and exercise (Gorski, 2013). Students who are fit progress better in school (Gorski, 2013).

The next strategy involves a combination of the student and his/her family (Gorski, 2013). The strengths of students and the family should be a focus of the educator (Gorski, 2013). Teachers should make an effort to discover family and student strengths, to set goals, and then to hold the student to high expectations (Gorski, 2013).

Eliminating bias about poor families depicted in classroom material is another strategy (Gorski, 2013). Teachers should analyze posters, books, magazines, and any other material in the classroom that depicts poor individuals in a negative stereotypical way (Gorski, 2013). Teachers may utilize the National Association for the Teaching of English Working Party on Social Class and English Teaching as a guide to determine what should stay and what needs to go (Gorski, 2013).

The seventh strategy is to make literacy, reading, fun (Gorski, 2013). Students who enjoy reading will continue to read and learn through reading (Gorski, 2013). To make reading fun, students should not be forced to execute literacy skills in front of

others (Gorski, 2013). The goal is to direct students out of poverty, and the best way to

do that is through literacy proficiency (Gorski, 2013).

The final classroom strategy involves making an effort to generate positive

encounters with parents and guardians (Gorski, 2013). Most people of low

socioeconomic status have had bad experiences with schools, teachers, and

administrators; any hesitance to get involved with an educator could be due to past

experiences (Gorski, 2013). Educators should be persistent and create a trusting, positive

relationship (Gorski, 2013).

There were four higher-level strategies in "Building a Pedagogy of Engagement

for Students in Poverty" by Gorski (2013). The higher-level strategies include preschool,

building relationships with community agencies, reducing class size, and providing health

services in school (Gorski, 2013). The first higher-level strategy involves the

implementation of preschools nationwide, since inequalities in early education compound

during a child's life (Gorski, 2013). School readiness plays a pivotal part in a child's

ability to escape poverty (Engle & Black, 2008).

The second higher-level strategy involves the inclusion of multiple community

agencies (Gorski, 2013). An individual agency can work toward helping the poor, but

when multiple agencies work together on the subject of impoverished students, the

students benefit even more (Gorski, 2013). The reduction of class sizes is the third

strategy, due to evidence proving the size of the class does matter (Gorski, 2013). The

last strategy includes the expansion of health services in schools, such as the inclusion of

farsightedness in eye tests and checking for asthma (Gorski, 2013). Not only are children

of low-income families in danger of educational deficiencies, they are also in jeopardy of

having more health problems (Engle & Black, 2008). Individuals and organizations must

battle poverty within their scope of influence (Gorski, 2013).

Poverty goes beyond the lack of material goods, food, and health problems;

poverty increases the chances of conflict and violence within or among families (Engle &

Black, 2008). Poverty has unfavorable outcomes on a student's chance to learn and

prosper in life (Miller, Pavlakis, Lac, & Hoffman, 2014). The relationship between

school attendance, a student's education, and poverty has a direct influence on the

success of an individual's life, with one affecting the next and so on (Monahan et al.,

2014). Missing school leads to low grades, which leads to dropping out, which leads to

the inability to get a job and therefore, poverty (Teske et al., 2013).

Consequences of Zero-Tolerance Suspension and Expulsion

The implementation of zero-tolerance policies was to create a safer environment

conducive to learning; however, a 10-year study by the American Psychological

Association concluded zero-tolerance policies failed (Teasley, 2014). Shah and McNeil

(2013b) noted 69% of schools in the United States have a population of 300 or more, and

in 2009-2010, "hundreds of schools suspended more than half their students without

disabilities" (p. 1). The one-size-fits-all approach to discipline is not only ineffective, it

increases the risk of negative academic and social outcomes (Skiba & Losen, 2016).

Although adopted for the betterment of the school, zero tolerance has several

unintended consequences (Monahan et al., 2014). The penalties involved with zero

tolerance include the following: increased likelihood of school disengagement, disrespect

for authority (Teasley, 2014), higher rates of future antisocial behavior, lower academic

achievement, dropping out or not graduating on time (Skiba & Losen, 2016), and

increased contact with law enforcement (Monahan et al., 2014). In the words of a father

10 years after his son was expelled for a year during his sophomore year of high school:

> My son was a fun-loving kid from a very loving and respected family that
>
> participated in sports and enjoyed going to school for the first 10 years of his
>
> school life. He was an average student, but had to work hard for the grades he
>
> received. He was active in his church's youth group and had friends that any
>
> parent would want to have their children hanging out with. At the beginning of
>
> his sophomore year of school, my son was expelled. What my son did was wrong
>
> and should have been punished, but no one was hurt, no property was damaged,
>
> and to expel a child that had not had any serious discipline problems prior to what
>
> happened that day sent him into a downward spiral. He was not allowed to attend
>
> any school functions or sporting events. He was turned into an outcast. This
>
> caused him to lose contact with his friends that had been a part of his entire life
>
> prior to being expelled. He developed an entirely different outlook on life.
>
> Since he was told by the school board and the school's administration at
>
> his expulsion school board meeting that he would be welcome to come back the
>
> next year, his mother and I, and with help from his grandparents, kept him caught
>
> up so he could graduate with his class. He was homeschooled that year; getting
>
> his assignments the night before and then going to his grandparents' house the
>
> next day to complete the work ALONE, with no contact with his friends. He
>
> accomplished this and was able to return to school the next year still on course to
>
> graduate with his class, but he just wasn't the same child. He became very distant
>
> from his family. Other students that had been known to have discipline problems

in school started coming around, and his previous friends kind of shut him out.

He began to smoke cigarettes with his new friends, and I believe, peer pressure

led him to using drugs and abusing alcohol. I believe he lost respect for his

teachers or administration after he returned to school for his junior and senior

year. He just wasn't the same fun-loving boy we were accustomed to being

around.

The long-term effects that I believe this has had, my son still struggles

with depression and low self-esteem, which has caused him to abuse drugs and

alcohol. He has experienced a short time in jail and a year in a rehab facility. I

know it has been financially hard on our family and has slowed him down on

being financially independent and getting out on his own. He still has friends, but

they are mostly just like him, no ambition in life and just barely getting by day to

day. He has a large, loving family that cares about him, and he can lean on them

when he needs support. He battles his demons every day, but I believe he still has

his faith in God, because without that faith, I don't know if he would be with us

today. (Anonymous, personal communication, January 23, 2017a)

Skiba and Losen (2016) found, "Suspension and expulsion for a discretionary school

violation, such as a dress code violation or disrupting class, nearly tripled a student's

likelihood of involvement with the juvenile justice system within the subsequent year" (p.

6). Monahan et al. (2014) showed concern for those students who were at a greater risk

of antisocial behavior due to suspension and/or expulsion for minor offenses such as class

disruption, dress code violations, and cheating or swearing because their previous

behaviors resulted in discipline by the principal instead of law enforcement.

A student who was expelled two weeks into his sophomore year of high school reflected on his expulsion due to zero tolerance 10 years after the expulsion took place. During an interview he was asked to describe school prior to being expelled, the reason for his expulsion, day-to-day life during expulsion, school life when he returned from being expelled, and the influence of expulsion on his life. When asked what school was like prior to being expelled, the male said, "Normal, like all other kids. I played basketball, baseball and was a member of the art club all through school" (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b). When the interviewer asked the male what had caused him to be expelled, he replied:

> Something that I did normally as a way to vent, to keep from getting into trouble, I wrote something down and then forgot to throw it away. The teacher, or somebody, found the note in my notebook that I left in class and turned it in. Two days passed before being called to the office and being told I was expelled over something I had forgotten about. The next thing I know, I'm not welcome anymore. (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b)

Next, the male was asked to describe his day-to-day life after being expelled. The male said he went to his grandparents' house every day to do math, history, science, and English, and would finish each day between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b). The male then said, "I wasn't welcome at school, and at some friends' houses anymore, because their parents decided I was a bad influence. That ruined a few friendships" (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b). He was then asked if school life was different once he returned for

his junior and senior year of high school. The male said, "Definitely" (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b). He continued:

I was looked at like an oddball, because I had been expelled. People knew that I had been expelled and thought I was a danger to them. I was treated different. I had to ignore being looked at closer by everybody: teachers, administrators, students, and parents, and just go about my business. By the end of my junior year it was better, but it never completely ended. (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b)

Finally, he was asked if being expelled influenced anything that happened since graduation. The male responded:

Since I couldn't play basketball and baseball anymore or even go to the school grounds anymore, I started skateboarding and began hanging around a rougher crowd. I had more free time and started going to skate parks, deserted buildings, and parking lots to skate. Being in those places where a different crowd of kids hung out led me into situations that I shouldn't have gotten into. Being expelled was a definite influence. (Anonymous, personal communication, January 24, 2017b)

Monahan et al. (2014) blamed zero-tolerance policies, harsh punishment for breaking school rules, suspension, and expulsion for an increased risk of having contact with the juvenile justice system.

Students who find themselves, due to suspension or expulsion, with nothing to do and no one to monitor them, find ways to fill their time (Monahan et al., 2014). Some researchers suggested time spent outside of school, due to suspension or expulsion, has

been linked to anti-social behavior; however, Monahan et al. (2014) claimed it depends on the student's characteristics as to whether an association with delinquent peers will incur. Due to the negative effects of zero tolerance, advocacy organizations are calling for change (Teasley, 2014).

Motivation to Succeed Regardless of Negative Setback

The link between motivation and academic outcome triggered a great deal of research in order to determine the reason some succeed and others fail (Bedel, 2016). Ejaz and Ara (2013) agreed, "We assumed that there are personality traits responsible for success or failure in the adjustment to diverse situations" (p. 58). Within the scope of motivation are many variables: metacognition, locus of control (Arslan & Ahmet, 2014), self-determination, self-efficacy (Bedel, 2016), and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Kuhnle, Hofer, & Kilian, 2012), to name a few. Motivation is also affected by a student's age, with adolescence being an important "stage of development" and "associated with emotional and behavioral difficulties" (Tanriseven & Dilmac, 2013, p. 29).

Intrinsic motivation. As defined by Kovalcikiene (2015), intrinsic motivation is the desire to do something because it is interesting and/or enjoyable. Kuhnle et al. (2012) shared and expanded on Kovalcikiene's (2015) definition when they wrote, "People are intrinsically motivated through the positive experience of the activity itself. As a result, they enjoy the activity and try to obtain this experience again, thus increasing their skills due to practice" (p. 536). Intrinsic motivation supports the self-determination theory; people who are intrinsically motivated practice their skills and become better (Shin & Kelly, 2013). They expect to succeed and therefore do because they have practiced (Shin

& Kelly, 2013). Contradictory to becoming better because one believes he/she can be better, when students do not believe they have the ability to be successful or competent they do not put forth the effort to succeed and therefore fail (Legault, Green-Demers, & Pellitier, 2006). Smither (2015) acknowledged self-evaluations as, "a basic evaluation of one's worth and capability" (p. 647). Shin and Kelly (2013) found people with close, positive family relationships are more likely to be intrinsically motivated, which also leads them to be goal-directed, more prone to explore career activities, and able to reach higher levels of vocational identity. Shin and Kelly's (2013) connection between close, positive family relations cited the findings of Case et al., who noted, "Emotional engagement in school is related to intrinsic motivation" (p. 885).

Arslan and Ahmet (2014) reported Watkins and Hattie connected metacognition and motivation when they stated high-achieving students "utilize strategies congruent with their own motivational states more than lower achieving students" (p. 34). Metacognition is the process of understanding one's own reasoning method (Arslan & Ahmet, 2014). Locus of control, or believing in one's own ability to accomplish a task, is related to metacognition (Arslan & Ahmet, 2014). A term similar to locus of control and related to motivation is efficacy, the ability to accomplish a task (Bedel, 2016). Bedel (2016) explained more motivated students believe in their own abilities. Kovalcikiene (2015) went as far as stating people who are intrinsically motivated are more satisfied with their choice of profession, while Shin and Kelly's (2013) "research indicated that intrinsic motivation in the career decision-making process is essential to building an adequate vocational identity" (p. 144).

Extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to the desire to do something in order to gain a reward or to avoid a punishment (Kovalcikiene, 2015). Controlled motivation can be associated with extrinsic motivation (Bedel, 2016). Controlled motivation includes rewards and punishments, which are external regulations (Bedel, 2016).

Characterization of Success

Miller's (2014) explanation of success included the ability to spend one's time and energy on the people and things that matter to him or her. Kovalcikiene (2015) defined satisfaction as "the psychological state, which results from confirmation or disconfirmations of expectations with the reality" (p. 2). The correlation between success and satisfaction was unified when Kovalcikiene (2015) stated satisfaction leads to success. Students need to remember the following to persevere when obstacles are put before them:

> Your life is not over because someone acting in a superior position inflicts
> control… No one owns you and no one should control your life but you… Take
> charge of your own life by listening to your feelings and thoughts; they never will
> betray you. (Saunders, 2013, para. 8)

Although success is defined differently by different people, having a purpose in life and being satisfied with one's vocation is connected to being motivated and having clear and stable career goals (Shin & Kelly, 2013).

Internal predictors. Many terms were identified as predictors in the search to determine the motivation for success, such as self-efficacy (Bedel, 2016), resilience, grit, buoyancy (Cassidy, 2015), persistence, emotion regulation, attentiveness (Hein,

Smerdon, & Sambolt, 2013), challenge, and hardiness (Hashemi, Kooshesh, & Eskandari, 2015). Grit, as a predictor of success, has caused conflict due to its association with children of low-income families and the desire of some researchers to cultivate grit in students (Herold, 2015). Bedel (2016) concluded between self-concept and self-efficacy, self-efficacy is the greater predictor of academic achievement. People with self-efficacy expect to overcome problems faced and therefore live their self-fulfilling prophecies by overcoming problems (Hashemi et al., 2015). According to Cassidy (2015), the difference in the self-efficacy of individuals is a better predictor of success than a person's previous achievement.

Hein et al. (2013) found, "Emotional expression, support-seeking behaviors, direct problem solving and cognitive decision-making skills" are related to future success (p. 6). Optimism, or a positive outlook, is associated with individual success because optimistic people have chronologically projected career goals that lead to satisfaction in career choices (Shin & Kelly, 2013). Hashemi et al. (2015) recognized challenge as a predictor of success in their research; people who hold within them the component of challenge approach problems in life as a chance to struggle and grow, while those who do not show defeat and weakness.

External influences. Poverty adds stress to a child's life that in turn may interfere with the ability to succeed academically (Engle & Black, 2008). Engle and Black (2008) recognized poverty as being a negative influence on a person's ability to succeed when they wrote, "Poverty affects a child's development and educational outcomes beginning in the earliest years of life, both directly and indirectly through mediated, moderated, and transactional processes" (p. 243). Regardless of the student's

age, country of origin, or area of study, there is a strong association between student achievement and socioeconomic status (Engle & Black, 2008). The higher a family is above the poverty line, the more likely parents are to participate in cognitively enriching activities with their student(s) (Engle & Black, 2008). Parents who actively participate in their child's life influence success; this was identified when Hashemi et al. (2015) connected family communication patterns with self-respect, attention to emotions, commitment, and independence.

Chase et al. (2014) described the support one receives from family, schools, and neighborhoods as contextual support. Students who take advantage of contextual support "acquire the knowledge and skill they need to become healthy and productive adults" (Chase et al., 2014, p. 885). Productive adults tend to be individuals with a strong vocational identity which is a reflection of individual, family, and cultural influences (Shin & Kelly, 2013). Hagelskamp, Brackett, Rivers, and Salovey (2013) believed individuals are more likely to succeed if they are in a "high quality classroom" where "interactions are respectful, youth are granted autonomy in the learning processes, teaching is organized, discipline is fair and instructions are appropriate and effective," because these classrooms breed good grades, encourage strong social and emotional skills, and provide a longer-lasting motivation to work (p. 530). Feedback is included in a quality classroom due to its high impact on student learning, which comes from the information a teacher gathers to determine the needs of the student (Hattie, 2012).

Obstacles to Success

It is no surprise studies show a correlation between academic struggles and unemployment, substance use, and adult delinquency (Chase et al., 2014). The adult

failure could be a trickle-down effect which starts with poor grades and leads to fewer opportunities, which in turn leads to being a burden on families, communities, and one's self (Chase et al., 2014). With insecurity and destitution, the norm for many Americans, education is even more important for a successful life (Abramsky, 2013). Mottus, Guljajev, Allik, Laidra, and Pullmann (2012) found a correlation between a student's low intelligence quotient (IQ), antisocial behavior, and criminal activity as an adult.

Education is key to raising an individual's IQ and to help the 46.5 million Americans living in poverty (Abramsky, 2013). Abramsky (2013) reported, "With the exception of Romania, no developed country has a higher percentage of kids in poverty than America" (para. 7). Gorski (2013) recalled a trip to a school with a large percentage of impoverished students:

> I asked 8th graders how many of them had a working computer and Internet access at home; only a few of the 40 students raised their hands. Then I asked how many of them had been assigned homework that required access to computers and the Internet since the last grading period ended; everybody raised their hands. (p. 49)

Impoverished students experience higher risks, limited protective factors, and fewer opportunities for enrichment and stimulation (Engle & Black, 2008). In addition to poverty, "homelessness, abuse and inappropriate use of drugs" impede learning and eradicate an individual's chance for success due to a lack of expectations and encouragement (Hattie, 2015, p. 6). There is a stronger link between the adverse effects of poverty and success than between disease and cigarettes (Miller et al., 2014). Wilson

(2014) claimed, "Zero-tolerance practices of exclusionary discipline fuel school failure and push students into the justice system" (p. 49).

Certain behavioral aspects have been identified as predictors of academic achievement: student attendance, problem behavior, and effort (Chase et al., 2014). Demonstrating poor attendance, behavior, or effort in the eighth grade predicts poor grades in high school (Chase et al., 2014). Students who transfer from one school to another even one time between the grades of eight and 12 are twice more likely to drop out of school than students who remain in one school (Hein et al., 2013).

Violence and social unrest are risk factors that plague students born into poor families (Engle & Black, 2008). According to Spengler et al. (2015), "Student characteristics and behaviors play significant roles in important life outcomes over and above socioeconomic factors and cognitive abilities" (p. 1339). When children within any family dynamic receive little family support and have little motivation, their vocational identity development is inhibited and can lead to career indecisiveness, role confusion, and mental consequences such as "depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem" (Shin & Kelly, 2013, p. 141).

Gender and the Relationship to Discipline

Demanet, Vanderwegen, Vermeersch and Van Houtte (2013) concluded there is a notable difference in academics and behavior when comparing students by gender. Lysenko, Barker, and Jaffee, (2013) cited Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, and Silva's 2001 work when they wrote, "Antisocial behavior and related traits, similar to many developmental disorders, are found to affect boys more than girls at a ratio of 10:1" (p. 197). Combined with knowledge from Lysenko et al. (2013), educators would benefit from knowing when

the ratio of girls to boys is higher, boys tend to perform better both academically and behaviorally (Demanet et al., 2013).

Lysenko et al. (2013) found individuals adjust to the type of discipline received as children, and when discipline is perceived to be non-normative or harsh compared to past discipline experiences, children's behavior becomes more oppositional. It is important to comprehend the differences in behavior based on a student's gender and the results of certain discipline on students due to the psychosocial, hormonal, and physical changes that take place in individuals from late childhood on into the adolescent years (Haan et al., 2013). This information is important to the success of students, since bad or deviant behavior correlates to low grades (Demanet et al., 2013).

Understanding child discipline techniques and learning about child development in order to teach and discipline children to help them develop into well-rounded and adjusted individuals is important to parents and is expressed as a concern by both male and female parents (Albritton, Angley, Grandelski, Hansen, & Kershaw, 2014). To help parents, educators, and administrators be better disciplinarians, all stakeholders need to know there is a relationship between academic failure, disengagement in school, and dropping out of school (Williams, Ernst, & Kaui. 2015). Not only should the individuals in charge of teaching and disciplining young people take into consideration the hormonal, physical, and psychosocial changes taking place in a student's body, they should also have knowledge of different personalities and how a personality responds to adversity (Haan et al., 2013). Some personality types are more resilient and can adjust to stressful occurrences; however, other personality types tend to be more rigid and unable to adapt (Haan et al., 2013). Students who are unable to bounce back when stressful and/or life-

changing events occur in their lives could be characterized as at-risk, which was defined

by Williams et al. (2015) as a group or individual "who are considered to have a high

likelihood of failing academically or dropping out of school" (p. 41).

Gender Perspectives on Discipline

Some research suggests men and women handle discipline differently due to their

personal experiences in life, which develops within each gender and person a perception

as to the best type of discipline (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). In an attempt to determine if

there are significant differences in discipline style, Oplatka and Atias (2007) conducted a

comparison of the two genders in relation to school principals' perspectives and

behaviors in the areas of discipline in the classroom, achieving control in the classroom,

handling disruptive behavior, and handling discipline.

Differences. Female principals are more democratic, while male principals are

more dictatorial and directive (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Female principals are more apt

than male principals to work together with others as a team and seek ways to get others

involved (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Female principals utilize power in facilitative ways,

while male principals correlate control with power over others (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

In the field of conflict, female administrators avoid conflict and try collaborative methods

to handle it, while male administrators use monocratic responses (Oplatka & Atias,

2007). Female administrators, more than male administrators, are more accustomed to

teaching, curriculum and instruction, and children (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Female

administrators are more likely to focus on the school's vision and work to implement

school improvement plans than male administrators (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

Male administrators tend to be more independent, expressive, and assertive, which is called strategy style, while women administrators seek union, cooperation, openness, and contact with others, which is known as communion strategy (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Oplatka and Atias (2007) suggested rather than the two genders being polar opposites in relation to discipline style, the two genders just give different meaning to the same style of leadership. Generally, the two genders share the same definition of discipline, identifying the importance of rules and standards and the need to combat violence (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). However, each gender has a different idea concerning the purpose of school discipline (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

As it pertains to zero tolerance, the male and female genders differ on discipline policy (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Male administrators are more apt to promote policy geared to creating and maintaining the school's learning environment to encourage learning (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Female administrators, on the other hand, promote policy geared to the individual student and work to create a positive school climate (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Female administrators focus on involvement of students and parents when initiating rules and demonstrate a facade of positive emotion in order to minimize disruptive behavior (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Male administrators, on the other hand, focus on control, obedience, prohibition, and hierarchy (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). The end goal of male administrators includes enhancing learning through discipline while the female administrator's goal includes cultivating honesty, courtesy, and the overall socialization of the individual (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

Similarities. Both genders, male and female, believe rules and regulation are the key to achieving discipline, set rules and policies for the classroom and campus, and then

stick to them daily, without wavering day-to-day (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Both agree

well-defined structure is important (Oplatka & Atias, 2007) and that students have a

better chance of following the rules and procedures if they are clearly stated and the

consequences are understood. Both genders were found to be equally effective in

maintaining school behavior and discipline as long as they make their presence known by

being visible (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Both genders delegate authority to classroom

teachers to handle discipline within the classroom (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

Views on suspension and expulsion. Male administrators are likely to use

suspension or expulsion when the student's behavior is violent (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

Female administrators utilize suspension or expulsion only when they have investigated

all other avenues (Oplatka & Atias, 2007). Both genders use suspension and expulsion,

but it is the effort each gender puts into trying different discipline methods that separates

them (Oplatka & Atias, 2007).

Summary

Motivation is the focus of an individual's desire to reach a goal (West, Rhoden,

Robinson, Castle, & Gibson, 2016). There are two types of motivation that lead to a

student's success, intrinsic and extrinsic (Kovalcikiene, 2015). Within the intrinsic and

extrinsic realms are the individual's predictors and influences that can be different for

each student (Bedel, 2016). Influences on a person's motivation involve contextual

supports such as family and education (Shin & Kelly, 2013). The contextual support,

family, and relationships within it play a large role in a person's self-concept in terms of

career and vocational identity (Shin & Kelly, 2013). A parent's method of rearing a child

and family communication styles help determine the development of an adolescent and affect the student's personality (Hashemi et al., 2015).

The importance of another contextual support, education, was explained by Hattie (2015) when he described the reason for mandated education for all children, stating it provides all students the chance to succeed regardless of their backgrounds. Due to required education, many educators and educational systems have made an enormous difference in the lives of a large number of students (Hattie, 2015). Saunders' (2013) idea that "we are a cooperative nation" (p. 49) explains why federal, state, and school administrators must work together to create education and public policies that cultivate equitable opportunities for all students (Miller et al., 2014). Hattie's (2015) idea of equitable education and Hagelskamp's high-quality classrooms can benefit students from impoverished families and students with low IQs.

In Chapter Three, the methodology is discussed. The problem, purpose, and research questions are reviewed. Also included in the chapter is a description of the population, sample, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Methods and procedures utilized in this study are outlined in this chapter to illustrate how these findings are useful and meaningful for Missouri public high school principals when considering zero-tolerance policies. The purpose and problem, rationale, research questions, and hypotheses are addressed. Additionally, research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter.

Problem and Purpose Overview

The rationale for this proposed project was to provide research on whether zero-tolerance policies have a significant impact on long-term student success. The original intent of the zero-tolerance policies by the National Association of School Psychologists was to assure consistent and firm consequences for dangerous student behaviors (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). However, others have noted consistency is not necessarily a substitute for rationality (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). This research provides insight into the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals on zero tolerance and its effect on students. The primary investigator aimed to find additional suggestions from professional survey research on possible alternative disciplinary actions for improved student retention.

Research questions and hypotheses. The following research questions will drive this study:

1. Do Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations?

H1₀: The majority of Missouri public high school principals do not find zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations.

H1ₐ: The majority of Missouri public high school principals do find zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations.

2. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?

H2₀: There is no significant difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer than 90 days for violating school policy.

H2ₐ: There is a significant difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer than 90 days for violating school policy.

3. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior?

H3₀: Missouri public high school principals do not believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior.

H3ₐ: Missouri public high school principals do believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior.

4. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative?

H4$_a$: Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance has negative or no lasting effects on students who were expelled or suspended.

H4$_0$: Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance has positive lasting effects on students who were expelled or suspended.

Research Design

The research for this study involved quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods involve surveying different groups of individuals (Fraenkel et al., 2015); in this case a survey was utilized to compare the male and female perspective on zero-tolerance. In qualitative research, the investigator collects and calculates data and reports the information in the form of scores (Fraenkel et al., 2015). Data were derived through statistical analyses of interview responses.

Population and Sample

The targeted population for this study was 583 Missouri public high school principals as listed in the MODESE (2016a) Missouri School Directory 2014-2015 Statistics of Missouri Public Schools. As it was unlikely the entire targeted population would respond, the primary investigator utilized an accessible population, or a minimum of the first 26 principals who replied to the study up to a maximum of the first 100 principals who replied to the study (Fraenkel et al., 2015). At the minimum number of respondents, 13 of the chosen sample would be female and 13 of the chosen sample would be male. Up to 50 female and 50 male samples could have been chosen. This type of sample, according to Fraenkel et al. (2015), is random sampling (see Appendix H). Every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen (Fraenkel et al., 2015).

Instrumentation

Instrumentation is the process of preparing to collect data (Fraenkel et al., 2015). Instrumentation includes where, when, and who collects the data (Fraenkel et al., 2015). For this study, the primary investigator used survey research with a questionnaire (see Appendix B) which mirrored the research questions to make meaning of the zero-tolerance policy through the stories of administrators. Vygotsky (as cited in Seidman, 2006) noted people use words as a microcosm of their consciousness. Seidman (2006) wrote, "Individuals' consciousness gives access to the most complicated social and educational issues, because social and educational issues are abstractions based on the concrete experience of people" (p. 7). It was the intent of the primary investigator to derive statistical analyses to reveal the long-term impact of zero-tolerance policies on students through the voices of Missouri public high school principals and the survey research instrument.

Data Collection

An email with valid informed consent (see Appendix A) was sent to Missouri public high school principals. Valid informed consent for all questionnaire participants included the following: (1) disclosure of study procedures and potential risks to prospective research participants; (2) participant comprehension of the information; and (3) participant voluntary agreement, free of coercion and undue influence, for research participation. No data were collected until Lindenwood University approved the IRB (see Appendix C). Data were collected by the primary investigator for this study. Data contained no identifiable markers other than gender.

Data Analysis

This research was conducted with attention to detail to avoid any unwanted threats to validity. The questionnaire elicited content-related evidence of Missouri public high school principal's perceptions of school suspension and expulsion as related to the Missouri Safe Schools Act and zero-tolerance policy. This is precisely what this research was designed to measure.

A *t*-test for independent means was used to answer research question two by comparing the mean between those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act to those who were expelled for violating other school policies (Fraenkel et al., 2015). The primary investigator used categorical data to code questionnaire responses (see Appendix D and E) into categories for descriptive analysis in response to research questions one, three, and four.

Ethical Considerations

Valid and informed consent was obtained from all those surveyed. All data were coded with all individual identifiers removed to protect confidentiality. Participants were identified by letters or numbers. Data were secured in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office. On completion of the project, all data will be retained for three years and then destroyed.

Summary

Methods and procedures utilized for this study were outlined in this chapter. Additionally, the purpose and problem, research questions and hypotheses, research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations were presented. Chapter Four includes illustrations of the data in regard to

Missouri public high school principal's perspectives of a zero-tolerance policy. Survey

results provide needed information to determine if there are perceived negative or

positive long-term effects from student expulsion and suspension (see Appendix F and

G). These data pieces are organized to illustrate how Missouri public high school

principals' views are descriptively similar or dissimilar.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

The purpose of this study was to identify the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals on Missouri's zero-tolerance policy. The survey was sent to 583 Missouri public high school principals to ascertain the differences between male and female perceptions on zero tolerance. The primary investigator collected survey responses of 22 female Missouri public high school principals and 22 male Missouri public high school principals. Five hundred eighty-three surveys were sent through email. Forty-four surveys were utilized because only 22 female Missouri public high school principals responded, while 81 male Missouri public high school principals responded. In order to obtain equal male and female responses, all 22 female surveys were utilized and 22 of the 81 Missouri high school principal male responses were used. The 22 male survey responses were chosen at random. Problems associated with the research included ratio of male to female Missouri public high school principals and the inability to receive data through surveys from all 583 Missouri public high school principals.

Questions in the survey were designed to elicit the Missouri public high school principal's viewpoints about the long-term effects of zero tolerance on students who violated school policy. Participants were encouraged to give examples, without identifying students, of positive and/or negative effects of zero-tolerance suspension or expulsion they had witnessed.

Data Analysis

A population of 81 male Missouri public high school principals and 22 female Missouri public high school principals responded to the questionnaire. For statistical

purposes, the primary investigator used simple random sampling using a random number generator to select participant data for 22 males. Simple random sampling is a probability sampling technique wherein the researcher divides the entire population into different subgroups, then randomly selects the final subjects with every member of the population having an equal and independent chance of being selected (Fraenkel et al., 2015). To ensure equivalent representation of both genders, 22 males were selected to equal the data from the 22 females who responded.

Research question one. Do Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations?

Of the 44 total Missouri high school principal respondents, 11 (25%) of the administrators believed zero tolerance is an acceptable policy, while 33 (75%) responded zero tolerance is not an acceptable policy. Of the 11 Missouri public high school principals who believed zero tolerance is an acceptable policy, four (36.36%) were female respondents and seven (63.63%) were male (see Figure 2).
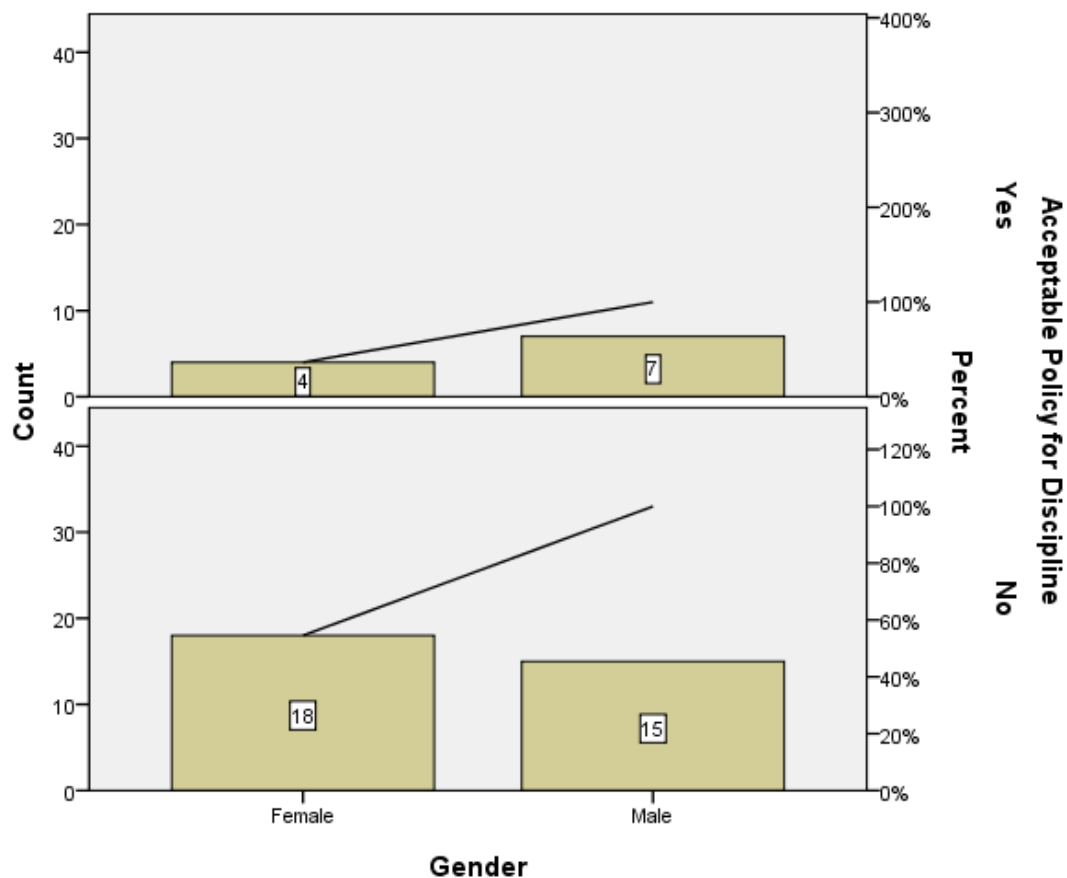
Figure 2. Acceptable policy of discipline. Pareto chart of gender-specific responses to

whether a zero-tolerance policy is acceptable. Named after Vilfredo Pareto, this type of

chart contains both bars and a line graph, where individual values are represented in

descending order by bars, and the cumulative total is represented by the line (Cooper,

2013).

In Table 1, the results are presented of a paired samples *t*-test of paired

differences, or differences in proportions, for the variable of gender and the choice of

whether zero tolerance is an acceptable policy. According to Fraenkel et al. (2015), "The

most commonly used parametric tests for analyzing categorical data are the *t*-tests for a

difference in proportions—that is, whether the proportion in one category (e.g., males) is different from the proportion in another category (e.g., females.)" (p. 239). There was a significant difference in the perception of whether zero tolerance is an acceptable policy or not an acceptable policy between the genders (*M*=.25, *SD*=.72); *t* (43) =-2.31, *p* = .026 (see Table 1). These results suggest it may be generalized males view zero tolerance more favorably than females.

Table 1

Paired-Samples t-Test for Difference of Means for Gender and Perception of Acceptability of Zero-Tolerance Policy

	M	*SD*	*T*	*Df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender – Acceptable Policy for Discipline	-.250	.719	-2.305	43	.026*

Note. * denotes significant difference at *p* < .05.

The results of this survey question suggest a correlation between male Missouri public high school principals and exclusion orientation and between female Missouri public high school principals and prevention orientation; 81.81% of female respondents viewed zero tolerance as unacceptable, while 68.18% of male respondents felt zero-tolerance policies were unacceptable. The two orientations provide a possible explanation for the variations in suspension rates among schools across the United States (Heilbrun, Cornell, & Lovegrove, 2015). Based on the findings of this question and the assertion of Heilbrun et al. (2015) that the administrator's opinion guides a building's

discipline policy, the differing opinion of the two genders may correlate with the number of long-term suspensions and expulsions within each of the surveyed Missouri public high school principals' buildings.

It is possible the Missouri public high school principals surveyed who believe zero-tolerance policies of long-term suspensions and expulsions are acceptable for disciplining students fall into the exclusion-oriented group. The exclusion-oriented group supported zero-tolerance policies, believing they improved school climate, helped maintain order, and reduced discipline problems when "the most persistent troublemakers were removed from school" (Heilbrun et al., 2015, p. 490). On the other hand, members of the prevention-oriented group felt zero-tolerance policies did not improve school climate and utilized preventative programs to manage discipline in their buildings (Heilbrun et al., 2015). Heilbrun et al. (2015) reported a relation between a principal's attitude and his or her school's discipline practices; the exclusion-oriented principals were more likely to suspend and expel students for nonviolent offenses, while the prevention group had much lower rates of suspension and expulsions for nonviolent offenses.

Research question two. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?

Of the 44 total Missouri high school principal respondents, only two believed there was no difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies. Overwhelmingly, 42 (95%)

believed there is a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled

90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were

expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies. Of the 42 Missouri public

high school principals who believed there is a difference in academic outcome, 21 were

female Missouri public high school principals and 21 were male Missouri public high

school principals (see Figure 3).
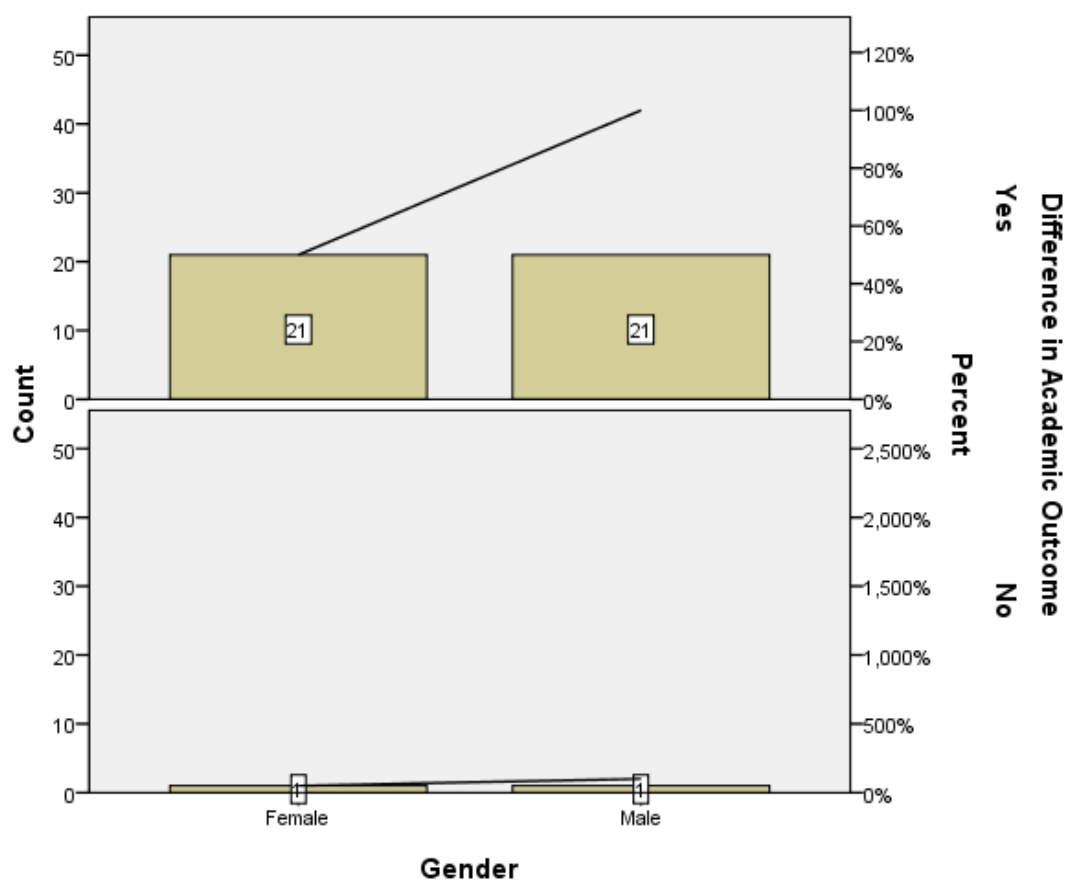
Figure 3. Difference in academic outcome. Pareto chart of gender-specific responses to

whether a zero-tolerance policy has an academic impact on students suspended or

expelled.

There were a significant number of Missouri public high school principals respondents with the perception zero-tolerance suspension or expulsion impacts academic outcome (*M*=.46, *SD*=.55); *t*(43)=5.50, *p* =.000 (see Table 2). These results show statistically Missouri public high school principals view the zero-tolerance policy as having an academic impact for expelled or suspended students.

Table 2

Paired-Samples t-Test for Difference of Means for Views on Academic Outcome for Students Impacted by Zero-Tolerance Policy

	M	*SD*	*T*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Difference in Academic Outcome – Yes or No	.455	.548	5.503	43	.000*

Note. * denotes significant difference at *p* < .05.

The intention of zero-tolerance policies was to make schools a safe place to learn; however, the over-extension of zero-tolerance policies by school administrators led to unintended consequences of disengagement, failure, and drop outs (Peguero & Bracy, 2014). Ninety-five percent of the male Missouri public high school principals and 95% of the female Missouri public high school principals surveyed believed a difference in academic outcome existed for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies. The long-term effect of suspensions over 90 days and of expulsions include a higher risk of unemployment, criminal activity, poverty,

health problems, and even a shorter life expectancy due to dropping out of school

(Mallette, 2012). However, the unintended consequences go beyond the individual and

into society with social consequences such as economic impact at all levels, increased

crime, increased demand on the welfare system, poorer levels of health, and a lack of

civic engagement (Mallette, 2012).

Research question three. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the

threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior?

Of the 44 total Missouri public high school principal respondents, 25 (57%)

believed the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior. Only

19 (43%) Missouri public high school principals believed the threat of suspension and

expulsion does not deter negative student behavior. Of the 25 Missouri public high

school principals who believed the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative

student behavior, 11 were female and 14 were male (see Figure 4).
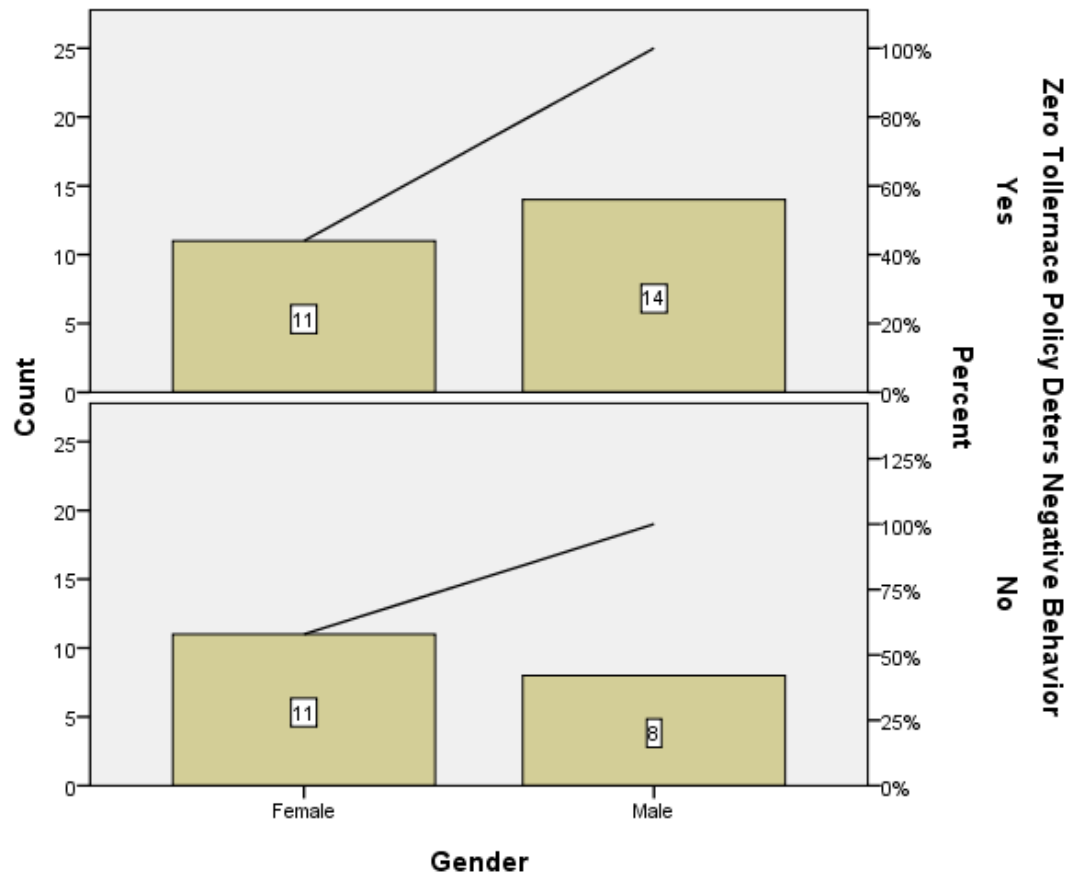
Figure 4. Zero-tolerance policy deters negative behavior. Pareto chart of gender-specific responses to whether a zero-tolerance policy deters negative behavior for students.

As seen in Table 3, there was no statistically significant difference in the opinions of male and female Missouri public high school principals on whether zero-tolerance policies deter negative behavior (*M*=.07, *SD*=.76); *t*(43)=.596, *p* =.555. A slight majority of respondents believed the zero-tolerance policy does deter negative behavior in students.

Table 3

Paired-Samples t-Test for Difference of Means for Gender and Views on Zero-Tolerance

Policy as a Deterrent for Negative Behaviors

	M	*SD*	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender – Zero-Tolerance Policy Deters Negative Behavior	.068	.759	.114	43	.555

The purpose of school discipline is to manage student behavior through a system of rules and consequences and to provide punishment for inappropriate behavior; this is known as the deterrence theory (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Zero tolerance is an example of deterrence theory (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Mayworm and Sharkey (2014) argued suspension and expulsion are effective deterrents for some students but not all. According to Mayworm and Sharkey (2014), discipline is only effective when it is perceived to be fair and appropriate to the offense. Mayworm and Sharkey (2014) specified, "When punishments are viewed as overly harsh and unjust, compliance actually lowers and repeated suspensions increase the odds of truancy over time" (p. 694). According to Aull (2012), "Some research suggests zero tolerance policies have the potential to make schools more dangerous" (p. 186). The results of studies by Mayworm and Sharkey (2014) and Aull (2012) help in understanding why the Missouri public high school principals in this study were split almost equally (57% yes to 43% no)

when asked if they believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior.

Research question four. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative?

Of all 44 Missouri public high school principal respondents, only seven (16%) believed there were long-lasting positive effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended. The remaining 37 (84%) Missouri public high school principal respondents believed the long-lasting effects are negative for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended (see Figure 5).
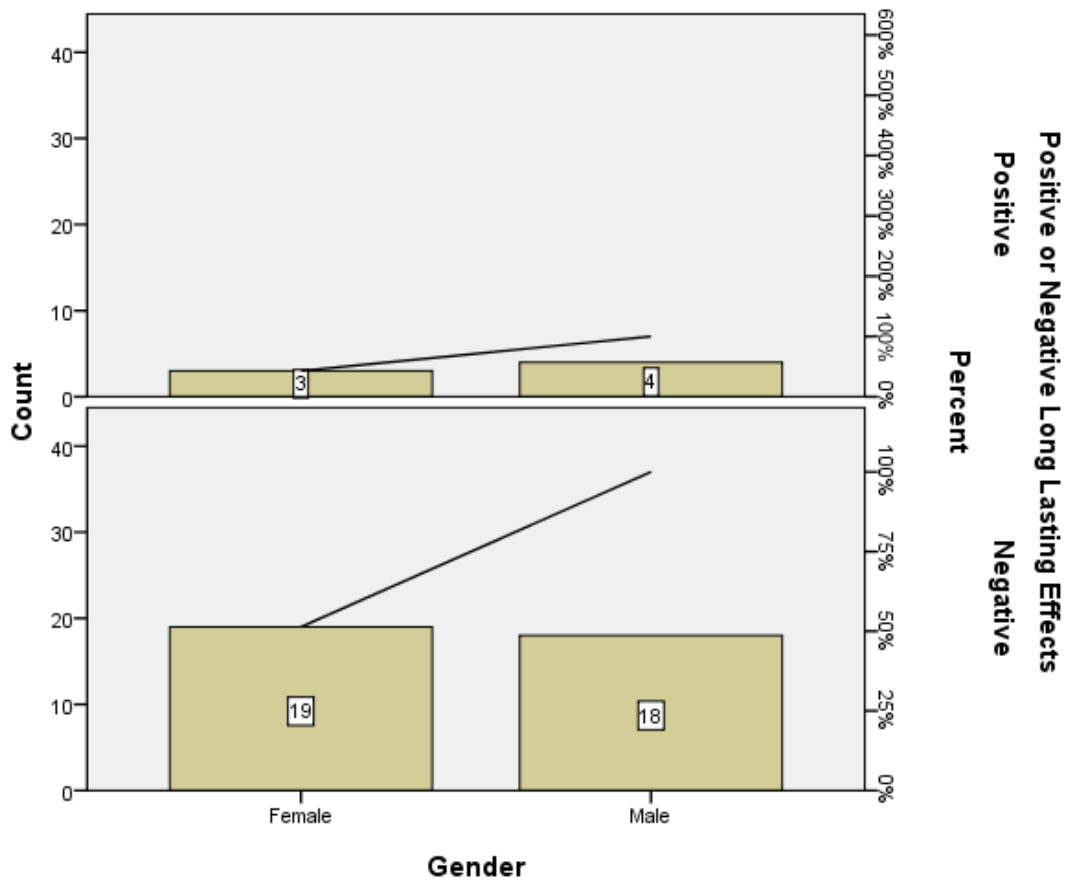
Figure 5. Positive or negative long-lasting effects. Pareto chart of gender-specific

responses to whether a zero-tolerance policy has long-lasting positive or negative effects.

There was a significant difference between perceptions of the sample as to

whether zero-tolerance suspension or expulsion has a long-term negative or positive

effect on students ($M=.34$, $SD=.65$); t (43) $=-3.51$, $p =.001$ (see Table 4). Three female

Missouri public high school principals and four male Missouri public high school

principals of the entire 44 respondents indicated there are positive results from

suspending or expelling students under this plan. These results suggest both male and

female Missouri public high school principals indicated the zero-tolerance policy has a

negative academic impact for expelled or suspended students.

Table 4

Paired-Samples t-Test for Difference of Means for Gender and Views on Positive or

Negative Long-Lasting Effects of Zero-Tolerance Expulsion or Suspension

	M	*SD*	*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender – Positive or Negative Long Term Effect	-.341	.645	-3.506	43	.001*

Note. * denotes significant difference at *p* < .05.

Zero tolerance is exclusionary in nature and affects a student's chances and

opportunities in life (Robbins, 2005). Pre-existing inequalities, such as socioeconomic

status, intelligence, family relations, and social, and emotional abilities, mean not all

students are the same; however, the punishment in zero-tolerance policies is the same for

all student (Robbins, 2005). The differences found in individual students contribute to

the long-term effects of zero tolerance; "the punishment might be the same, but the long-

term consequences are experienced differently according to the educational opportunities

the middle- and upper middle-class students can afford, and are generally built into the

social networks of their communities" (Robbins, 2005, p. 9).

The negative effects of long-term suspension and expulsion due to zero-tolerance

policies are numerous. Shah and McNeil (2013a) reported academic decline and

dropping out of school. A single suspension doubles a student's chance of failing a

grade, and failing a grade is a predictor of dropping out (Gutierrez, 2016). Most schools do not offer an alternative form of education to students who are suspended and expelled; therefore, the students suffer from a deficiency in their education unless their families have the financial ability to provide tutoring (Gutierrez, 2016). When students miss too much school, they are unable to reach academic milestones that can cause them to fail and eventually drop out (Chang & Jordan, 2011).

Suspension and expulsion also increase the likelihood of unemployment, substance use, and delinquency as adults (Chase et al., 2014). Other factors associated with suspension and expulsion include psychological damage (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016) and financial strain on the family when a parent or guardian has to stay home or find alternate child care for students who are not allowed at school (Gutierrez, 2016). Research conducted on zero tolerance supports the Missouri public high school principal's survey question responses, with 16% positive and 84% negative lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended.

Participant Responses to Interview Questions

Victoria Bernhardt (2013) emphasized the importance of understanding the perceptions of stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and self-assessment tools. The survey for this study contained two open-ended questions to allow the primary investigator to gain an in-depth understanding of what each Missouri public high school principal's respondent had experienced in regard to a zero-tolerance policy. Reponses were then coded to capture the main ideas espoused by the respondents.

According to Fraenkel et al. (2015), "Strauss and Corbin define coding… as the analytic process through which data are fractured, conceptualized and integrated to form

theory" (p. 434). The coding schemes, or categories which appeared, were used to derive a measure for content analysis first developed by Amidon and Flanders in 1963 (Fraenkel et al., 2015, p. 447). In this study, coding allowed the investigator to gain a sense of how Missouri public high school principals feel about the long-lasting negative or positive outcomes of the zero-tolerance policy which results in suspension and expulsion.

Survey question six. Please describe an instance of expulsion where the student returned to the district with a positive long-term outcome.

One hundred three of the 583 Missouri public high school principals responded to the survey emailed to them. Forty-four Missouri public high school principal surveys were utilized in this research, including all 22 female Missouri public high school principals and 22 randomly selected Missouri high school principal surveys of the 81 male responses. Thirty-two of the 103 Missouri public high school principals, 31.06%, gave an example of a positive long-term outcome after a student was expelled. Ten of the 32 (31.25%) Missouri public high school principal surveys were from women, while 22 of the 32 (68.75%) positive examples were from men. Although all 10 of the female Missouri public high school principal responses were used, only eight of the 22 male Missouri public high school principals responses fell within the 22 randomly picked male surveys and were used, giving a total of 18 responses to the request for a positive long-term outcome to expulsion from the 44 surveys used in the study.

Emerging theme: Graduation. Seven (five male and two female) of the 18 Missouri public high school principals reported a student had returned to school after the long-term suspension or expulsion and had graduated high school. Not all Missouri public high school principals stated the returning student graduated with his/her cohort.

Of the seven students reported to graduate after being long-term suspended or expelled, one graduated with his/her cohort, one was reported to graduate not with his/her cohort, and five did not specify whether the student graduated with his/her cohort.

According to the participants, support was given to three of the seven students who graduated. Support was provided in the form of credit recovery at school and through off-campus services for a special education student. Another student was reported to have earned credits while participating in online school while expelled. The school accepted those credits; however, it was not noted if the student graduated.

Specific examples for receiving long-term suspension and expulsion were given by some respondents; however, some only gave a brief example of the positive outcome. Reasons given for long-term suspension and expulsion of students who went on to graduate included three cases involving drugs (addiction, possession, and distribution) and one assault on a staff member. One example included a special education student who was able to graduate due to laws requiring the school to provide services to students with an individualized education plan (IEP). The student was able to complete high school, although there were no details as to why the student was expelled or whether the student graduated with his/her cohort. Special concessions were made by the district based on the student's diagnosed disability, which allowed him/her to have an IEP. The law protected the IEP student by requiring the school to provide an education to the student regardless of the student's behavior.

The percentage of Missouri public high school principals in the calculated portion of the survey who reported graduating high school as a positive long-term outcome for students who were suspended or expelled correlated with the percentages of Missouri

public high school principals who believed zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy. As previously stated, 25% of the 44 Missouri public high school principals believed zero tolerance was an acceptable policy. Of the 25% believing zero tolerance to be an acceptable policy, 36.36% were female Missouri public high school principals and 63.63% were male Missouri public high school principals. Calculating the number of Missouri public high school principals who reported graduating high school as a long-term positive outcome of expulsion, the female-to-male ratio was consistent with the previous ratio (28.57% female and 71.42% male).

Examples of behavior necessitating suspension and expulsion gathered from the 103 surveys, some used and some not used in calculating responses, are noted for the sole purpose of providing knowledge of conduct compelling Missouri public high school principals to suspend or expel students. The most common behavior requiring expulsion involved drugs. Of the 32 total responses describing a positive long-term outcome after expulsion, nine involved a form of drug misconduct: use, addiction, possession, and/or distribution. One example involved a student fighting, and one Missouri public high school principal gave the reason for expulsion as multiple violations. There were three instances involving a weapon; one student took a weapon (type unknown) to school, one student used a BB gun to shoot fellow students, and one student used a pellet gun to shoot out exterior lights on the high school. One student was expelled for assaulting a staff member. The remaining examples included some form of intimidating behavior such as exhibiting threatening behavior toward students, threatening a teacher, and threatening to kill a teacher.

Emerging theme: Rehabilitation. Five of the 18 Missouri public high school principal respondents (three female and two male) reported a form of rehabilitation as being responsible for the student's positive long-term outcome. Rehabilitation was presented in a variety of forms: parent intervention which included parent/child discussions and parent-initiated disciplinary action, court-mandated home visits, support from multiple agencies, and counseling. Although the positive outcome varied for the individuals receiving rehabilitation, rehabilitation was credited for affecting the success of the students who were suspended long-term or expelled from school. Four of the five students who received a form of rehabilitation also received some form of extra services. The extra services described by the Missouri public high school principals were provided by the school or the parent or a combination of the two and included extra help before or after school by school personnel and/or the parent.

Examples have been supplied to describe the type of rehabilitation offered or required by different schools and/or Missouri public high school principals. One example of rehabilitation involved a student who had been suspended for 180 days due to taking a weapon to school. The student was referred to juvenile authorities and received court-supervised probation and mandated home visits. Along with the court-mandated visits, the student had an IEP and was provided on-campus services by the school before school hours. Another Missouri public high school principal claimed a positive long-term outcome due to involvement with multiple agencies after a student was expelled. The parent-initiated rehabilitation was not specific; however, it suggested more discipline, parental involvement in the student's daily activities, and an increase in expectations for the student. Another response included counseling a student expelled or

suspended for drug abuse. All forms of rehabilitation, regardless of length or intensity, were credited with the positive outcome of the student after expulsion or suspension.

Emerging theme: Employment. Only two of the 18 Missouri public high school principal respondents described situations in which a student was employed after graduation. One administrator described the student as grown, productive, and respected. The second example included a special education student who received off-campus services after being expelled from school. That individual went on to work in construction and then to start his/her own business after graduating high school. Of the two examples of employment as proof of positive long-term outcomes for a student expelled from school, one Missouri public high school principal was male and the other Missouri public high school principal was female.

Emerging theme: Post-secondary education. There were no examples of post-secondary education provided as a positive long-term result for suspended or expelled students within the 18 Missouri public high school principal respondents calculated in the survey. However, when examining the 32 examples of positive long-term outcomes given from the total 103 respondents, one Missouri high school principal reported the positive outcome after long-term suspension or expulsion was earning a post-secondary degree. In the example, the student was intelligent, self-directed, and handled adult-level responsibilities outside of school before the expulsion incident occurred. The student actually quit school before he could be expelled for shooting exterior lights out on the high school building. After returning to school two years later, the student graduated and then went on to earn an associate's degree.

Survey question eight. Please describe an example of an instance of expulsion where there was a long-term negative outcome.

Fifty-nine (57.28%) of the 103 Missouri public high school principals gave an example of a negative long-term outcome after a student was expelled. Eight of the 59 (13.55%) were from women, while 51 (86.44%) of the 59 negative examples were from men. All eight of the female Missouri public high school principal responses were used, while only 13 of the 51 male responses fell within the 22 randomly picked male principal surveys used. A total of 21 Missouri public high school principal responses to the request for a negative long-term outcome to expulsion from the 44 surveys were used in the study.

Emerging theme: Dropping-out. Seventeen of the 20 (85%) Missouri public high school principals who responded to the request for a long-term negative outcome due to expulsion responded with an example of a student dropping out of school. Eight female and nine male administrators had knowledge of a student who dropped out of school after being expelled. Reasons given for expelling students who eventually dropped out of school included the following: falling asleep while serving an in-school suspension (ISS) after repeated misbehavior in music class, possession of a weapon, two examples of possession of drugs with the intent to distribute, and an unknown offense described as one very bad mistake. Although the drop-out rate among students who have been expelled was not 100%, an alarming 80.95% gives reason to evaluate the zero-tolerance policy.

Four of the 17 Missouri public high school principals attributed dropping out to falling behind academically. One Missouri public high school principals described a

student who dropped out as having lost hope in his/her future. Only one of the 17 students who dropped out of school had been offered support from the school to help shorten the suspension length. In that case, the student refused school-required counseling, dropped out of school, and ended up in jail.

Emerging theme: Imprisonment or arrest. Four of the 20 (20%) responses to the long-term effect of expulsion included arrest and/or time in jail for the student. One student was arrested after getting into more trouble after being expelled from school. Whether the student graduated or dropped out was not acknowledged by the Missouri public high school principals. Another student went back to school after being expelled; however, the student eventually dropped out and was later issued jail time for selling drugs. While expelled, one student used his/her time to break into homes and was eventually arrested, and another student used his/her time to experiment with drugs and ended up in jail.

The explanation for the expulsion of the four students who eventually were arrested or spent time in jail was not given by the administrators. However, the Missouri public high school principals did describe scenarios of two students who were left to their own devices without supervision from the school or parents and utilized the free time to get into additional trouble. The question here is, would the student have gotten involved in the activity or with the people who prompted the behavior leading to arrest and jail time if the student had not been suspended or expelled?

Emerging theme: Unemployment. Two instances (10%) of unemployment were given by the 20 Missouri public high school principals when requested to provide examples of negative long-term effects of expulsion. One student in this category

dropped out after being suspended for falling asleep in ISS. The Missouri public high school principals reported the student continued to struggle to get and keep a job 10 years later. The second student reported by another Missouri public high school principals had also dropped out of school after being suspended and then was unable to get and keep a job. The student reportedly told the Missouri public high school principal that he/she had earned his/her GED several years later and would be willing to talk to the school's student body on the advantages of getting an education.

Emerging theme: Generational poverty. Generational poverty could be grouped with the theme of unemployment. One hundred percent of the students who had trouble getting and retaining a job had dropped out of school after being expelled. Although there was no verbatim quote on generational poverty concerning the negative long-term effect of expulsion, unless the student had other means of income or financial support from family, it could be rationalized those students who dropped out of school were propelled into a existence of labor-intensive, low-paying, blue-collar jobs.

Summary

In this chapter, a description of the qualitative research methodology used to elicit the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals toward the policy of zero tolerance was included. Throughout the research, ethical protocol was used to avoid deception of respondents and to ensure confidentiality of the data for integrity of the study. The methodology for data analysis employed a cross-sectional survey from a sample of 44 Missouri public high school principals. Chapter Five contains the interpretation of research findings, implications for change, and recommendations for application and further study.

It is hoped these findings will motivate administrators to use judgment on a case-by-case basis when issuing suspension and expulsion to students. In addition, the implementation of extra support services should be considered by all administrators to help those students who are suspended or expelled long-term to be successful, not only by graduating, but also by gaining employment, furthering his/her education if so desired, and maintaining a healthy self-perception to ward off depression and self-loathing. The findings, recommendations for future research, and implications of this research are reported in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

Blad (2014) gave school administrators instruction on their responsibility as school leaders—honor the requirements of Title IV and Title VI. In the article "Federal Guidance Urges Schools to Shift from 'Zero Tolerance,'" Blad (2014) directed school administrators:

> Newly issued discipline guidance from the U.S. Department of Education and Justice urges school leaders to draft and apply rules in a way that is fair to all racial and ethnic groups and to ease up on zero-tolerance policies the agencies' leaders said have led to unnecessarily high rates of suspension and expulsion. (para. 1)

The requirements include examining school policy to determine the fairness of the policy and then examining the administration to determine if the policy is being implemented fairly (Blad, 2014). The urgency to cut down on zero tolerance came about due to the arbitrary use of zero tolerance by school administrators (Alvarez, 2013). What started as an attempt to create a system for schools to be safe from drugs and weapons in the 1980s and early 1990s (Jones, 2013) created a system known as the school-to-prison pipeline (Wilson, 2014).

The challenge originated prior to the Columbine shooting when the United States federal government necessitated all primary and secondary schools to implement the zero-tolerance policy on weapons in order to continue collecting federal funding for education (Mongan & Walker, 2012). The required zero-tolerance policy made expulsion mandatory in all cases, regardless of danger, except in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) cases or in extreme circumstances (Mongan &

Walker, 2012). Jones (2013) argued the zero-tolerance policy caused high school principals to "throw common sense out the window" (p. 740).

In the early 1990s, laws were enacted by the federal government which forced schools to implement zero-tolerance policies in order to continue receiving federal funding (Skiba, 2008). The regulations were established to make schools safe from drugs and weapons (Jones, 2013). The laws mandated expulsion in all cases, except for IEP students (Mongan & Walker, 2012). From the zero-tolerance laws of the early 1990s grew zero-tolerance school policies within individual districts, subsequently expanded by school administrators to include a wide range of behaviors such as drugs, weapons, willful disobedience, disrespect, dress code violations (Fergus, 2015), possessing water guns, toys, nail clippers (Jones, 2013), using cell phones (Skiba, 2008), breaking dress code (Skiba, 2014), swearing, and being disrespectful (Gutierrez, 2016). Laws and policy meant to keep students safe turned into what is known as the school-to-prison pipeline (Wilson, 2014).

Freud's theory on trauma helps to explain what happens when students receive sentences of suspension or expulsion for behavior that does not involve real weapons, real threats, or drugs; "the impact of trauma shows up in patients' apathy, lifelessness, somatization, addiction, weak notions of self, and inability to fantasize or to act at all in real life" (Moreno & Coelho, 2013, p. 17). Suspension is linked to behavioral problems and a "detachment from social interaction with peers and adults" (Gutierrez, 2016, para. 6). Early childhood into adolescence is a formative period for students (Haan et al., 2013) during which students are vulnerable and can be affected by a variety of events (Spark, 2014).

Findings

Data indicated 75% of the Missouri public high school principals participants believed zero tolerance is not an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations. Female Missouri public high school principals made up 54.54%, while male Missouri public high school principals represented the other 45.45% of the policy's detractors. On the question of whether there is a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies, 95% of the respondents believed there is an academic difference. The male and female Missouri public high school principals making up the 95% were equally split with 21 male administrators and 21 female administrators.

Data collected for question three were closer in perspective than other questions. Twenty-five (56.81%) respondents believed the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior. Within the 56.81%, 56% were male Missouri public high school principals and 44% were female Missouri public high school principals. The final research question asked Missouri public high school principals if they believed the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative. Thirty-seven or 84.09%, of the Missouri public high school principals believed the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students when expelled or suspended is negative. Female Missouri public high school principals made up the majority of the total with 51.35%, while the male Missouri public high school principals represented 48.64%.

Each of the four research questions was represented by five multiple-choice questions and two open-response questions. The survey questions followed the line of

thought and sequence of the research questions. The two open-response questions gave Missouri public high school principals the opportunity to provide examples of personal experiences involving students who had been expelled.

This study was executed for the purpose of determining the perception of Missouri public high school principals on the topic of zero tolerance by examining the responses to the following questions: Does zero tolerance work? Is zero tolerance beneficial or detrimental to students? Which of the genders, male or female, utilize zero tolerance the most? What alternative is there to zero-tolerance long-term suspensions and expulsions? Emerging trends from examples given by Missouri public high school principals were identified and described.

Eighteen of the 44 respondents provided an answer to the open-ended question concerning the positive long-term outcomes from expulsion. Positive trends identified included graduating high school, gaining employment, being rehabilitated, and receiving a post-secondary education. Twenty of the 44 respondents provided an answer to the open-ended question concerning the negative long-term outcomes from expulsion. Negative trends identified included dropping out of school, being arrested, unemployment, and generational poverty.

Email addresses were acquired through the use of the MODESE website. A survey was sent via email to 583 Missouri public high school principals. The primary investigator needed at least 26 responses (13 female and 13 male). One hundred three Missouri public high school principals completed and submitted a survey. Of the 103 surveys, 22 were from female Missouri public high school principals and 81 were from male Missouri public high school principals. In an effort to utilize as many surveys as

possible, and in order to examine an equal number of surveys from the two genders, all 22 surveys from the female Missouri public high school principals were used. Since there were 81 male responses, 22 surveys were chosen at random and used to calculate the results of the study. A sequential table was created showing the order in which the survey results were submitted and to disclose the indiscriminate order of male Missouri public high school principals results to help the primary investigator identify the survey results to be used in this paper.

Four research questions served as the foundation for the study. Eight survey questions were used as a guide for exploration of participant perceptions and may be found in Appendix B.

1. Do Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations?

2. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?

3. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior?

4. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative?

The actual survey emailed to the Missouri public high school principals started with one question to identify gender, but did not include or attempt to collect any other identifiable information. The remaining six questions sought to answer the research questions listed above and can be found in Appendix B.

The literature review in Chapter Two included an examination of previous studies pertaining to zero tolerance. Topics within the literature review included the history of zero tolerance, the role of school administration in zero-tolerance expansion, the importance of attendance, consequences of zero-tolerance suspension and expulsion, motivation to succeed regardless of negative setback, characterization of success, obstacles to success, and gender and the relationship to discipline. Each topic within the literature review was intended to explore zero tolerance and to help determine if the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals concurred with previous research. There were a number of articles and studies on zero tolerance to provide a background of the subject and to help in gathering information for this research. Through the research in the literature review, it was discovered although policy and laws are made by legislators, school boards, and administrators, it is the school administrator who develops and directs the policy. The administrator is responsible for carrying out the policy; however, the administrator has a remarkable amount of influence which provides him/her with the capability of expanding policy beyond its original intended limits.

The first question serving as a foundation for the study involved determining if Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations. The history of zero tolerance was explored in order to understand where the term came from and how it became commonplace in the vocabulary of administrators. Another topic within the literature review used for this purpose was gender and the relationship to discipline. Male and female Missouri public high school principals may have differing opinions on the best

way to discipline students. This section was utilized to determine if one gender preferred zero tolerance more than the other.

The second question serving as a foundation for the study was designed to determine if there was a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days compared to those who were expelled for fewer days. To improve understanding, the importance of attendance was examined in the literature review. The fact students who are suspended long-term or who are expelled miss school cannot be denied. Identifying the consequences of missing school helped answer the question pertaining to the difference in academic outcome between students who are suspended more than and less than 90 days.

The third question serving as a foundation for the study prompted examination of whether Missouri public high school principals believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior. The section in the literature review on the role of school administration in zero-tolerance expansion was used in order to understand not only how zero tolerance began, but also who is responsible for the breadth and depth of zero-tolerance policy.

The last question serving as a foundation for the study was framed to determine whether Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended is positive or negative. The section within the literature review, consequences of zero-tolerance suspension and expulsion, included an exploration of cases of long-term suspension and expulsion and provided insight on its effect. Additionally, motivation to succeed regardless of negative setback was included in the literature review. This section was utilized in an effort to

understand the mindset of students and what it takes to overcome trauma. Since people

in general have differing views on what success is, a section on characterization of

success was included in the literature review. On the same note, obstacles to success

were included in the literature review to understand why long-term suspension and

expulsion can be positive for some students while being negative for others.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to a sampling of 44 Missouri public high school principals.

Although there are 583 Missouri public high school principals, the principal investigator

chose to utilize equal samplings of male and female participants. Of the 583 surveys

emailed to Missouri public high school principals, 103 high school principals completed

and submitted a survey response. Of the 103 responses, 22 were from female Missouri

public high school principals and 81 were from male Missouri public high school

principals. In order to provide results from equal samplings of the two genders, all 22

surveys from female administrators were used and 22 randomly chosen surveys from the

81 male administrators were used. Participation was limited to Missouri public high

school principals. Upon gathering the email addresses of all Missouri administrators

from the MODESE website, the email addresses of alternative school principals,

vocational schools principals, charter school principals, private school principals,

elementary school principals, middle school principals, assistant principals, and

superintendents were removed. The remaining principals included public schools

educating ninth through 12th-grade students.

Demographic Analysis

Informed consent and survey links were emailed to a census sample of all 583

Missouri public high school principals. Data were collected and yielded 103 responses

from 22 females and 81 males (see Figure 6). Due to existing research which indicates

there may be differences in female and male perceptions (Cuadrado et al., 2015), the

primary investigator elected to use a simple random sampling of 22 males to ensure equal

voice for both males and the 22 responding female participants.

High School Administrators' Perception of Zero Tolerance Survey   SurveyMonkey

**Q1 High School Administrators' Perception
of Zero Tolerance Survey**

Answered: 103   Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Female	21.36%	22
Male	78.64%	81
Total		103
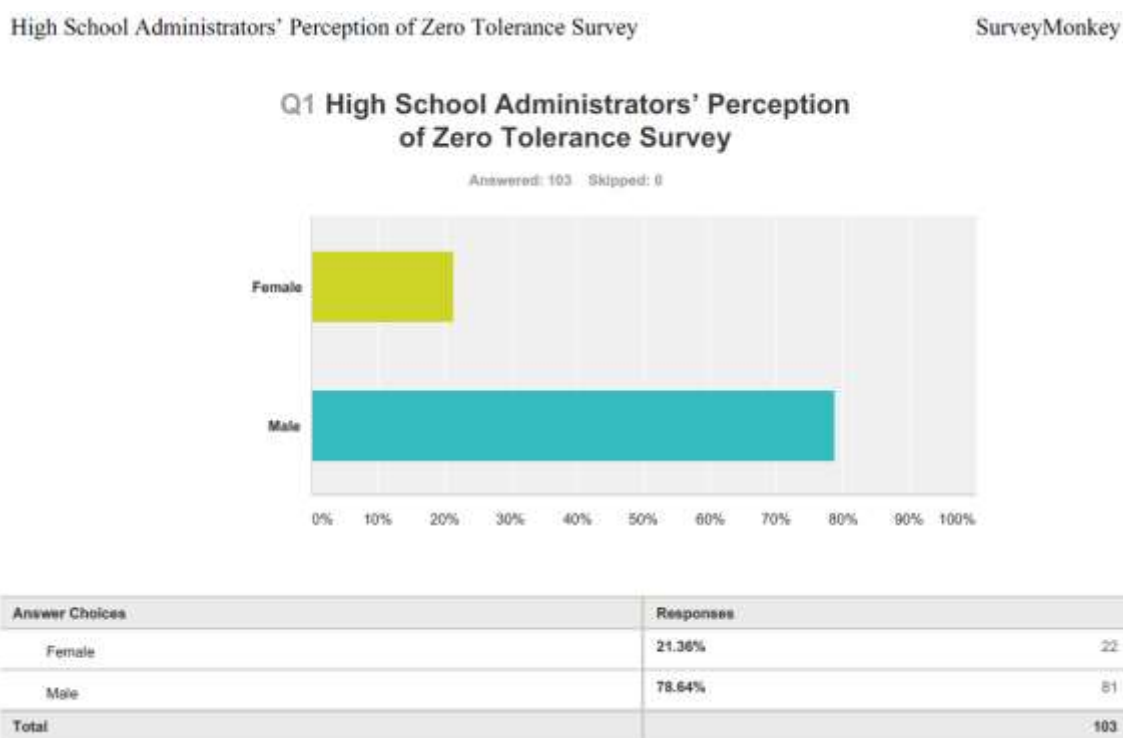
Figure 6. High school administrators' perception of zero tolerance. The survey

questions were arranged to correlate with the order of the research questions.

Since one purpose of the research was to determine which gender utilized zero

tolerance more, the first question on the survey asked each administrator to identify

his/her gender. Identifying gender was also necessary in making sure equal numbers of

surveys from male and female respondents were used. The sum of this question was used to tally responses to all other questions in the survey.

Question two asked specifically if Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have broken school regulations. This question correlated with the first research question. Once surveys were collected, responses were tallied to determine the number of Missouri public high school principals who believed and the number who did not believe zero tolerance was an acceptable policy for disciplining students. After tallying the total, the survey responses were separated into two additional categories, male and female, to find out which of the two genders was more apt to believe using zero-tolerance policies was acceptable.

Survey question three correlated with research question two to determine if students who receive long-term suspension or expulsion suffer academically. Or, do the students suffer academically regardless of the number of days they are suspended? Survey question four correlated with research question three to determine if suspension and expulsion accomplished the job for which they were intended. If the threat of suspension and expulsion did not change behavior, what disciplinary action would change student behavior?

Survey question five correlated with research question four to gain insight on the number of Missouri public high school principals who believe long-term suspension is positive and the number who believe it is negative. Questions six and seven, respectively, provided each Missouri public high school principal the opportunity to give specific examples of an instance of expulsion where the student returned to the district with a positive academic and long-term outcome and an example of a negative academic

and long-term outcome. These questions provided insight into the experiences of those who participated in the survey. Each of the two questions served as extensions of question five.

Summary of the Findings

A review of findings from the statistical analysis of data is presented in the following paragraphs. The data analysis is in the same sequence as the findings were presented in Chapter Four. Responses to questions are presented in total statistics and percentages.

Survey question one. Do Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school regulations?

The 44 respondents were split 25% to 75%, with the majority believing zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy. Eleven of the 44 respondents believed zero tolerance is an acceptable policy, while 33 of the 44 respondents believed zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy.

When the respondents were broken down by gender, four of the 11 females and seven of the 11 males believed zero tolerance is an acceptable policy. This equates to 18.18% of the 22 female respondents reporting zero tolerance is an acceptable policy, while 81.81% reported zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy. In comparison, seven male respondents (31.81%) believed zero tolerance is an acceptable policy and 68.18% believed zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy.

The comparison between male and female respondents demonstrates the difference in perception of zero tolerance. When categorizing the respondents who

believed zero tolerance is an acceptable discipline policy, with a total of 44 respondents,

9.09% of those respondents were female and 15.90% were male. In contrast, of the

respondents who believed zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy, 40.90%

were female and 34.09% were male.

Survey question two. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those

students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when

compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?

There were 44 respondents to this question. Only two of the 44 respondents

believed there was no difference in academic outcome for those students who were

expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those

who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies. This indicates

4.54% believed there was no difference in academic outcome and 95.45% believed there

was a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more

days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled

for fewer days for violating other school policies. The two respondents who believed

there was no difference in academic outcome were split, one male and one female.

Survey question three. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the

threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior?

Twenty-five of the 44 respondents believed the threat of suspension and expulsion

does deter negative student behavior, and 19 of the 44 respondents believed the threat of

suspension and expulsion does not deter negative student behavior. This indicates

56.81% of respondents believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does deter

negative student behavior, and 43.18% believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does not deter negative student behavior.

The respondents were also compared based on gender. Eleven of the 25 who believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does deter negative student behavior were female, which equals 44% of the 25, and 14 were male, which equals 56% of the 25 respondents. Fifty percent of the 22 female respondents believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does deter negative student behavior. In comparison, 63.63% of the 22 male respondents believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does deter negative student behavior.

Of those 44 respondents who believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does not deter negative student behavior, the female responses were tied with the number of females who believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does deter negative student behavior; 50% of the 22 female respondents or 25% of the total respondents. In comparison, the male respondents who believed the threat of suspension and expulsion does not deter negative student behavior was less; 36.36% of the 22 males or 18.18% of the total respondents.

Survey question four. Do Missouri public high school principals believe the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive or negative?

Respondents overwhelmingly (37 of the 44) believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are negative. Only seven respondents believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive, and none of the 44 respondents believed there is no long-term

impact. This indicates 84.09% believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are negative, and 15.90% believed the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive.

To grasp gender difference in perspectives, the responses were divided further. Three of the seven respondents (42.85%) who believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive were female and four of the seven (57.14%) were male. This indicates 13.63% of the 22 female respondents believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive. In comparison, 18.18% of the 22 male respondents believed the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive.

Respondents who believed the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are negative greatly outnumbered those who believed it was positive, 37 to seven. Nineteen of the 37 respondents (51.35%) were female, and 18 of the 37 respondents (48.64%) were male. Further division shows 43.18% of the 44 total respondents who believed the lasting effects for zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are negative were female and 40.90% were male.

Survey questions five and six. Can you give an example of an instance of expulsion where the student returned to the district with a positive academic and long-term outcome?

If any of the 44 Missouri public high school principals replied yes to this question, the respondent was prompted to describe the instance. Eighteen (40.90%) respondents replied "yes" to this question and then proceeded to provide an example. Trends were identified within the examples and then explained.

Seven of the 18 respondents (38.88%) stated a student had returned to school after expulsion and then proceeded to graduate; five were male (71.42%), and two were female respondents (28.57%). Five of the 18 respondents (27.77%) gave examples of students being rehabilitated in some form; two respondents were male (40%), and three respondents (60%) were female. Two of the 18 respondents (11.11%) gave examples of a student gaining and maintaining employment. Of the two respondents, one was male and one was female. Post-secondary education was identified once within responses to all 103 surveys; however, when the 44 usable surveys were pulled for calculation, there were no examples of post-secondary education.

Survey questions seven and eight. Can you give an example of an instance of expulsion where there was a long-term negative outcome?

If any of the 44 Missouri public high school principals replied yes to this question, the respondent was prompted to describe the instance. Twenty of the 44 respondents (45.45%) replied "yes" to this question and were prompted to provide an example. Of the 20 respondents, eight (40%) were female and 12 (60%) were male. Trends were identified and then calculated.

The largest percentage of examples included students dropping out of school. Seventeen of the 20 respondents (85%) gave an example of a student who dropped out of school after being expelled. Twenty percent of the twenty respondents gave an example of a student being arrested or spending time in jail after his/her expulsion. Two of the 20 respondents (10%) gave unemployment as an example of a negative outcome after expulsion. Although there were no specific examples of generational poverty, 100% of

the examples which included unemployment also included the explanation of the student

dropping out of school.

Conclusions

      Research question one. Figure 2 represents the findings pertaining to research

question one. The majority of Missouri high school administrators do not find zero

tolerance to be an acceptable policy for disciplining students who have violated school

regulations. When asked if zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining

students who have violated school regulations, 33 of the 44 respondents said "No."

Although 75% of the respondents agreed zero tolerance is not an acceptable policy, the

largest majority against zero tolerance were female administrators, with 81.81% in

agreement zero tolerance is not an acceptable discipline policy. The majority of the male

administrators (68.18%) also believed zero tolerance is not an unacceptable policy;

however, the margin between those for and those against was not as wide as the female

population.

      Since the implementation of zero-tolerance policies by the federal government in

an effort to make schools safe, school administrators have arbitrarily expanded the

discipline policies (Mongan & Walker, 2012). School administrators took the zero-

tolerance policy and applied it to all areas of school discipline, making it possible to

suspended or expel students for minor offences such as willful disobedience, disrespect,

and dress code violations (Fergus, 2015, p. 17). Water guns, toys, and nail clippers

(Jones, 2013) were interpreted as weapons. The time-honored child's game of imaginary

guns became an action worthy of suspension (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). A parent

accidentally leaving a butter knife in a lunch box or calling his/her child on the student's

cell phone could result in the student being suspended or expelled (Skiba, 2008). Other actions that could cause a student to be suspended included wearing midriff shirts, stealing as little as $2.00, participating in a food fight (Skiba, 2014), swearing, and being verbally disrespectful (Gutierrez, 2016).

Researchers have suggested a connection between the number of suspensions and expulsions, not to the number of discipline incidents in a school, but to the attitudes and perceptions of the school administrator on the value of suspension and expulsion (Heilbrun et al., 2015). Based on the results of study and the Heilbrun et al. (2015) research, the high schools employing principals who do not believe zero tolerance is an appropriate discipline policy will have fewer cases of student suspensions and expulsions than high schools with administrators who believe zero tolerance is an appropriate discipline policy. Heilbrun et al. (2015) wrote, "Skiba (2007) surveyed public high school principals in Indiana and reported that their endorsement of zero tolerance as a disciplinary philosophy predicted higher suspension rates in their school" (p. 490).

When comparing the number of male Missouri public high school principals to female Missouri public high school principals on the belief zero tolerance is an acceptable discipline policy, this research indicated a higher percentage of Missouri male high school principals believed zero tolerance is an acceptable discipline policy in contrast to female high school principals, almost two to one. Comparatively, 31.81% of the 22 males and 18.18% of the 22 females believed zero tolerance is an acceptable discipline policy. One possible explanation for the gender's difference in opinion on discipline comes from a report by Lysenko et al. (2013), who stated males experience harsher discipline than females both physically and verbally. In a study conducted by

Albritton et al. (2014) about disciplining children, males and females indicated different

areas of concern. Females wanted to learn about discipline because of inconsistencies in

disciplining children and because they were concerned about child safety and

development (Albritton et al., 2014). On the other hand, the males in the study, although

also concerned about discipline techniques and child development, were interested to

know how to discipline a child in order to correct bad behavior, not cause physical harm,

and establish an authoritative role (Albritton et al., 2014).

Overwhelmingly, Missouri public high school principals believe zero tolerance is

not an acceptable discipline policy, three to one. Blad (2014) reported a widely varying

rate of suspension and expulsion among states not due to the difference in children, but

due to the difference in administrative training, professional development, and policy.

Blad (2014) quoted U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, "It is adult behavior that

needs to change" (para. 5).

Research question two. Figure 3 represents the findings for question two.

Forty-two of the 44 respondents (95%) indicated there is a difference in academic

outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe

Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for fewer days for violating

other school policies. Only two Missouri public high school principals believed there is

no difference in academic outcome when comparing students expelled more than 90 days

to those suspended or expelled for less than 90 days.

The best source of research material backing the outcome of research question

two comes from studies on school attendance. Gutierrez (2016) stated suspension and

expulsion "removes students from the classroom and frequently fails to provide other

alternative education, resulting in learning deficits that can impact the student's continued success in life" (para. 5). It is detrimental to the student and society when students are not in school; teachers cannot provide instruction to students who are not there (Mahoney, 2015). Students who are absent, regardless of the reason, miss instruction, have trouble catching up due to the fast-paced structure of classes, fall behind their peers, and become future risks of dropping out (Mahoney, 2015). Data from Mahoney's (2015) research provide justification for regular school attendance; 90% of students who miss five or fewer days will graduate on time, and only 63% of students who miss six to nine days will graduate. Being suspended or expelled only once doubles the chance of being retained a grade and increases the chance of dropping out of school (Gutierrez, 2016).

Not only is school attendance important to the student, but it is important to individual families and to society (Gutierrez, 2016). Families are affected by student suspension when a parent is forced to quit a job in order to stay home with the student, to find alternative methods of supervision, to hire a tutor, or to pay for online classes (Gutierrez, 2016). Beyond the individual student and the family, absenteeism is a problem for society due to the risk of dropping out of school and the problems that go along with it (Mahoney, 2015). High school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, earn less than a high school graduate, have more health problems, be incarcerated, and become dependent on welfare and other government programs (McKee & Caldarella, 2016).

Male and female Missouri public high school principals equally indicated there is a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled 90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those who were expelled for

fewer days for violating other school policies. The resulting data of this research question supports the primary investigator's conception students who are suspended from school are more likely to fail, fall behind, and eventually drop out of school. In the words of Balfanz and Byrnes (2012), "Students need to attend school daily to succeed" (p. 4).

Research question three. Figure 4 represents the data from research question three. Twenty-five (56.81%) Missouri public high school principals who participated in this survey believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student behavior. Of the 25 respondents, 14 (56%) were male and 11 (44%) were female. These data suggest suspension and expulsion may be part of school policy, whether used or not, because the threat of being removed from school supports an obedient student body.

In the Mayworm and Sharkey (2014) article "Ethical Considerations in a Three-Tiered Approach to School Discipline Policy and Practice," two purposes of discipline were identified: development of student self-discipline and management of student behavior. Suspension and expulsion falls into the category of managing students, because its purpose is to control student behavior and increase policy compliance through the use of rules and expectations (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). This follows the Heilbrun et al. 2015) belief schools with greater percentages of suspensions also have administrators who support zero-tolerance policies. A concept known as deterrence theory "states that punishment is the most efficient way to control student behavior" (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014, p. 694), because students fear the consequences related to misbehavior. The zero-tolerance policy is an example of deterrence theory because it utilizes suspension and expulsion to manage student behavior (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014).

The concept behind deterrence theory and the goal of managing students justifies the data for question three; however, the cause for the 56.81% - 43.18% split could be due to the fact suspension and expulsion, or the threat thereof, is only effective for the majority of students (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). According to Mayworm and Sharkey (2014), in order for suspension and expulsion to be effective, it must be perceived as fair.

Are suspension and expulsion considered fair punishments when paired with zero tolerance? According to Mongan and Walker (2012), zero-tolerance policies, as they exist in schools today, cannot be considered fair punishment when the policies can randomly assign punishment to a population with no way of avoiding the punishment. Consider the fictional story proposed by a judge on the matter of zero tolerance (Mongan & Walker, 2012). A valedictorian was framed by another student and was found to be in possession of a weapon that had been planted in his/her backpack (Mongan & Walker, 2012). Based on zero-tolerance policy, the valedictorian would likely be expelled, even though he/she had no idea the weapon was there (Mongan & Walker, 2012). With that fictional story being plausible, any student on campus that day could have been expelled (Mongan & Walker, 2012). With random assignment of suspension and expulsion a possibility, students no longer consider that form of punishment fair, and it loses its potential to manage student behavior.

Research question four. Figure 5 represents the data from research question four. Thirty-seven (84.09%) of the 44 Missouri public high school principals respondents believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are negative. The percentage of female administrators compared to male administrators who believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or

suspended are negative was comparable, with 86.36% of the female sample and 81.81% of the male sample. Only seven (15.90%) respondents indicated the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled or suspended are positive, three female and four male administrators.

Robbins (2005) wrote, "Zero tolerance is an education policy and practice that undermines the life chances of students" (para. 1). Consequences such as suspension, expulsion, and referral to authorities are common results of zero-tolerance policy, which has unintended consequences (Aull, 2012). Aull (2012) provided specific examples of students who had experienced consequences due to zero-tolerance policies: (1) 12-year-old Alexa Gonzalez of New York was handcuffed, escorted to the police station, issued a court summons, and given eight hours of community service for doodling with a an erasable marker on her desk; (2) a 13-year-old in Florida guilty of repeatedly passing gas and turning off a classmates computer was arrested; (3) a 15-year-old in Wisconsin was handcuffed and hauled out of the cafeteria for stealing chicken nuggets; and (4) another 12-year-old, guilty of class disruption, being loud, and getting agitated with an administrator was charged with a misdemeanor. Behavior once handled by the principal now calls for suspension and contact with authorities (Monahan et al., 2014).

Additional information was gathered for research question four by allowing Missouri public high school principals the ability to provide examples of personal experiences involving students who were expelled. There were two such opportunities, one for negative long-term effects and one for positive long-term effects. Since responses to research question four indicated 84.09% of the respondents believed expulsion has a negative effect on students, the personal experiences given by those

respondents were broken into categorical negative results: dropping out of school, arrests, unemployment, and generational poverty.

Dropping out of school is one of the most prevalent unintended consequences of the zero-tolerance policy, according to the respondents. Dropping out of school limits students' life opportunities (McKee & Caldarella, 2016), making it a precursor to unemployment, low wages, few employment opportunities, a decreased chance for advancement, more health problems, contact with authorities, incarceration, and dependency on welfare and government programs (Fan & Wolters, 2014). Dropping out of school has long term ramifications which may originate from a loss of self-esteem after dropping out and the desire to turn to drugs as a way of coping (Khalkhali, Sharifi, & Nikyar, 2013). Khalkhali et al. (2013) stated, "Students' perception of need for self-determination and competence satisfaction is a strong predictor of their dropout intention" (p. 287).

Dropping out of school is a process that can be identified through the following risk factors as a student progresses from elementary into junior high and then into high school: poor attendance, low grades, and failure in core classes (McKee & Caldarella, 2016). However, Spark (2014) asserted some students who end up dropping out of school do so because they have been faced with a sudden event that leads them to ending their education. Based on Spark's (2014) theory, whether a student showed signs of dropping out throughout his/her education does not matter; once a student is faced with a life-changing event, such as expulsion, the student is more likely to drop out. Freud would categorize Spark's (2014) event as trauma, because the event disrupted consciousness and is directed by incomprehensibility (Barnaby, 2012). According to

Lewis (2012), "Extreme situations destroy the capacity of language to convey meaning and are meant to destroy the selfhood of the victim, especially in relation to others" (p. 303).

Regardless of the long or short-term motive for student drop outs, attendance plays a huge factor in a student's decision (McKee & Caldarella, 2016). McKee and Caldarella (2016) wrote, "78% of students with attendance rates below 80% eventually drop out of school" (p. 518). Suspending or expelling students forces them to be absent, fall behind academically, and often fail a grade level, which McKee and Caldarella (2016) identified as another factor associated with dropping out.

Contact with authorities, which can lead to police records, arrests, and incarceration, is the second-most prevalent unintended consequence according the survey. Aull (2012) called it "criminalization of student misbehavior" (p. 180), and Monahan et al. (2014) called it the "school-to-prison pipeline" (p. 1110). Students who have been removed from the school setting due to suspension or expulsion have time in which they are not supervised and have nothing to do, which can lead to delinquent behavior and arrest (Monahan et al., 2014). The expulsion also means students not only have extra time available to them for mischief, they also have less time with positive influences at school and more time to spend with delinquent peers (Monahan et al., 2014). Monahan et al. (2014) noted, "School suspension can lead to negative behavioral or emotional outcomes for teens… If it is the case that the negative effects of school discipline on behavioral outcomes may be strongest among those who are the least likely to be expelled" (p. 1112).

Unemployment was another unintended consequence, according to the Missouri public high school principal's answers on the survey. As identified in the section on dropouts, students who have been suspended miss school, fall behind academically, and eventually drop out. Dropping out of school then leads to a higher risk of unemployment and therefore beginning or continuing a cycle of generational poverty due to the struggle to acquire and maintain employment. Miller et al. (2014) argued there is a stronger link between the adverse effects of poverty and success than between disease and cigarettes. Once an individual falls into the rut of unemployment and poverty, it is difficult to gain success and break the cycle.

Although students across the nation may face the same punishment for behavior falling in the realm of zero tolerance, the long-term consequences are experienced very differently (Robbins, 2005). Robbins (2005) rated the ability of one group of students (wealthier) over the ability of another group of students (poor) in their capacity to obtain extra-curricular services to allow them to gain an education through other means, socialize with others through costly parent paid-for activities, and be supervised to keep the student from participating in delinquent behavior. It is the primary investigator's belief even if some students stand a better chance of overcoming the setback of being suspended or expelled, zero-tolerance policies requiring suspension and expulsion damage student self-esteem and cause them and their families to work harder to reach the same aspirations as those who were not suspended; many students never overcome it.

Implications for Practice

Heilbrun et al. (2015) wrote, "The use of zero tolerance as a disciplinary method in schools is highly controversial and has been associated with negative outcomes for

students" (p. 491). The impact on a student receiving suspension or expulsion is life-long, impacting their chances of getting a job, going into the military, and getting financial aid (Alvarez, 2013). With the consequence of suspension and expulsion in mind, three issues were raised in this research: (1) the principal's role in making and carrying out policy, (2) the principal's use of management of student behavior style of discipline, and the need to educate all students regardless of behavior. In the following paragraphs, each issue will be described with a plausible solution to that problem explained.

Mongan and Walker (2012) reported principals as chief administrative officers should be targeted, because they have the ability to use discretionary power granted by the zero-tolerance policy to suspend or expel students for non-threatening, non-dangerous behavior. In every instance of zero-tolerance discipline, the principal should include certain stakeholders: teachers, student, parent/guardian, and the principal. The act which leads the principal to consider suspension or expulsion should be dissected. What did the student do? Was the act a willful attempt to break school policy? Is there a threat of danger to others? Are there circumstances beyond the students control causing him/her to misbehave? Is the behavior typical of the student?

Once these questions have been explored, the principal should make a decision that will bring order to the school or classroom, but also fit the crime. In other words, accidentally leaving a butter knife in your lunch bag, talking on your cell phone, showing your midriff, and writing on a desk do not necessitate expulsion. Zero-tolerance policy should be utilized as it was intended; only dangerous behavior involving real weapons or

drugs should qualify a student for expulsion. Suspension and expulsion should be a last resort (Alvarez, 2013).

Schools in some states have taken it upon themselves to keep students in the classroom rather than kicking them to the street (Alvarez, 2013). Those schools are proving there are other avenues for disciplining students and are providing them with an education (Alvarez, 2013). A school in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, saw results immediately after starting a program designed to keep students in school (Alvarez, 2013). The program set up by the Broward County School received support from law enforcement and the juvenile justice department along with civil rights groups because it kept students out of the criminal justice system (Alvarez, 2013). The program developed by Broward County Schools modified the zero-tolerance policy by placing a ranking system on 11 nonviolent misdemeanors so students were not automatically arrested (Alvarez, 2013). Students were given second and third chances, received counseling, and performed community service instead of jail time; this gave students the opportunity to change their behavior (Alvarez, 2013). The Broward County Schools system utilizes administrators, counselors, and parents (Alvarez, 2013). By including the stakeholders, the principal has the opportunity to extend knowledge of the seriousness of the behavior to the student and his/her parent; learn about the student's life circumstances, previous behavior, and intentions; and make a well-informed decision on what could affect the student long-term (Alvarez, 2013).

Mayworm and Sharkey (2014) offered a second type of school discipline, development of self-discipline, as opposed to management of student behavior. As explained in previous sections, managing student behavior requires setting rules and

regulations, as well as consequences for breaking those rules and regulations (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Although it is true this method of discipline is effective for most students, it is not effective for all students; however, one goal of discipline is to prepare students for society outside of school (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). The implementation of a discipline policy which develops student self-discipline helps educators reach their goal of creating responsible citizens (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014), not because the students fear the consequences, but because they want to do what is right.

A discipline policy that meets the criteria for self-discipline is positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), which includes proactive, preventative methods to get at the reason for misbehavior and provides needed support in academic engagement (Gutierrez, 2016). Mahoney (2015) described PBS, which involves the same aspects of PBIS without the intervention element. The PBS components include "a) explicit teaching and reinforcement of a small number of expectations, b) implementation of consistent consequences for violations of rules, and c) use of data to drive intervention planning and monitoring of outcomes" (Mahoney, 2015, p. 127).

Suspending and expelling students has become too easy; however, discipline cannot be seen as a one-size-fits-all method (Monahan, 2014). Students who in years past would have received discipline in school are now being sent home without a source of education (Gutierrez, 2016)In Mallette's (2012) review of Rumberger's book, she stated a need for accountability on schools to educate all students regardless of behavior. After a student has behaved in a manner meeting a school's policy criteria for suspension or expulsion, the student should meet with a committee of stakeholders to determine the student's fate (Mallette, 2012). Stakeholders should include the administrator, at least

one teacher, the student, and the student's parent or guardian (Mallette, 2012). Once the

decision to suspend or expel is made by the principal, the same group of stakeholders

should develop a plan of action to provide the student with access to an education

(Mallette, 2012). Access to education should not be limited to students with an IEP

(Mallette, 2012). The plan of action should include a viable way for the student to be

educated (Mallette, 2012). The best and most efficient way for that to take place is on

campus; however, if the stakeholders agree the student should not remain on campus, an

alternative location should be designated and a way for the student to receive instruction

and credit should be supplied (Mallette, 2012).

Recommendations for Future Research

The literature review portion of this research was focused on the nationwide

concerns about zero-tolerance policies (Alvarez, 2013). Evidence shows zero tolerance, a

get-tough policy, leads to arrests, academic failure, and high rates of dropout (Alvarez,

2013). The number of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests increased over the past two

decades (Alvarez, 2013). The literature review pinpointed a variety of aspects of zero

tolerance, including its history, expansion, and unintended consequences. Although the

primary investigator's examination of zero tolerance focused on unintended

consequences due to the implementation of zero-tolerance policy, the long-term extent of

negative outcomes was unexpected.

It is the primary investigator's recommendation for extended research on the

individual outcomes, over a period of 10 or more years, of students who have suffered

suspension or expulsion due to zero-tolerance policy. The researcher should not just look

at the student's long-term outcome, but should connect the outcome with the behavior, or

act, triggering the suspension or expulsion. It is important to determine the extent of school suspension and expulsion based on the school's zero-tolerance policy.

Several questions should be asked to further the research on zero tolerance. In what year did the student receive long-term suspension or expulsion? What was the student's grade point average (GPA)? Did the student have a history of discipline problems? If so, what were they? What was the rule/policy broken by the student? Was the student given the opportunity to explain his/her actions? Was there any type of support offered to the student? What happened to the student during the time of the long-term suspension or expulsion? Did the student consider himself/herself to be successful or a failure five years later, 10 years later, even 15 years later?

The rationale for the research is the need for administrators and lawmakers to realize the consequences of their actions when creating laws and policies for schools. Although most government lawmakers and school policymakers have best interests at heart, laws and policy should be focused beyond the here and now. Stakeholders should study the long-term outcome of laws and policies in order to make the necessary adjustments to benefit students, not just today, but in the future. Currently, some states are experiencing a push by parents and other organized groups to amend the law so principals have more discretion in assigning punishment (Alvarez, 2013).

Summary

In this chapter, a summation of the study was presented, along with a synopsis of the research design and procedures. The presentation also included limitations and implications. A summary of the findings as they related to the research and survey

questions were gathered and presented. Specific conclusions were made based on data, concerning results of each survey question and a comparison of the gender's responses.

This study focused on the perceptions of Missouri public high school principals on the policy of zero tolerance. Little support was found for zero tolerance as an acceptable discipline policy, with even fewer females supporting zero tolerance than males. There were a large percentage of Missouri public high school principals who indicated zero tolerance had a negative effect on a student's academics, with no difference between male and female administrators. There was some support for using suspension and expulsion as a threat of punishment in order to control behavior, with more support from males than females. There was very little support for zero tolerance as a discipline policy based on administrative perception of the long-term negative effects for students who have been suspended or expelled, with more support coming from males than females.

The data reveal a problem with zero tolerance when students are suspended and expelled for non-threatening, non-dangerous behavior (Denti & Guerin, 2014), which leads to academic and psychological damage (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016). Students who are suspended and expelled from school are denied a free and public education (Gutierrez, 2016). School attendance is important to the long-term success of a student (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012), and when a student is suspended or expelled, he/she is at great risk of dropping out of school (Chang, & Jordan, 2011). Schools should be safe, and policy should be written, passed, and executed to benefit all students. The purpose of education is to help develop human capital while attending to the physical, social, and emotional individuality of students (Kennedy, 2015). According to Skiba (2008):

Although it seems intuitive that removing disruptive students from school will

make schools better places for those students who remain, or that severe

punishment will improve the behavior of the punished student or of those who

witness that punishment, the available evidence consistently flies in the face of

these beliefs. Zero tolerance has not been shown to improve school climate or

school safety. (p. 860)

Evidence supports schools keeping students who have broken the law in a school setting

in order to keep them off the streets and away from people and activities that could cause

them to get into more trouble (Alvarez, 2013). Those students should be offered

counseling and other support designed to change behavior (Alvarez, 2013).

Appendix A

Lindenwood University

School of Education
209 S. Kingshighway
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

"Missouri Public High School Principal's Perception of Zero Tolerance"

Principal Investigator ___Sherry McMasters_
Telephone: ████████████ E-mail: ████████████████

Participant _____Contact info _____

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Sherry McMasters under the guidance of Dr. Julie Williams. The purpose of this research is to determine how effective high school principals perceive zero tolerance to be.

2. a) Your participation will involve:
   Read and sign the consent form. Read and answer the questions in the survey to the best of your ability, and then submit the survey to be used in the PI's research.

   A survey will be emailed to the 583 Missouri public high school principals. The first 13 to 50 female completed surveys and the first 13 to 50 male completed surveys will be utilized for the research. An equal number of female and male completed surveys will be used. The exact number will depend on the number of surveys completed and returned to the PI.

   b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be 20 to 30 minutes.

   Approximately 100 high school principals will be involved in this research.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about zero tolerance policies in Missouri schools and may help society.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study and the information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a safe location.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Sherry McMasters, at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Julie Williams, at ▓▓▓▓▓▓. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Jann Weitzel, Vice President for Academic Affairs, at 636-949-4846.

   I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date   Participant's Printed Name

_____   _____
Signature of Principal Investigator   Date   Investigator Printed Name

Appendix B

Missouri Public High School Principals Perception of Zero Tolerance
Questionnaire

1. Gender: ◯Female   ◯Male

2. Do you believe zero tolerance is an acceptable policy for disciplining students
   who have broken school regulations?   ◯Yes   ◯No

3. Is there a difference in academic outcome for those students who were expelled
   90 or more days for violations of the Safe Schools Act when compared to those
   who were expelled for fewer days for violating other school policies?
        ◯Yes   ◯No

4. Do you believe the threat of suspension and expulsion deters negative student
   behavior?
        ◯Yes   ◯No

5. Do you believe the lasting effects of zero tolerance on students who were expelled
   or suspended are positive or negative?
        ◯Positive   ◯Negative   ◯No Long-Term Impact

6. Can you give an example of an instance of expulsion where the student returned
   to the district with a positive academic and long-term outcome?
        ◯Yes   ◯No

   If yes, please describe:

7. Can you give an example of an instance of expulsion where there was a long-term
   negative outcome?
        ◯Yes   ◯No

   If yes, please describe:

Appendix C

Lindenwood Approval Letter from IRB

LINDENWOOD

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY   ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

DATE: October 10, 2016

TO: Sherry McMasters
FROM: Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: [953234-1] High School Administrators' Perception of Zero Tolerance
IRB REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: October 7, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE: October 6, 2017
REVIEW TYPE:

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research project. Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received   based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the IRB.

This project has been determined to be a   project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the completion/amendment form for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of .

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

If you have any questions, please contact Theodore Cohen at (636) 949-4817 or tcohen@lindenwood.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

If you have any questions, please send them to IRB@lindenwood.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board's records.

Appendix D

Open-Ended Survey Response 1

Please describe the instance of expulsion where the student returned to the district with a positive academic and long-term outcome.

1. The student came back and the parents had reflected with the student. He had completed his work, spent extra time after school to get caught up and was not a discipline issue again.

2. Student was able to put aside her drug addiction on returned to stay on pace to graduate high school.

3. Suspended students for shooting others with BB gun that was brought to school. The shooters: one is a drop out the other will graduate as valedictorian.

4. There wasn't a blank to qualify whether I believe in zero-tolerance policies; however, I believe that while the consequence has a negative perception, you have to take a stance of zero tolerance in instances of severe behavior such as assault (not just fighting), distribution of drugs, etc. for the protection of the other students. I have had students who were long-term suspended and came back and never had another issue up until they graduated. We provided support for the student to graduate with his cohort so we try to separate the behavior from the academic consequences.

5. 180-day suspension for weapons at school. Juvenile referral as well with court supervised probation and mandated home visits. Student had an IEP so district still provided service in a before school setting on campus. Parental figure was responsible for transportation. The boy was a model student during his first 90 days of expulsion; never late for his before school class, kept all mandated visits, etc.

Parental figure will petition the board at end of first semester to be allowed to return to school second semester. Given his behaviors and based on the recommendation of his juvenile officer and the in house CARE team, we will probably advocate for him to return to class. I anticipate a positive outcome in this case.

6. Due to involvement with multiple agencies the student received support which leveraged a positive outcome.

7. Students that are suspended due to drug abuse. We have them go through therapy/counseling before they return. This helps them heal and become healthier when they return. The majority of them stay clean and are successful upon their return.

8. Students who left school for fighting come back and go to mediation before returning to class to ensure they can work well with others

9. 17 yr. old with systemic discipline problems and no academic engagement. Intelligent, self-directed, and had adult level responsibilities outside of school. Expelled for using a pellet gun to shoot out the lights on the outside of the HS building. Returned to public education at 19 and completed a diploma program. Went on to get an associate's degree.

10. SpEd student was expelled, but due to manifestation determination hearing, the district was required to provide services. We arranged for off-campus services, student was able to complete high school. Discovered later that he had worked construction and ended up starting his own business.

11. An 8th grade student that was caught with pot at school and was expelled. It was late in the year, but he was allowed to begin his freshman year and never had another incident. He is grown, productive, and respected.

12. We had an instance where a stud (The survey respondent did not finish the statement.)

13. I had a student who received multiple suspensions of OSS. He came from a very different culture than our small rural school and thought he had to be tough and be threatening to survive. That isn't needed or acceptable in a small rural school. After multiple suspensions, he got the message and has now acclimated to our area and culture. I think the change probably was due as much to time and distance away from negative influences as it was to suspensions.

14. I have most of my long term suspension students still return to school and earn their high school diploma. I would guess over 70% have. Of those who did not, there is only one who I think would have if she had not been suspended

15. Student was suspended for multiple violations, finally for the school year. After having more intensive therapy and treatment in a group home setting—Rosa Parks facility, they returned to the high school and recovered their credits in a high school setting and graduated—early. Issues related to expulsion or long-term suspension— you probably need to differentiate between the two. Expulsion is necessary to prevent harm to other students, but should be used in rare instances that are investigated thoroughly. However, expulsion is a general term for some districts—it doesn't always mean "gone forever". Some use the term "expulsion" to mean 180 days out, which is the max a supt. can do, principals can only do 10. The school

board does an expulsion—never return to the school. There really is no positive outcome if a district refuses to take a student back and other districts can choose to keep a student out based on the original expulsion—this is obvious. So, you seem to be intertwining terms—long-term suspension and expulsion. Your question above intertwines the meaning and unfortunately, your survey shows clear bias toward NOT suspending students long-term and/or expelling them. I'd consider a more neutral way to inform your study and consider some operational definitions to help those you are surveying. There are a number of pathways to explore with your topic—legal, procedural, due process, laws, viewpoints of the community on how incidents are handled, relationships between law enforcement and school district. There are varying levels of tolerance from district to district…you might test this…What's the tolerance level?

16. Student suspended for multiple drug possessions, distribution, etc, returned and graduated. Another who was suspended for a semester is currently successfully gaining credits and learning in my building. The Missouri Options program, credit recovery systems, and a successful alternative school program can assist students in finding school success and graduating. The safe schools act provides clear guidelines for safety of all students. However, context and common sense must be applied to all investigations of issues of this nature.

17. A behavior plan was implemented by the administration and parents to move the student forward. That student has not had a referral of any kind since the plan was developed.

18. A student assaulted a staff member and was expelled for the remainder of the school year. The student returned the next year and graduated.

19. We have had many students with long term suspensions that have come back and made it through to graduation.

20. A student was suspended for possession of drugs. To my knowledge, the student quit using, graduated from high school and became gainfully employed.

21. A student was suspended for 90 days and returned in regular classes, plus credit recovery classes and is now graduating a semester early.

22. A student apologized and really wanted to come back to school and learn.

23. Students make mistakes. If a student learns from the experience, he/she has the opportunity to return to school and work hard to make up the work missed. I have seen this occur in a couple of students; however, I've also seen situations in which students who are not motivated get further behind and increase the risk of becoming a drop out.

24. Student threatened to kill her teacher, after expulsion for 180 days student returned with positive attitude and is doing great. She received treatment from a facility that made a positive impact on her life.

25. Home discipline and expectations while suspended were not pleasing. Has been much better since.

26. Returned after long term drug suspension and graduated on time with class.

27. Three last year who brought drugs to school, were all falling numerous courses. All three returned with counseling services provided, held to drug testing randomly agreement, and only one F between the three. This is just the most recent example.

28. Student suspended 180 days for distribution of drugs, returned to school graduated with 3.2 GPA.

29. There are lots of them. These questions are not as simple as a click on a survey. In some instances, Zero Tolerance is necessary and you are happy it exists. In others cases, you hate it and think it's bad for the student. The problem with this survey is the exact problem with Zero Tolerance: it's just not that easy.

30. A student was expelled for 180 days. Because the parents had adequate resources they were able to participate in online school and those credits were accepted by the district.

31. Shawn was a sophomore when he was on his way to being expelled. He threatened a teacher and said that he had better watch his back at the teacher's home. Shawn dropped out before he was actually expelled. He moved out on his own and realized that life was tough. He matured and came back to school. The teacher he threatened told him that all the "crap" they had been through was all worth it when Shawn walked across that stage. Shawn graduated and is friends with the teacher on Facebook and publicly thanked him for how he treated Shawn throughout high school.

32. Student distributed an illegal substance on campus as a 9th grader and returned after a 180-day suspension to graduate from high school with his class.

Appendix E

Open-Ended Survey Response 2

Please describe an example of an instance of expulsion where there was a long term negative outcome.

1. The student ended up dropping out of school and never getting his GED.

2. A student was expelled after a lengthy ISS assignment for repeated misbehavior in music class. This was the only class in which the student acted out. Two core subject area teachers were allowed to take the student to their classroom for instruction without incident. That was suspended after a couple of weeks. When the student fell asleep in ISS the student was suspended. The student dropped out of school following the suspension. Ten years later this student struggles to hold down a job due to lack of a good education, but has never been arrested or jailed.

3. Loss to credits and unable to graduate. Difficultly in providing SPED support.

4. I have suspended 4 students for weapons charges, 3 with knives longer than 3.5", one with a BB gun in the trunk of his car. None graduated high school.

5. Student with a safe schools violation dropped out.

6. Student expelled for weapons possession. Student was a senior and on track to graduate. Student was not a repeat offender. Student never graduated.

7. The consequence of certain behaviors has serious ramifications. When the price of certain behaviors endangers the lives of students, the punishment and its consequences must be severe. Sadly, those that would commit such transgressions will ultimately affect themselves the most.

8. Student was suspended long term. Upon the students return he/she were placed in the districts alternative school. The student lasted approx. two weeks in alt school then dropped out. Former student had a child whom he/she never sees and works in a saw mill.

9. Student ended up in more trouble and was arrested.

10. Suspended students for shooting others with a BB gun that was brought to school. One is a dropout the other will be the valedictorian this year.

11. Three students smoking pot on school grounds. It was in April so all three students received a 10-day suspension with a referral to the superintendent for further disciplinary action. All three were removed for the rest of the school year. One had enough credits to graduate, one took a full year to complete one credit of math but did receive his diploma but it was a year later the last one never returned to school. Ended up in jail and now prison.

12. Student was introduced to drugs.

13. We had a student who refused to reduce his suspension by going to counseling for drug addiction and his suspension ended up being long-term. He ended up not coming back and is in jail for selling drugs.

14. Student with high honors was expelled for over 90 days and when he returned his grades plummeted and eventually dropped out.

15. Every expulsion situation that I have encountered resulted in no continuance of education for the students involved. While I believe that these few situation did warrant expulsion, zero tolerance policies do in fact handcuff disciplinarians in situations where more ability to use judgement would result in better outcomes.

16. Drop out.

17. Upon return, the student found himself to be too far behind from a credit standpoint. The student eventually dropped out.

18. Yes, but the student was already heading down the wrong path. It cannot be determined that the suspension/expulsion created or assistance in the negative outcome.

19. We have never expelled anyone in my 16 years in the District…

20. Before I began my career in administration, when I was in the classroom, there was a young man who was expelled for 180 days for bringing drugs to school to distribute. He returned to school very briefly the following year but soon dropped out since he was now a year behind his former classmates. He did not finish school. I do not know of his whereabouts now.

21. Failure to graduate and the long-term negative implications associated with it.

22. I had a student that was put on a long-term suspension for distribution of a controlled substance. That student eventually ended up dropping out of high school.

23. Chronically misbehaving 16 year old who was expelled for having a weapons violation (gun in a locker). He and another student were buying and selling the weapon and so he had it at school for that purpose. This student, now an adult, has been incarcerated on and off. I believe he is currently incarcerated.

24. Student was expelled and despite efforts of the district to get him to return the following year, he decided it wasn't worth his time and simply dropped out. He was unable to secure and retain a job. Years later he returned to my office and let me know he had received his GED and would be willing to come talk to any kid that was

considering dropping out (he stated, "It's harder than I thought and I should've swallowed my pride and stayed in school.").

25. Usually ends in drop out or "home schooling."

26. Student eventually dropped out.

27. Student was expelled and therefore was unable to complete high school. That has a long term negative outcome on their life.

28. The student was suspended and did not return to school. They became a dropout and that will limit their opportunities in the future. I believe in zero tolerance in situations that impact school safety. The thing that must be weighed is the safety of others versus the right of an individual student to be at school. I tend to error [sic] on the side of safety even if there are negative outcomes for the suspended student.

29. Student dropped out.

30. Long term suspension has led to students dropping out of school.

31. Kid who did homeschool rather than finish her HS diploma. She still was able to go on to post-secondary education.

32. Student was suspended 90 school days for a felony assault charge and the completion of required graduation requirements took an additional semester.

33. Student was expelled for stealing, did not return to school, instead 6 months later was in jail for something else, and last I checked was in prison for selling drugs

34. Student sold drugs and distributed—was arrested—drug trafficking. Long-term suspension, but finished school with us correspondence, later was given jail time.

35. Student continued to "hang around" with the wrong type of crowd during suspension. There were very few positive influences for the student during this time. Poor

behavior continued, trouble escalated to include law enforcement involvement, and eventual drop out. I believe the opportunity to have gone to an alternative school would have been beneficial. Small districts do not have this option; possibly these students could be enrolled in bigger districts who offer alternative schools.

36. Student never graduated. Got too far behind and could never catch up.

37. The student had committed multiple discipline infractions, violated safe school act, while on suspension committed multiple felonies outside of school; the student was expelled through discipline hearing by the BOE and removed from the school system. That student continues to be in the community causing issues, not working, not paying taxes, and an issue for police.

38. Student was expelled for an extended period of time and it affected his credits for graduation and put him a year behind.

39. It would be difficult to say the expulsion alone was the reason for the negative outcome because students often have other avenues of support, such as summer school, to stay caught up and to be successful.

40. We had a student who was suspended long term who was a good student, academically, but came from a negative home life. She made one very poor mistake and never recovered from the impact of the suspension. She had the opportunity to recover, academically, but she lost hope in her future. She had planned to be a marine biologist at the time this happened. She eventually dropped out of school her senior year, although all efforts were made to keep her in school. She fell into the lifestyle of her sisters, her mother, and other family members.

41. A scholar dropped out of school.

42. A student who robbed a gas station for a small amount of $ had charges filed against them, was ultimately expelled by the Board of Education and went on to be in and out of jail as well as developed drug problems.

43. Long term suspension for drug dealing by 15-year-old ended up with boy dropping out.

44. Had a young man suspended.

45. A student was given a long-term suspension from which he never returned to school and became a drop out.

46. Many drop out following long term suspension.

47. A student was suspended and instead of returning to school they chose to homeschool. Talking to the student at a later date they did not earn their GED.

48. Student suspended for 180 for drug distribution never returned to high school.

49. Student ended up in the juvenile system and didn't finish high school.

50. Same as 7. But I think more often than not, students come back and do what they need to do.

51. We once suspended a student who repeatedly violated our NO SMOKING rule. The result was that he lacked the focus that had been present in his education. He eventually earned his high school diploma elsewhere, but had a difficult time deciding what to do beyond high school.

52. Students expelled from school anywhere from 3 to 180 days realize they can't earn credit because they violated the attendance policy so they drop out.

53. I had to suspend a student for 10 days and since then the demeanor of the student has drastically changed and grades have not recovered.

54. I am not going to type that response.

55. Many students who received long term suspensions often had to finish their diploma through an alternative route because they were too far behind academically.

56. A fifteen-year-old student was suspended for long term and while on suspension was breaking into homes during the day, and was arrested and tried as an adult.

57. Student dropped out.

58. Students who receive 90+ day suspensions may not return to the same school and instead complete their education at an alternative location.

59. Over 90% in my experience do not finish High School.

Appendix F

Charted Positive Responses

Please describe the instance of expulsion where the student returned to the district with a positive long-term outcome.							
Extra	Graduated	Employment	Post-Secondary Ed.	Rehab	Other positives	Reason for expulsion	Length of OSS
Spent extra time after school to get caught up.				F – parent/student reflection			
	M – returned & stayed on pace to grad.					Drug addiction	
School provided support – type unknown	F – with cohort						
Services provided by the school due to IEP – before school setting on campus. In house CARE team				F – supervised probation & mandated home visits	Expected to return early due to good behavior	Weapons at school	180 days
Support from multiple agencies				M – Multiple agencies	Positive outcome – no explanation of type.		
IEP – School provided off campus services	M – unknown if with cohort	Worked construction and eventually Started own business					
		F – Grown, productive, respected				Drug possession at school	
					F – Eventually acclimated to the small school	Threatening, tough behavior	Multiple OSS
	M – unknown if with cohort						
	M – unknown if with cohort					Assaulted a staff member	OSS for remainder of school year
Credit recovery	F – graduated early						90 days OSS
Home discipline & expectations				Home discipline & expectations	F – Better behavior		
				M – counseling provided – unknown provider	Improved grades	Drug possession at school	
	M – unknown if with cohort					Drug distribution	180 days OSS
Parent resources – online school					F – School accepted online credits when student returned		180 days OSS

Appendix G

Charted Negative Responses

Please describe an example of an instance of expulsion where there was a long-term negative outcome.							
Extra	**Dropped Out**	**Arrested / Prison**	**Unemploy-ment**	**Gen. Poverty**	**Other negatives**	**Reason for expulsion**	**Length of OSS**
	F – Dropped out						
	F – Dropped out		Struggles to hold down a job			Repeated misbehavior in music class, and then falling asleep in ISS	
	F – Never graduated					Weapons possession	
		M – Arrested			Ended up in more trouble		
School required counseling to shorten length of suspension, but student refused	F – never returned to school	Jail					Long term
	M – dropped out				Grades plummeted		90 + days
	M – dropped out						
	M – dropped out				Fell behind cohort	Drug possession at school	180 days
	M – dropped out					Drug distribution	Long term
	M – dropped out Eventually earned GED		Unable to secure and retain a job	Unable to secure and retain a job			Long term
	M – Dropped out – Home schooled						
	F – Dropped out						
	F – Dropped out						Long term
	M – dropped out – home schooled						
	F – dropped out			Fell into lifestyle of family	Fell behind – lost hope	Bad mistake	Long term
		M – jail			Developed drug problem	Robbed a gas station	Long term
	F – dropped out				Fall behind due to attendance policy		Long term
		M – arrested			Broke into homes while on OSS		Long term
	M – dropped out						
	M – dropped out						

Appendix H

Order of Survey Responses and Random Selection of Male Missouri Public High School Principals

Surveys Used In Research Calculations	1st male	1st female			2nd female		2nd male			
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	1		3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Female		2			5					

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		3rd female	3rd male				4th male			5th male
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	11		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Female		12								

Surveys Used In Research Calculations					4th female	5th female				6th female
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	21	22	23	24	25			28	29	
Female						26	27			30

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		6th male	7th male	7th female	8th female		9th female		10th female	
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	31	32	33			36		38		40
Female				34	35		37		39	

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		8th male	9th male							
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
Female										

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		11th female		10th male	11th male	12th female				12th male
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	51		53	54	55		57	58	59	60
Female		52				56				

Surveys Used In Research Calculations	13th female					13th male	14th female	14th male		15th female
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male		62	63	64	65	66		68	69	
Female	61						67			70

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		15th male	16th male			17th male				18th male
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
Female										

Surveys Used In Research Calculations		16th female	19th male	17th female						20th male
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	81		83		85	86	87	88	89	90
Female		82		84						

Surveys Used In Research Calculations			21st male	18th female					22nd male	19th female
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male	91	92	93		95	96	97	98	99	
Female				94						100

Surveys Used In Research Calculations	20th female	21st female`	22nd female							
Surveys in the Order of Response										
Male										
Female	101	102	103							

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Vita

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Prior to administration, McMasters served in public education as an elementary Title I Reading and Math teacher, high school special education teacher, junior high and high school teacher of Government, Geography, World History, and Economics. McMasters served as a coach for junior high and high school volleyball and basketball, detention supervisor, and an in-school-suspension (ISS) supervisor. McMasters served on a Closing the Gap committee and was the chairperson of a Professional Development committee. Before entering academia, McMasters was a stay-at-home wife and mother of two sons.