

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HISPANIC AND ANGLO
CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR AND LEARNING PROBLEMS

by

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ABSTRACT

Although Hispanics are the fastest growing minority group in the U.S., and Hispanic children are at a higher risk for failing to complete a high school education than children of any other ethnic group, factors related to Hispanic children's school success are not well understood. Hispanic children's learning and behavior problems are identified by teachers at rates disproportionate to the rate of Hispanic students in the population, but it remains unclear whether these problems are over or underidentified. Teachers' perceptions of children's problems are crucial, because teachers are the gatekeepers of psychological treatment in the schools. Many children's behavior and learning problems are treated solely in educational settings, making teachers' referral and ratings practices even more salient. This study attempted to clarify previous findings regarding teachers' perceptions of Hispanic and Anglo children's psychopathology. Teachers read vignettes describing a Hispanic or Anglo boy with either behavior or learning problems, then answered questions about her level of concern for the boy, types of interventions she would use, whether she would make referrals for special services, and her prediction about the boy's future. I hypothesized that the teachers' responses would be influenced by the ethnic description of the boys in the vignettes. In addition, I hypothesized that the number of weeks teachers waited before referral would differ based on ethnicity. A significant difference was found between ethnic descriptions for the length of time teachers would wait to make a referral to special services for the boy described as having behavior problems, and for teachers' predictions for futures of boys described as having behavior problems. No other significant differences were found.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to data collected in the 1999 Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, a lower percentage (64%) of Hispanic students graduates from high school than any other major ethnic group in the U. S., including Anglo (92%), African American (84%), and Asian (94%). Thus, Hispanic children are not benefiting from education to the same extent as children of other ethnic groups. Children who are unsuccessful at school are at high risk for restricted future employment and educational opportunities, and increased delinquency and behavior problems. Adding salience to this issue is the fact that the Hispanic population comprises the fastest growing minority group in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, as cited in Pugh, 2001). Between 2000 and 2002, the Hispanic population grew 9.8% compared to the general population, which grew only 2.5%, and this trend is projected to continue into the next century (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003, as cited in Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004). More than one-third of Hispanics living in the U.S. are children under 18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003, as cited in Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004). Therefore, it is increasingly important for psychologists and educators to understand factors that contribute to the failure of Hispanic students, and to ensure that Hispanic children have access to mental health treatment and academic assistance when needed. While this brief introduction will provide information relevant to the current study, additional information regarding factors salient to the identification of minority children's behavior and learning problems can be found in the extended literature review.

Disproportionate Identification of Hispanic Students' Learning Problems

School resources are often the primary source of assistance for children with behavior and learning problems, and children's mental health problems are often treated only in the school environment (Leaf, Algria, Cohen, Goodman, Horwitz, Hoven, Narrow, Vaden-Kiernan, & Regier, 1996). Thus, it is crucial to ensure that psychological interventions are applied equitably and effectively in schools. Research has demonstrated that children's placement in special education programs designed to treat learning and emotional problems is influenced by ethnicity. When placement rates of Anglo, Hispanic, and African-American students were compared, minority children had a significantly higher probability of being placed in special education for learning or emotional problems than Anglo students (Argulewicz, 1983). Hispanic children, overall, were the most likely to be placed in special education. Middle-class, Spanish-speaking Hispanic students and lower- and middle-class English-speaking Hispanics had the highest probability of placement in such classes (Argulewicz, 1983).

Spanish-speaking Hispanic students may experience difficulty communicating with their teachers, resulting in an increased risk of placement in special education for learning problems. A study of 16 to 22-year-olds compared Mexican-American and Anglo boys' scores on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and the Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) (Whitworth, 1988). One-half of each ethnic group had been diagnosed as learning disabled by their schools; the other half had no diagnosis. Learning disabled boys of both ethnicities scored significantly lower on the WRAT and the WAIS, demonstrating that boys identified with a learning disability actually had

greater difficulties with learning than boys who had not been identified. Mexican-American boys performed more poorly on all three WRAT achievement measures than Anglo boys. This finding suggests that teachers may have a higher threshold for referring minority children for help with learning problems. Therefore, it could be argued that Mexican-American boys in this sample were not being referred often enough for assistance with learning problems. Mexican-American boys with learning disabilities scored significantly lower on the WAIS Verbal IQ (VIQ) and WAIS Full Scale IQ (FSIQ) scores than Anglo boys with learning disabilities, but there were no significant differences between ethnic groups with learning disabilities on the WAIS Performance IQ (PIQ) scores. Because the PIQ scores were not significantly different between groups, but the VIQ scores were significantly lower for Mexican- American boys, it appears that the significant differences between the two groups of learning disabled boys on the FSIQ scores were primarily caused by VIQ score differences between groups. Thus, the Mexican-American boys identified as having learning disabilities by their schools might actually have difficulty with English rather than an actual learning disability. While any academic assistance is preferable to a child receiving no intervention, these Spanish-speaking boys would probably have benefited more from a class focused on improving English-language skills, rather than treating learning disabilities (Whitworth, 1988).

Similar results were found in a study of teachers' referral of younger children to special education. African-American, Anglo, and English-speaking Hispanic children in grades 2-4 were administered the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III (WISC-III) and the Wide Range Achievement Test-Revised (WRAT-R) (Macmillian, Gresham,

Lopez, and Bocian, 1996). Teachers completed the Connors Teacher Rating Scale-28 (CTRS-28) and the Social Skills Rating System-Teacher (SSRS-T) for each child. Teachers' ratings of children on the SSRS-T Academic Competence scale suggested that teachers' perceptions of children's intellectual abilities were unaffected by ethnicity. Results on the objective achievement and intelligence measures, however, suggested that there were significant differences among ethnic groups. On the WISC-III Verbal IQ Scale and the WRAT-R Reading Scale, Anglo children's scores were significantly higher than minority children's scores. On the CTRS-28, teachers rated Hispanic students lower than African-American students on the Conduct Problems and Hyperactivity subscales. Based on findings in this study, Hispanic students appear to be referred by teachers for academic problems, rather than behavior problems, while African-American children were more likely to be referred when they had both types of problems. There are several possible reasons for these findings. One explanation would be that Hispanic children experience more academic problems than behavior problems, while African-American children tend to experience problems comorbidly. A second possibility is that teachers' perceptions of Hispanic children are biased, resulting in a lower threshold of referral for Hispanic children. Thus, Hispanic children are referred for one problem, whereas African-American children must display two problems to be considered severe enough to be given a referral. This lower threshold for referral could be seen as a bias towards Hispanic students, because it allows them easier access to treatment, or a bias against Hispanic students, because teachers may tolerate fewer problems from Hispanic students before referring them to special education (Macmillian et al., 1996). A third possibility is

that African-American children displayed behavior that was more disturbing to teachers, resulting in a higher rate of referral to special education.

Previous research that has examined Hispanic students' referral to special education has demonstrated that referral rates are affected by ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Hispanic children are often said to be referred for special education at higher than expected rates given the percentage of Hispanics in the general population, but reasons for this phenomena are unclear. Some research findings have suggested that teachers have a positive bias towards Hispanic children's academic performance, and thus do not refer those children often enough for special education. Other research suggests that teachers correctly identify children who have learning problems, but that Hispanic children are not placed in programs that would provide optimum treatment benefit. In the next section, differences in Hispanic students' referral to special behavior programs will be presented.

Disproportionate Identification of Hispanic Students' Behavior Problems

Results regarding the identification of Hispanic children's behavior problems have varied widely across studies. In a study of West Texas elementary teachers' ratings of their students on the Teacher-Child Rating Scale, African-American students were rated as having a significantly higher level of behavior and learning problems than their Anglo and Hispanic peers, but no differences were found between the latter two groups (G. Fireman, personal communication, March, 2000). Based on these results, it might be concluded that Hispanics and Anglos had similar levels of behavior and learning

problems, that teachers perceived their problems similarly, or that the T-CRS measured their symptoms equitably.

Other research has demonstrated that teachers identify Hispanic children as having fewer behavior problems than expected given the percentage of the general population that is Hispanic. Teachers rated African-American, Anglo, and Hispanic children on the Abbreviated Conners Teacher Rating Scale (Langsdorf et al., 1979). Hispanic children were rated as hyperactive at lower than expected rates given the percentage of Hispanics in the general population, African-American children at higher than expected rates, and Anglo children consistent with expected rates. A more recent study compared Anglo teachers' ratings of Anglo and Mexican-American elementary school children on three measures: the Teacher Report Form, the Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Rating Scale-IV (AD/HD-IV), and the Conners Teacher Ratings Scale (Ramirez & Shapiro, 1998). Teachers rated Mexican-American children as having fewer externalizing problems than Anglo children across all three measures (Ramirez & Shapiro, 1998). Mexican-American children might have been rated as less pathological in these studies due to differences in rates of externalizing disorders among ethnic groups, teacher perceptual bias, cultural differences in expectations between teachers and students, or due to assessment instrument bias. The fact that three measures were used to record teachers' perceptions suggests that the disproportionate identification of Hispanic children's behavior problems may be more than an artifact related to instrument bias. However, it is important to consider that both the AD/HD-IV and the CTRS are measures based on criteria in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). The criteria may be

somewhat biased due to the fact that their development was originally based on Anglo culture (Bauermeister et al., 1990).

In contrast to research demonstrating equal or lower rates of externalizing disorders among Hispanic children, there are other data suggesting that Hispanic children display externalizing behavior at higher than expected rates. Anglo, Hispanic, Asian, Native-American, and African-American teachers rated 5 to 18-year-old children of the same ethnic groups on the AD/HD-IV (DuPaul, Power, Anastopoulos, Reid, McGoey, & Ikeda, 1997). Across all age groups, African-American children were rated as displaying more symptoms of hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity than Anglo children. There were no significant differences in ratings of Hispanic and Anglo children for 5 to 13-year-olds. In the 14 to 18-year-old group, however, Hispanic children were rated as having more externalizing behavior than Anglo children (DuPaul et al., 1997).

Therefore, age of the children in the sample appears to be an important variable to consider when examining teachers' ratings of children's externalizing problems. Perhaps there is a developmental difference between Anglo and Hispanic children in the course of externalizing disorders. Another explanation could be that, as Hispanic children get older and have more frustrating school experiences, they increasingly disengage from school and display more aggression, inattention, and hyperactive behaviors than they did as children. A third possibility is that Hispanic children do not function as well in high school environments, due to decreased structure, larger classes, and other school variables. Hispanic children have been shown to need more structure in the classroom (Lubienski, 2000) and more personal relationships with their teachers (Lee, 1999), and

those needs may go unmet more in high school than in elementary school, where classes are contained and teacher-student ratios are lower.

Some research indicates that Hispanic children, at least in some subgroups of the population, experience externalizing behavior at higher rates than Anglo children across all age groups. One such study compared 4 to 16-year-old Puerto Rican children living in Puerto Rico with Anglo children living on the U.S. mainland (Achenbach, Bird, Canino, Phares, Gould, Rubio-Stipec, 1990). Puerto Rican and Anglo teachers completed Teacher Report Forms (TRF), and parents completed Child Behavior Checklists (CBCL) on children. Older children completed the Youth Self-Report (YSR). Puerto Rican parents and teachers scored Puerto Rican children as having significantly higher problem scores than Anglo children. Puerto Rican children, however, reported fewer problems than their Anglo peers. A significantly greater number of Puerto Rican children than Anglo children scored in the clinical range on the CBCL and TRF externalizing scales. Thus, teachers and parents rated Hispanic children as having more externalizing problems than Anglo children across all age groups in this sample. These results might be due to a tendency for Puerto Rican parents and teachers to overreport symptoms, or to actual differences in rates of psychopathology among ethnic groups (Achenbach et al., 1990).

In summary, the issue of whether Hispanic children's externalizing disorders are over or underidentified has not been resolved by empirical studies. Results have varied greatly, with Hispanic students at times seeming to display externalizing behavior at higher rates than expected given the percentage of the general population that is Hispanic, and at other times, seeming to display such behavior at lower than expected rates. Differences in findings are most likely related to the wide range of instruments, referral

procedures, sampling procedures, and methods used across studies. It is clear, however, that factors contributing to the identification of Hispanic students' psychopathology require further study. Possible reasons for disproportionate placement and ratings of Hispanic children's psychopathology include bias in assessment tools or diagnostic criteria, actual differences in rates of psychopathology between ethnic groups, differences between teachers and students in expectations for appropriate classroom behavior based on cultural or socioeconomic differences, some other perceptual bias on the part of teachers, or a combination of factors.

Teachers' Identification and Referral of Students with Behavior and Learning Problems

Teachers are often the initiators of referrals to special services for children with learning and behavior problems and are the gatekeepers of mental health treatment in the schools (Ford, 1998). Teachers' descriptions of children's behavior and ratings of children's psychopathology on teacher rating scales often influence other school personnel who assess children and make decisions about class placement (Sonuga-Barke, Minocha, Taylor, & Sandberg, 1993). Therefore, understanding the influence of ethnicity on teachers' perceptions of children's learning and behavior problems is crucial to understanding how best to ensure that all children receive adequate treatment for psychopathology, regardless of ethnic background. If teachers perceive children's learning and behavior in an overly positive or negative light, or if they misperceive children's symptoms, then children are not likely to receive adequate treatment.

Cross-cultural studies that have attempted to determine whether ratings of behavior and learning problems are constant across ethnic groups have found mixed

results. Asian children were rated by teachers and parents as having significantly lower broad-band and total problems scores on the Child Behavior Checklist and Teacher Report Form than Anglo or Hawaiian children (Loo & Rapport, 1998). No differences were found between scores for Anglo and Hawaiian children (Loo & Rapport, 1998). A second study examined teachers' ratings of American and Dutch children on the Teacher Report Form (Achenbach, Verhulst, Edelbrock, Baron, & Akkerhuis, 1987). No differences were found between groups on internalizing, externalizing, specific problem, or total problem scores between groups (Achenbach et al., 1987). Finally, in a study using the Gordon Diagnostic System, Puerto Rican children were found to meet criteria for ADHD at much higher than expected rates (Bauermeister et al., 1990). Taken together, these results suggest that differences in rates of psychopathology may exist among ethnic groups, and the relationships may differ between any two groups. Further study is required, however, in order to isolate exactly what causes these differences to occur.

Differences in cultural backgrounds between teachers and students have been shown to influence teachers' perceptions of children's learning and behavior problems. Anglos comprise a higher proportion of teachers than any other ethnic group (U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1994). Therefore, most classrooms in the U.S. are structured to suit Anglo children's learning and behavior styles. Minority students are likely to be unfamiliar with these expectations, however, placing them at higher risk for identification of a learning or behavior problem by their Anglo teachers (Tharp, 1989). Research indicates that students are aware of a culture clash in the classroom. A recent study found that African-American and Hispanic students feel that their relationships with authority figures,

including teachers, are often fraught with distrust and hostility on both sides (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). Students perceived that their teachers had low expectations for their achievement and behavior (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). If the students' perceptions were accurate, there are important implications for the identification of minority children's behavior and learning problems. Teachers who expect poor achievement and behavior from minority children might be less likely to refer minorities to special services because they do not perceive minority children as having a learning or behavior problem. Alternately, teachers who have low expectations might refer minority students too quickly to special education programs because they assume that these children cannot achieve in a mainstream classroom.

Cultural differences between teachers and students may also affect classroom interactions when teachers have a unique set of standards they use to judge each ethnic group (Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, & Bridgest, 2003). Teachers may be most likely to perceive behavior problems in children who act differently than the expected norm for their racial group. In a recent study, teachers' perceptions of African-American children who moved with a stereotypic stroll were compared to teachers' perceptions of Anglo children with the same movement. The stereotypic stroll involved slumped posture with head tilted to the side while dragging one foot behind. Results suggested that teachers believed that the Anglo children who strolled had less achievement potential than their African-American peers who strolled. Both Anglo and African-American children who strolled were viewed by teachers as being higher in aggression and lower in achievement potential than those who walked normally. Thus, teachers are vulnerable to misconstruing

cultural differences as learning or behavior problems, perhaps preventing them from making accurate referrals for special services (Neal et al., 2003).

Spanish-speaking Hispanic children may face more difficulty adapting to Anglo-led classrooms than Hispanic children who speak English fluently. These children are unfamiliar with behavior and learning styles common in Anglo culture, but they are likely to have trouble understanding teachers' feedback and instructions, causing these children to have increased difficulty adapting to Anglo standards for learning and behavior (Carlson & Stephens, 1986; Whitworth, 1988). Children who are primary Spanish-speakers may also have immigrated to the U.S. very recently, allowing fewer opportunities for exposure to values common in U.S. schools.

Socioeconomic differences between teachers, who are predominately middle-class, and minority students, who are disproportionately impoverished, are likely to further complicate teachers' perceptions of minority students. Like cultural heritage, socioeconomic background shapes expectations for behavior, learning, and communication. Teachers often judge children using middle-class standards. Hispanic children, however, may not have been exposed to middle-class values prior to entering school (Langsdorf et al., 1979). Thus, minority children begin school at a disadvantage, and may have a great deal of difficulty ever recovering from this initial difference in expectations. Due to the more crowded and chaotic inner-city lifestyle that Hispanic children are often raised in, they may prefer activities that involve movement, physical contact, and multitasking (Nine-Curt, 1979, as cited in Bauermeister et al., 1990). Anglo teachers, who are more likely to have been raised to value quiet, independent, sequential work, are likely to interpret such behavior as disruptive (Boykin, 1982). As a result of

these disparate expectations, middle-class Anglo teachers may rate Hispanic children as having learning and behavior problems at rates disproportionate to the rate of Hispanic children in the population.

In conclusion, teachers' perceptions, ratings, and referrals of children for special education services are important. Teachers are often the first people to recognize that children require assistance for behavior and learning problems and are the primary initiators of referrals. Thus, teachers are the mediators between children who need assistance and the system equipped to provide it for them. Research has shown that teachers' ratings and referrals of children are affected by ethnicity, but reasons for this phenomena are unclear. While disproportionate placement of minority children in special education may result from inequities at other stages of the assessment process, or from actual differences in rates of psychopathology among ethnic groups, it is crucial to evaluate the referral process where it often begins: with elementary school teachers. Because of the powerful influence teachers have on placement decisions made by schools, this study will focus on the teachers' role in the referral process and will investigate whether their perceptions of children are based on ethnicity (Hispanic or Anglo).

Rationale for the current study

In order to determine whether teachers would rate Hispanic students differently than Anglo students, each teacher was presented with a single vignette describing either an Anglo or Hispanic boy with either behavior or learning problems. Vignettes and procedures will be described in more detail below. The use of vignettes had the advantage of holding socioeconomic status, the type of problem, and the severity of

problem constant. By removing variance in ratings due to these issues, I hoped to determine whether teachers' ratings were based primarily on the boys' ethnicity. In other words, if teachers' ratings for boys from different ethnic groups continued to vary when other factors were held constant, we could conclude that there is some perceptual bias on the part of the teachers.

The methodology of this study was informed by a previous study in which teachers were given two vignettes, each describing a fourth-grade boy having difficulty in a classroom situation (Savener, Clopton, & Fireman, 2001). One vignette described a boy having learning difficulties, and the other vignette described a boy engaged in aggressive and inattentive behaviors. Vignettes were based on items from the Conners' Teacher Rating Scale (CTRS), as are the vignettes in the current study. However, in the 2001 study, most teachers rated their level of concern for the boy in the behavior vignette as high as possible, producing so little variability in the responses that it was impossible to determine whether ethnicity caused ratings to vary. Therefore, for the current study, vignettes were written so that a clinician would rate the child in the vignette as having the lowest clinically significant score possible on the appropriate CTRS scale. More information about the construction of the vignettes is given later in this paper. The 2001 study included three ethnic descriptions in the vignettes: Hispanic, African-American, or Anglo. For the current study, only Hispanic and Anglo descriptors were used so that more statistical power would be available to detect smaller effect sizes. Hispanic and Anglo ethnicities were compared because there is a paucity of research on Hispanic children compared with an abundance on African-Americans, because Hispanics comprise the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003, as

cited in Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004), and because the study was conducted in Texas, where Hispanics now comprise a majority of citizens. Also, in the 2001 study, each teacher was given more than one vignette, producing an order effect for the behavior vignette. In order to eliminate the possibility of an order effect for the current study, each teacher was given only one vignette.

In the 2001 study, the school district asked to participate was not supportive of the project, and administrators deviated from normal research procedures by distributing a copy of the research proposal, including the hypotheses, to the principal of each prospective school. The researchers were made aware of this only when one principal declined to participate, citing the research hypotheses as the reason. Though several principals allowed direct delivery and return of packets between the researchers and the teachers, most preferred to have control of the process, having the teachers fill out the surveys at faculty meetings or during workshops while the principals were present. All of the principals who opted to distribute and collect packets in this manner indicated that this method would yield the highest return of surveys; however, it seems likely that teachers' responses might be altered by knowing that their principal could review their answers. Thus, for the current study, teachers received packets via U.S. mail to their homes in order to eliminate the possibility of social pressure to rate the vignettes in any particular way.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 205 elementary school teachers (18 male, 187 female) who were primarily responsible for third-, fourth-, or fifth-grade homeroom classes in the Austin Independent School District (A.I.S.D.) for the 2001-2002 school year. A.I.S.D. was chosen because it is a racially diverse school district; the student population was comprised of approximately 47.8% Hispanic, 33.7% Anglo, 15.8% African-American, 2.5% Asian, and 0.3% Native-American students for the 2001-2002 school year (Austin Independent School District, 2001-2002). Therefore, teachers were likely to have had experience working with both Anglo and Hispanic students. The A.I.S.D. personnel office provided a directory listing names, teaching assignments, and home addresses of all teachers in the district. Of teachers listed, 722 met the selection criteria for the study. Each of those teachers was sent a packet, which will be described in detail below, via U.S. mail. Fifty-eight of the potential participants were excluded because their packets were returned marked as undeliverable. Of the remaining 664 potential participants, 256 (38.6%) were listed in the directory as third-grade teachers, 228 (33.4%) as fourth-grade teachers, and 176 (26.5%) as fifth-grade teachers.

A total of 218 surveys were collected for a return rate of 32.8%. However, 13 were excluded from final data analysis because the teacher was either not primarily responsible for a third-, fourth-, or fifth-grade homeroom, or because the teacher did not

indicate his or her teaching assignment. Therefore, the final sample included 205 completed surveys, for a total of 30.8% of the potential participants.

Of teachers included in the final sample, 38% reported teaching third grade, 32.2% teaching fourth grade, and 26.3% teaching fifth grade. The remaining 3.5% reported teaching multi-level homeroom classes within the three grade levels included in the study. Thus, the percentages of participants from each grade level closely approximates the percentages of teachers actually instructing students in each grade in the district. Caucasian teachers comprised 76.1% of the sample; Hispanic teachers, 15.6%; African-American, 6.3%; and the remaining 2% of respondents did not specify their ethnic background. Many participants (47.8%) described their students as coming from a low socioeconomic (SES) background. An additional 4.9% said their students were from low to middle SES backgrounds, and 29.3% described their students backgrounds as mid-level SES. The smallest percentage of teachers described their students as coming from mid- to high- (3.4%) and high-level (14.6%) SES.

Materials

Each teacher received a packet containing a cover letter (see Appendix A), a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B), one of the two possible vignettes (see Appendix C and D), a rating questionnaire (see Appendix E), and an incentive sheet (see Appendix F). Each vignette described a fourth-grade boy having difficulty in a classroom situation. Third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade teachers were selected for participation because they are most likely to be familiar with developmentally appropriate expectations for the fourth-grader described. The vignettes focused on boys because teachers tend to identify boys as having the problem behaviors that are the focus of this study, such as Attention-

Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), conduct disorders, and learning disabilities at higher rates than girls. One vignette described a boy having learning difficulties, and the other vignette described a boy engaged in aggressive and inattentive behaviors. Vignettes were based on items from the Conners' Teacher Rating Scale - Revised: Long Version (CTRS-R:L), a measure commonly used to assess problem behavior. The CTRS-R:L has been normed on a sample representative of the ethnic diversity of the United States (Conners, Sitarenios, Parker, & Epstein, 1998). The learning problems vignette was constructed from items on the CTRS-R: L Cognitive Problems/Inattention Scale so that a clinician would be likely to rate the boy as having a T-score of 65, the lowest clinically significant score. This T-score was chosen so that the boy would be described as having clinically significant problems, but not so severe that all teachers would rate the boy at the highest level of concern. Children who obtain high scores on this scale are likely to have problems with learning, organization, task completion, and concentration (Conners, 1997). The behavior problems vignette was constructed from items on the Hyperactivity Scale of the CTRS-R: L, and the boy in this vignette is also likely to be rated by a clinician as having a T-score of 65. Children with high teacher ratings on the Hyperactivity Scale are likely to have excessive energy, impulsivity, and restlessness. In both the learning problems and the behavior problems vignettes, the behavior and description of the boy remained constant except for the boy's ethnic group, which was described as Hispanic or Anglo. These two ethnic groups were chosen for comparison because the Hispanic population is the fastest growing minority group in the U.S. (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000, as cited in Pugh, 2001), yet there are few studies that address reasons for the disproportionate referral of Hispanic students to special services. The

issue of Hispanic children's school experiences may be particularly salient in the state of Texas, because Hispanics comprise 32% of the population of Texas, whereas African Americans, the second largest minority group, comprise only 11.5% (U. S. Census Bureau, 2001). Based on these statistics, it seems likely that teachers participating in the current study are more likely to have experience with Hispanic children than African-American children. Therefore, the results of this study are more likely to be externally valid for Hispanic and Anglo children than for African-American children. Thus, the decision was made not to include African-American children in this study.

Each teacher received either a learning problem or a behavior problem vignette. An equal number of each of the four vignettes was distributed to potential participants. For the learning vignette, forty-six (22.4%) of the 103 vignettes that were included in the final sample described the Anglo boy, and fifty-seven (27.8%) described the Hispanic boy. An approximately equal number of the behavior vignettes (102) were returned, with 54 (26.3%) describing the Hispanic boy and 48 (23.4%) describing the Anglo boy.

Teachers were asked to read the vignette, then answer seven questions (see Appendix E) regarding their level of concern for the boy, their prediction for his future, and what actions they would take if this boy was in their classrooms. The incentive sheet included a statement that the teacher had completed the packet and wished to be entered in a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate to Office Max. Winners were selected by random drawing. Teachers had been told that this sheet would be separated from the rest of their packets immediately upon return, in order to ensure confidentiality.

Procedure

Home addresses for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade teachers in A.I.S.D. were obtained from the district's central personnel office. Packets were delivered to teachers' homes via U.S. mail in order to maximize the opportunity for confidentiality and candor in responses. Packets, cover letters, and incentive sheets were addressed with each teacher's name. Questionnaires were completely anonymous. When teachers returned their packets, incentive sheets were separated from questionnaires to protect confidentiality. Teachers were told that participation was completely voluntary. Self-addressed, postage-paid envelopes were provided for teachers to return packets to Texas Tech via U.S. mail.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The hypotheses, statistical analyses, and results of this study are reported in detail in this section. I predicted that teachers' level of concern, decision to discipline, choice of interventions, and prediction for the future for the boys in the behavior and learning vignettes would be affected by the ethnic description of the boys. In addition, I hypothesized that teachers' decisions to refer the boys for special services, the type of referral teachers recommended, and the number of weeks teachers waited before referral would differ based on ethnicity. A significant difference was found between ethnic descriptions for the length of time teachers would wait to make a referral to special services for the boy described as having behavior problems, and for teachers' predictions for the futures of the boys described as having behavior problems. These findings are described in this section. No other significant differences were found.

Teachers' Ratings of Concern Based on Ethnicity

My first hypothesis was that teachers would indicate different levels of concern for Hispanic children's learning and behavior problems than they would indicate for Caucasian children. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, t -tests were conducted using the two races of the vignette -- Caucasian and Hispanic -- as the independent variable and the teachers' level of concern as the dependent variable. This effect was not significant for the behavior vignette, $t(96) = .58, p > .05$. Thus, there was no significant difference between teachers' mean rating of concern on the Hispanic behavior vignette ($M = 3.42, SD = .97$) and the Caucasian behavior vignette ($M = 3.53,$

$SD = 1.04$). There were also no significant effects for the t -test for the learning vignette, $t(98) = -.51, p > .05$, indicating that teachers' level of concern for the boys described in the vignettes was unaffected by the boys' ethnicities. The mean level of concern for the Hispanic boy in the learning vignette ($M = 4.00, SD = .86$) was not significantly different than the level of concern for the Caucasian boy ($M = 3.91, SD = .86$). Both analyses refute my hypothesis that teachers would indicate a different level of concern for learning and behavior problems of Hispanic boys than for Caucasian boys. As previously mentioned, this study attempted to describe the boys in the vignettes in such a way that teachers would recognize that the boys had significant problems with behavior and learning, but that not all teachers would rate the boys at the highest possible level of concern. Based on means for the four vignettes, teachers did not tend to rate boys in the vignettes at the highest level of concern. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was sufficient variability in responses to obtain meaningful results. Mean levels of concern were also analyzed for each vignette type and teacher ethnicity (see Table 1).

Teachers' Use of Discipline Based on Ethnicity

My second hypothesis was that teachers would indicate that discipline was appropriate for Anglo and Hispanic children at significantly different rates. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, chi-square analyses were used to compare the ethnicity of the boy in each vignette with the teachers' choice of whether discipline was appropriate. This effect was not significant for the behavior vignette, $\chi^2(1, N = 91) = .18, p > .05$, and was also not significant for the learning vignette, $\chi^2(1, N = 93) = .31, p > .05$, indicating that teachers' judgments about whether discipline was a suitable intervention were unaffected by the ethnicity of the boys as described in the vignette.

Both analyses fail to support my hypothesis that teachers would use discipline at different rates with Hispanic and Caucasian children.

Teachers' Choice of Interventions Based on Ethnicity

My third hypothesis was that teachers would employ different types of interventions with the boys in the vignettes based on their ethnic descriptions. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, a series of chi-square analyses was used to compare the ethnicity of the boys in the vignettes with the teachers' choices of whether to use each of the eleven types of interventions listed on the questionnaire. There were no significant effects for any of the interventions (see Table 2). In addition, the frequency of each type intervention chosen by teachers for each of the two vignettes is presented in Table 3. There were two instances in which χ^2 values were not computed because all of the teachers responded in the same way. All teachers who responded to the learning vignette indicated that they would contact parents about learning problems experienced by the boys. Also, all of the teachers who responded to the behavior vignette indicated that they would not recommend the boys be sent to remedial classes. In both cases, there was no variability in responses. Because the teachers' judgment did not differ, a χ^2 was not used.

Teachers' Choices to Refer for Evaluation for Special Education or Special Services Based on Ethnicity

My fourth hypothesis was that teachers would recommend referral to special education or special services for Hispanic boys more frequently than for Caucasian boys. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, chi-square analyses were used to compare the ethnicity of the boys in the vignettes with the teachers' choices of whether to make a referral for special education or special services. This effect was not significant

for the behavior vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 101) = .17, p > .05$, or the learning vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 102) = 3.22, p > .05$, indicating that teachers' judgments about whether to refer the boys in the vignettes to special education or special services was not influenced by the description of the boys' ethnicity. Therefore, the hypothesis that teachers would identify Hispanic boys as being in need of special services at higher rates than they would identify Anglo boys was not supported.

Type of Special Services Recommended by Teachers Based on Ethnicity

My fifth hypothesis was that teachers would recommend different types of special services for boys in the vignettes based on their ethnic description. On the questionnaires, teachers who indicated that they would refer the boys in the vignettes to special services were asked what type of services they would recommend: evaluation for an emotional or behavioral disorder, evaluation for a learning disorder, or evaluation for need for therapy. Chi-square analyses were used to compare the ethnicity of the boys in the vignettes with the teachers' recommended special services. There were no significant effects for referral for evaluation of an emotional or behavioral disorder for either the behavior vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 58) = .00, p < .05$, or the learning vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 77) = .19, p > .05$. In addition, there were no significant effects for referral for evaluation of a learning disorder for the behavior vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 58) = .67, p > .05$, or learning vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 77) = 2.01, p > .05$. Finally, there were no significant effects for referral for therapy for the behavior vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 58) = 2.01, p > .05$, or learning vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 77) = .001, p > .05$. Thus, results indicate that teachers' judgments about the type of special

services needed by the boys in the vignette were not affected by the description of the boys' ethnicity, and my hypothesis was not supported.

Teachers' Judgments about Length of Time Before Making a Referral

My sixth hypothesis was that teachers would recommend working with Caucasian boys longer than with Hispanic boys before making a referral for special services. All teachers who indicated they would make such a referral were asked to indicate the number of weeks they would wait before making the referral. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, t -tests were conducted using the two races of the vignette, Caucasian and Hispanic, as the independent variable and the number of weeks prior to referral as the dependent variable. Because some teachers reported a range, a mean number of weeks was computed for each teacher, and these means were used to compute the t -value. This effect was significant for the behavior vignette, $t(52) = -1.26$, $p > .05$, indicating that teachers' differed in the number of weeks they would work with the boys in the behavior vignette before making a referral based on the description of their ethnicity. Teachers indicated they would wait approximately 2 weeks longer to refer a Hispanic boy for a behavior problem ($M = 10.2$ weeks, $SD = 6.08$) than an Anglo boy ($M = 8.4$ weeks, $SD = 4.14$). This effect was not significant for the learning vignette, $t(74) = 1.27$, $p > .05$, demonstrating that teachers' decisions about how long to wait before referring the boy described as having learning problems was unaffected by the boys' ethnicity. Thus, findings from the behavior vignette support my hypothesis that teachers would differ in the length of time they would wait before making a referral. However, findings were in contrast to my expectation that teachers would work longer with Anglo

boys. Instead, teachers indicated they would wait longer to refer Hispanic boys. Results from the analysis of the learning vignette did not support my hypothesis that teachers would wait longer to refer boys of either ethnic description.

Teachers' Predictions for Problem Outcome Based on Ethnicity

My seventh hypothesis was that, for both vignettes, teachers would predict more positive outcomes over the next two years for Anglo boys than they would predict for Hispanic boys. To test this hypothesis for each type of vignette, chi-square analyses were used to compare the ethnicity of the boy in the vignette with the teachers' indication that the boys' problems would improve, stay the same, or get worse over the next 2-year period. This effect was significant for the behavior vignette, $\chi^2 (1, N = 98) = 4.11, p < .05$. A significantly greater number of teachers rating the Hispanic behavior vignette than the Anglo vignette predicted the boy's behavior would stay the same rather than improve over the next two years. Almost all of the teachers (95.62%) rating the Anglo boy with behavior problems said the boy would improve over the next two years, compared with only 82.69% of teachers rating the Hispanic boy with behavior problems. Fewer teachers (4.34%) rating the Anglo boy in the behavior vignette said the boy's behavior was likely to stay the same over the next two years than teachers who rated the Hispanic boy in the behavior vignette as likely to stay the same (17.31%). Interestingly, none of the teachers rating the behavior vignette predicted the boy's behavior would get worse. The effect for the learning vignette was not significant, $\chi^2 (2, N = 95) = 3.10, p > .05$, demonstrating that teachers' predictions for the boys described as having learning problems did not differ by ethnicity. Based on these results, my hypothesis that teachers

would predict more positive outcomes for Anglo boys than Hispanic boys was supported for the behavior vignette, but refuted for the learning vignette.

Supplemental Analyses

An analysis of variance (ANOVA), using the two ethnic labels, Hispanic and Anglo, and the two problem types, learning and behavior, as the independent variables, and the teachers' level of concern as the dependent variable was conducted to determine whether there were any significant interactions. The interaction between vignette race and problem type was not statistically significant , $F(1, 195) = .60, p > .05$.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Previous research suggests that teachers' and students' expectations for classroom interactions are influenced by ethnicity, socioeconomic status, peer relationships, and many other factors. By using vignettes that varied only by ethnicity, this study controlled other differences that might have influenced teachers' ratings of behavior and learning problems. Two statistically significant differences in teachers' judgments were found on the vignettes. First, teachers indicated they would wait 2 weeks longer to refer the Hispanic boy with behavior problems to special education than the Anglo boy. Second, teachers predicted that the Hispanic boy's behavior problems were less likely to improve over the next two years than the Anglo boy's problems. This section will review findings of this study, describe possible reasons for the findings, explore limitations of the methodology, and suggest directions for future research.

The fact that teachers in this sample viewed the Anglo boy with behavior problems as more likely than the Hispanic boy to improve over the next 2 years is consistent with previous research. Teachers have been shown to have more negative expectations for future achievement of Hispanic and African-American children than for Anglos (Wigfield et al., 1999). Teachers may have rated the Hispanic boy as less likely to improve due to a negative bias against Hispanics. Such a bias might be due, in part, to differing cultural expectations for acceptable classroom behavior (Chan & Rueda, 1979; Tharp, 1989; Zimmerman et al., 1995). Another possibility is that teachers are aware that Hispanic children are less likely than Anglos to come in contact with experiences outside

of school that would help them acculturate to classroom expectations, thus decreasing Hispanic children's opportunity for improvement of behavior problems (Juarez, 1974).

Research suggests that teachers maintain a unique mental set of behavioral norms for children in each major ethnic group (Neal et al., 2003). When children act outside the anticipated norm, teachers' expectations are negatively affected (Neal et al., 2003). In a study of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in children aged 5 to 18, elementary-aged Hispanic children were rated as having fewer externalizing symptoms than Anglo children of the same age (DuPaul et al., 1997). Thus, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade teachers who responded to the vignettes may be more accustomed to dealing with Anglo boys with behavior problems than Hispanic boys. These teachers' mental schema for Hispanic boys normative behavior, in other words, may not include the behavior problems in the vignette while teachers' schemas for Anglo boys do, leading teachers to be more negative about the prognosis of the Hispanic boy's problems.

Finally, teachers may have been less positive about the future of the Hispanic boy in the behavior vignette because they recognize that Hispanic children are more likely than Anglos to be economically and socially disadvantaged. Teachers may have thought that a Hispanic boy who developed a significant behavior problem would have decreased access to community resources that would promote improvement, such as doctors and therapists (Voekl et al, 1999). Teachers may have recognized that more Hispanic families are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than Anglos, and Hispanic boys are more likely to have parents who have to work several jobs to make ends meet. Therefore, Hispanic parents may not be as available to help manage behavior problems when they arise, putting the Hispanic boys at higher risk for continuing behavior problems.

Another statistically significant finding of this study is that teachers waited 2 weeks longer to refer the Hispanic boy with behavior problems to special services than the Anglo boy. This was a surprising finding, because previous research suggests that teachers prefer working with Anglo children over working with minorities (Wigfield et al., 1999). Therefore, it seemed more plausible that teachers would continue working with Anglo children longer in mainstream classes before making a referral to special education or special services. Teachers might wait longer to refer Hispanic boys to avoid appearing biased against the boys. Alternately, teachers might refer Anglo students to special services earlier because of a bias toward helping them get treatment for their problems (Macmillian et al., 1996). Another possibility is that teachers, who are predominantly Anglo, may feel more confident in their abilities to recognize when an Anglo child requires special services, and therefore the teachers make referrals for Anglos more quickly. Teachers' empathy for Hispanic children's cultural disadvantages may influence their decision to keep Hispanic boys in the mainstream classroom longer. Perhaps teachers are more patient with the behavior problems of Hispanic boys because of the socio-cultural challenges the boys are likely to face. Finally, teachers may be quicker to refer Anglo boys with behavior problems to special services because they believe that Anglo children would benefit more from placement in special education.

This study did not find any of the expected differences between ethnic groups in teachers' level of concern, decisions to use discipline, choice of interventions, or in type of special service recommended for learning or behavior problems. Similarly, there were no significant differences found for whether teachers would refer the boys in the vignettes for special services for behavior problems, or how long teachers would wait to

refer a boy for a learning problem based on ethnicity. Finally, there were no significant differences in prognosis for the boys' learning problems based on their ethnic descriptions. Interestingly, both significant differences occurred on the behavior vignette, which suggests that teachers' perceptions of behavior problems are influenced by ethnicity while their judgments about learning problems are not.

Some differences in teacher ratings of the vignettes based on ethnicity may not have been detected because of a lack of statistical power in the sample. Research has shown that there are a myriad of factors affecting teachers' perceptions, and ethnicity may only be one small part of what affects teachers' judgments on level of concern, types of interventions and special services, and length of time before referring a child. Future research in this area might seek an increased sample of teachers with the intent of finding smaller effect sizes.

Another possible reason the hypothesized differences did not occur is that ethnicity, by itself, does not affect teachers' judgments in these cases. Instead, it may be the interaction between ethnicity and other factors that causes teachers' judgments to vary across ethnic group. For example, Argulewicz (1983) found that ethnicity alone did not predict children's placement in special education, but that there was an interaction between socioeconomic status and ethnicity that did predict placement. Student ethnicity may interact with a number of factors, including teacher ethnicity, geographical origin, first language, and gender, to name just a few possible influences, to create a complex picture that influences teachers' judgments. Future research should examine whether ethnicity interacts with other factors, as it does with socioeconomic status, in order to influence teachers' referral patterns and ratings.

Another possible reason that no differences were found in regard to ratings of concern, choice of interventions, or in type of special service recommended for learning or behavior problems is that ethnicity is actually not a factor in teachers' judgments in these areas. A.I.S.D. is unique in that a majority of students is Hispanic and teachers in the District are more likely than most teachers in the U.S. to be comfortable and familiar working with children from both racial groups. A recent study suggests that teachers in urban environments, like Austin, may be becoming more adept at handling children of many different races with objectivity. As they become more familiar with diversity, they are less likely to rely on stereotypes (Chang & Sue, 2003). Thus, the unique qualities of Austin may present a threat to external validity of results, and future research might expand this type of exploration into areas where the demographic composition is more reflective of the U.S. in general, with an Anglo majority.

CHAPTER V
EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of whether Hispanic children's behavior and learning problems are over- or underidentified by teachers is controversial. Much of the research on the influence of ethnicity on teachers' ratings of children's psychopathology has focused on differences between Anglo and African-American children, perhaps because, historically, African-Americans have been the largest minority group in the United States. However, the cultural landscape of the U. S. is changing, with the most recent census data indicating that the Hispanic population is growing more rapidly than the population of any other minority group (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000, as cited in Pugh, 2001). During the last decade, there was a 58% increase in the Hispanic population (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000, as cited in Pugh, 2001). Nationally, African Americans comprise 17% of the population, a percentage nearly equal to that of Hispanics, who comprise 15.5% (U. S. Census Bureau, 2001). Given these statistics, the paucity of research on teachers' relationships with Hispanic students is somewhat perplexing. While African-American children have entire journals, such as The Journal of Negro Education, devoted to improving understanding of cultural influences on their school success, no known journal is devoted to improving understanding of influences on Hispanic student success. Examining the abundance of research on factors related to teachers' identification of African-American students' psychopathology provides insight into areas that need further research in regard to Hispanic students' relationships with their teachers. Therefore, this review will examine teachers' identification of African-American and Hispanic students'

learning and behavior problems, with a focus on Hispanic students in areas where such research is available.

In order to provide a historical context for this literature review, a history of cultural research will be presented. Next, the influence of ethnicity on teachers' referral and ratings of minority children's psychopathology will be explored, and the clinical importance of these referrals and ratings will be explained. Disproportionate referrals of minority students to special education will be examined in the context of cultural and socioeconomic differences between teachers and students, and consequences for communication between teachers and students will be presented. Finally, influences of minority students' families, peers, and school characteristics on school success will be explored.

Definition of Terms

Before beginning a discussion of the influence of ethnicity on teachers' perceptions of children's psychopathology, it is important to clarify terms that will be used throughout this paper. Internalizing disorders will be defined as problems that interfere with children's internal sense of well-being, including clinically significant problems with depression and anxiety. Externalizing disorders will be defined as those problems that children express through externally disordered behavior, including oppositional or defiant behavior, conduct problems, attention deficits, hyperactivity, and aggressive or angry behavior. The terms behavior disorders and behavior problems, and descriptions of children as behaviorally disordered, will also be used to describe children who have externalizing problems. A learning disability or learning disorder will be

defined according to the criteria given in the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Therefore, a learning disorder or disability will be defined as lower than expected performance on achievement measures in reading, written expression, or mathematics when compared to intelligence scores, age, and level of education. According to the DSM-IV, learning disorders may not be diagnosed when academic failure is caused by cultural or socioeconomic factors. Special services will be defined throughout this document as any type of service provided to a child that is not provided to every child in the school population. Thus, referral for special services by teachers may include referral to special education classes, counseling, or discipline.

A significant problem in this area of the literature is that researchers use many different criteria to define learning problems, including but not limited to low grades, achievement scores that are significantly lower than expected based on intelligence scores, poor performance on achievement scores across the entire achievement measure, and placement in special education classes (Hinshaw, 1992). Even definitions of learning disabilities vary from one research article to the next, and one school district to the next (Whitworth, 1988). Therefore, for the purpose of this document, the term “learning problems” will be used to describe a myriad of problems that cause children to have difficulty with academics, including mental retardation, developmental disorders, communication disorders, and generally low academic functioning.

Cultural psychology: A brief history

Scientific and philosophical interest in the influence of ethnicity on thought and behavior has its origins in the Enlightenment, a period when philosophers such as J. S. Mill began to search for ways to explain human behavior empirically rather than

intuitively (Portes, 1996). In 1843, Mill noted that behavior of people living in England and France varied by their cultural backgrounds. Based on these observations, he concluded that interpretations of human behavior must include not only the behavior itself, but also the cultural context in which the behavior occurs (Mill, 1843/1974 as cited in Portes, 1996). Other scientists of the time also began exploring ways that ethnicity influenced behavior. One example is the psychologist W. Wundt, who expanded on Mill's ideas, noting that psychological development was influenced by exposure to cultural myths, traditions, and languages (Bruner, 1990 as cited in Portes, 1996).

Although the idea that cultural background influences psychological development was considered by psychologists from the time the field first emerged, ethnic conflicts prevented the influence of culture from being more fully explored until the mid-1900's (Portes, 1996). The Civil War and World War I and II brought out intense inter-ethnic tensions. Social and political tensions around racial issues, such as slavery and forced migration to refugee camps, contributed to increasing discomfort on the part of researchers who were beginning to look at the role of culture in psychological development, and in many cases, steered psychologists away from the topic (Portes, 1996). With war at the forefront of American culture, psychologists focused most research efforts toward improving selection of military personnel and improving industry. Most studies that did consider ethnicity at that time focused on broad cultural differences, such as differences in intelligence among ethnic groups, rather than looking at cultural influences on children's psychological development (Berk, 1991). Thus, the study of culture and its effects on psychological development was not of major concern to most researchers until the latter half of the 1900's (Portes, 1996).

In the 1950's and 60's, changes in social and political ideas emerging from the Civil Rights movement caused psychologists to place greater emphasis on the influence of culture on development (Portes, 1996). Prior to the 1960's, researchers thought that variables such as per-pupil expenditures, availability of educational materials, and quality of instructional materials were the most important factors in children's school success. Studies of children's academic achievement completed during the 1960's challenged these beliefs, however, when research suggested that characteristics of teachers and students, such as values, attitudes, and beliefs, were more influential in children's school success than variables previously considered most important. At the same time, research emerged that demonstrated a strong relationship between student success and family background variables. While it is beyond the scope of this history to detail such findings, they will be explored and presented in depth throughout this review. The findings that teacher-student characteristics and family characteristics influenced children's academic success raised interest in cultural characteristics that affect school success. Ways in which cultural backgrounds of students interact with cultural backgrounds of teachers, as well as ways in which cultural upbringing influences children's psychological development, began to come to the forefront of research. Desegregation of schools was one impetus for this change due to increased pressure on educators to improve schooling for all children, particularly when minority children failed to achieve at the same level as Anglo children after schools were integrated. Thus, the Civil Rights movement brought renewed focus to cultural issues in research (Portes, 1996).

Around the time psychologists returned to examining cultural influences on development, Russian psychologist Vygotsky's Thought and Language, written in

Russian in the early 1900's, was translated into English for the first time. The work had a major influence on the direction of research on culture and development (Berk, 1991). Vygotsky proposed that children's social interactions with knowledgeable adults in their culture help shape children's cognitive development. Through these social interactions, children begin to understand cultural values. Over time, children internalize these values, and use their cultural knowledge to solve problems, communicate, and accomplish tasks on their own. Vygotsky's theory has continued to influence research on the effect of culture on psychological development, including helping to shape the recent trend towards determining relative contributions of biology and environment to children's academic success (Berk, 1991).

In conclusion, psychologists' examination of the role of culture in psychological development dates to the very beginnings of the field of psychology. However, due to social and political forces, the issue of culture was not widely addressed in psychological research until the later half of the 1900's, when the Civil Rights Movement and, subsequently, school desegregation, focused renewed attention on the importance of cultural background in student success. Having laid a foundation for understanding the direction of research in this area, the paper will now focus on the importance of culture as it relates to relationships between teachers and students, and teachers' perceptions of children's psychopathology.

Ethnicity and Differences in Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Psychopathology

Research has established that ethnicity of students often influences teachers' perceptions of students' learning and behavior problems. Teachers in five elementary

schools in the Lubbock Independent School District (L.I.S.D.) rated their students on the Teacher-Child Rating Scale, a scale that correlates highly with the Connors Teacher Rating Scale (G. Fireman, personal communication, March 2000). Teachers rated African-American students as having significantly more behavior and learning problems than Anglo or Hispanic students. However, in the same classrooms, peers nominated children who had trouble behaving in school, but findings conflicted with teachers' ratings. Classmates did not tend to rate minority peers as having any more aggressive or impulsive behavior than their Anglo counterparts (G. Fireman, personal communication, March, 2000). Perhaps teachers witnessed behavior in minority children that peers did not, resulting in increased problem scores for African-American children. A racial bias on the part of either teachers or students might also have influenced ratings. Alternately, cultural differences in expectations for behavior and learning might have existed between teachers and students, but not between students and peers, resulting in disparate ratings. Finally, the measures used by teachers and students might have had different levels of sensitivity to cultural differences in behavior, resulting in teachers rating a higher proportion of African-American students as having psychopathology than peers.

Some research has indicated that the ethnicity of a teacher may interact with the ethnicity of a child to influence the teacher's perceptions of the child's learning problems. A study by Tobias et al. (1982) used vignettes to focus on the influence of cultural backgrounds of teachers and students on teacher referrals to special education services. Approximately 200 Kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers were recruited from graduate education courses and faculty meetings for participation. African-American, Hispanic, and Anglo teachers rated a vignette describing an African-American, Hispanic,

or Anglo child according to the teachers' preference to refer the child for psychological assessment or to keep the child in the regular classroom. The child was described as 16-years-old, academically low-functioning, and aggressive. Differences in ratings emerged based on the ethnicities of the teachers. Hispanic teachers were significantly more likely to recommend keeping the child in a mainstream classrooms, but Anglo teachers were significantly more likely to report that they would refer the child for psychological assessment. Teachers of all three ethnic backgrounds tended to refer a child described as being from an ethnic background different from their own for psychological assessment more often than they referred a child of their own background. Because there are a greater proportion of Anglo teachers than minority teachers in the U. S., minority students are more likely than their Anglo peers to be in classrooms where their teacher is from a different ethnic background than their own. Therefore, this finding might partially account for the disproportionate referral of minority students to special education programs. Based on the assumption that teachers refer children they believe to have more severe psychological problems, Hispanic teachers tended to perceive the boy in the vignette as having fewer psychological problems, and Anglo teachers tended to view the boy as more pathological. An alternate interpretation of this finding is that Hispanic teachers believe working with boys in the classroom, regardless of the level of their psychopathology, is more effective for treatment, while Anglo teachers believe that referral is more effective. Teachers' ethnic backgrounds interacted with ethnic descriptions of the boys to influence referral preferences. Interestingly, teachers of all three ethnicities tended to refer boys of ethnic backgrounds different from their own to special education significantly more often than boys described as being of the same

ethnic background as the teacher. Perhaps teachers felt more confident about their ability to help children of their own ethnic background in the classroom, resulting in a lower referral rate for children of the same race. Another possibility is that teachers refer children of other races more often because they perceive children of other ethnicities as having more severe psychopathology than children of the same ethnic background as themselves. Teachers might also believe that children of other races would benefit more from receiving special services (Tobias et al., 1982).

A study of teachers' ratings of elementary school children's behavior problems found that ratings of children on the Connors Abbreviated Teacher Rating Scale varied by ethnicity of the child (Langsdorf et al., 1979). African-American children were identified as hyperactive at much higher rates than expected, and Mexican-American children were identified at lower rates than expected. The socioeconomic status and racial diversity of the schools that children attended also influenced teachers' ratings. A higher proportion of children were identified with externalizing problems in lower-socioeconomic status, minority schools than in middle-income, Anglo schools. In schools with non-Anglo majorities, Mexican-American children were rated as hyperactive at lower rates than expected and African-American children were rated as hyperactive at higher rates than expected. (Langsdorf et al., 1979). A more recent study using the Connors scale, as well as the Teacher Report Form, and the Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Rating Scale-IV (AD/HD-IV), found similar results (Ramirez & Shapiro, 1998). Anglo elementary school teachers rated Mexican-American and Anglo elementary-aged children on all three measures. Mexican-American children

were rated as having fewer externalizing symptoms than Anglo children on all three scales (Ramirez & Shapiro, 1998).

Both Langsdorf et al. (1979) and Ramirez and Shapiro (1998) found that teachers rated elementary-aged Hispanic children as having fewer externalizing symptoms than other ethnic groups. When larger age ranges have been considered, however, results have differed. For example, in another study, five to eighteen-year-old children were rated by teachers on the AD/HD-IV (DuPaul et al., 1997). Most teachers were Anglo, but there were a few teachers of Hispanic, African-American, Asian, and Native-American descent as well. African-American children were rated as displaying more symptoms of hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity than Anglo children across all age groups, consistent with findings from the other two studies. Differences between Hispanic and Anglo children were found in the 14 to 18-year-old group, however, with Hispanic children rated as having more externalizing symptoms than Anglo children. Therefore, age of the children in the sample appears to be an important variable to consider when examining teachers' ratings of children's psychopathology. Based on DuPaul et al.'s (1997) findings, Hispanic children may be at higher risk for developing externalizing problems as adolescents than as young children. Changes in the attitudes of teachers and students might also influence results, however. Perhaps as Hispanic children age, they have an increasing dislike for school or teachers, causing teachers to perceive them in a more negative light. Teachers' attitudes might also change, leading to increased sensitivity to, or bias against, Hispanic children. Further research is needed to clarify these differences in teacher ratings.

In conclusion, research has consistently found that teachers' ratings and referral practices are influenced by ethnicity. Teachers' ethnic backgrounds appear to influence their referral preferences for children with learning and behavior problems. Also, ethnic backgrounds of teachers and students have been shown to interact with ethnic backgrounds of students to influence referral to special programs. In regard to behavior problems, African-American children have been found to be rated by teachers as having a disproportionate rate of externalizing disorders across all age groups. Hispanic children have been shown to be rated as having a disproportionate rate of externalizing disorders only during adolescence. The exact reasons for disproportionate referral rates are unclear and require further research. One possible reason for these findings would be that teachers are biased against minority children, and thus perceive their behavior and learning problems in an overly negative way. Alternately, a disproportionate number of minority children may experience behavior and learning problems, causing teachers' ratings and referrals to reflect actual differences among ethnic groups. There could also be cultural differences between teachers and students that lead to different expectations for behavior and learning among ethnic groups, causing teachers to rate minority children as having more problems than Anglo children, who share their cultural heritage. Sampling procedures used to study teachers' ratings could cause the appearance that minority children are identified by teachers as having disproportionate rates of psychopathology, when actually there is a bias in the sample. Finally, biases could exist in instruments that would account for differences in ratings. If instruments used to judge children's behavior and learning are not culturally sensitive, they might cause minority children to appear to have higher or lower rates of psychopathology than these children

actually have. These issues will be explored throughout this review. In the next section, the importance of teachers' identification of children's psychopathology will be clarified.

Clinical Importance of Teachers' Perceptions of Psychopathology

Schools serve an important role in treating children's psychological problems, because many children with behavior and learning problems do not have access to clinical services (Offord, Boyle, Szatmari, Rae-Grant, Links, Cadman, Byles, Crawford, Blum, Byrne, Thomas, & Woodward, 1987). Thus, children's psychopathology is often treated solely in the context of an educational setting (Leaf et al., 1996). Therefore, teachers are important mediators between children and psychological services (Ford, 1998; Leaf et al., 1996). Forty-six states in the U.S. use teachers as a primary source of information when screening children for psychopathology and subsequent appropriate class placement (Ford, 1998). The decision to refer a child for psychological assessment may be made very subjectively, even though the teacher's original referral is the most important step in the assessment process (Harry & Anderson, 1994). Cohen (1982) noted that even when schools have guidelines to determine when a teacher should refer a child for psychological assessment or special services, there is a great deal of room for a teacher to decide exactly how those guidelines should be applied. Teachers also influence other school personnel who make placement decisions (Sonuga-Barke et al., 1993). A teacher's rating and description of a child's psychopathology influences the outcome of the assessment, and therefore the child's placement by school administration (Sonuga-Barke et al., 1993). Once a referral is initiated by a teacher, the chance that a child will be diagnosed with some type of psychopathology increases substantially (Artiles & Trent,

1994). Estimates of diagnosis and placement after referral have ranged from 55% (Fugate, Clarizio, & Phillips, 1993) to 73% (Algozzine, Christenson, & Yseseldyke, 1982, as cited in Fugate et al., 1993).

It is possible that the disproportionate identification of minority students may be due to a combination of factors outside the classroom, such as assessment procedures and administrative practices. However, teachers' disproportionate referral of minority children for assessment of psychopathology has been cited by researchers as one reason for excessive placement of minority children in special education classes (Oswald, Coutinho, Best, & Singh, 1999). Placement rate is measured by comparing the number of minority students in the school population to the number of minority students in special learning or behavior programs (Oswald et al., 1999). In a study conducted by the United States Department of Education (USDOE, 1995, as cited in Oswald et al., 1999), African-American children were found to comprise 16% of school populations nationwide, but 21% of enrollments in special education classes. African-American children, particularly those from impoverished backgrounds, were found to be twice as likely to be identified as mildly mentally retarded by school systems as Anglo children (USDOE, 1995, as cited in Oswald et al., 1999). African-American children have been disproportionately placed in classes for learning disabled children (Patton, 1998), as have Hispanic children (Oswald et al., 1999). However, the fact that minority students are placed disproportionately in classes for students with learning problems does not mean that these placements are unwarranted. While many critics argue that minorities are overreferred to programs designed to treat learning problems, others insist that minority children are not being referred to these programs often enough (Oswald et al., 1999). Referral for

psychological assessment could be viewed as a bias toward an ethnic group, because it allows children with psychopathology to receive treatment (Tobias et al., 1982). Research indicates that there may be a disproportionate number of Hispanic and African-American students who require treatment for psychopathology due to economic and social disadvantages that are correlated with ethnicity (Chan & Rueda, 1979; Tharp, 1989; Willerman, 1973). In support of this assertion, Leinhardt, Seewald, and Zigmond (1982) found that African-American students were actually placed more appropriately in classes for learning disabilities than Anglo students, and MacMillan et al. (1996) found that Hispanic, African-American, and Anglo children in special education classes actually had serious psychopathology and academic deficiencies that interfered with learning. In Macmillian et al.'s (1996) study, Anglo children who were referred by teachers for assessment of learning problems scored significantly higher on scales of Verbal Intelligence and on achievement tests than minority children, indicating that teachers may have a higher threshold for referring African-American and Hispanic children for psychological assessment than they have for Anglo children. Thus, teachers may not refer minority children to special programs often enough. Teachers may be concerned about appearing biased, and therefore may be more hesitant to refer minority children (MacMillian et al., 1996). Alternately, minority children may not perform as well on standardized tests due to a bias in testing instruments. Also, teachers may try to compensate for cultural differences by employing more prereferral intervention strategies, resulting in fewer referrals for minority children.

In addition to concerns about teachers' over or underidentification of children's psychopathology, researchers have alleged that teachers and school personnel may

incorrectly identify the types of problems children experience. Bilingual Hispanic children may be at particularly high risk for having teachers misperceive their symptoms, because bilingual children often appear to have psychopathology when they actually have difficulties related to language deficits (Whitworth, 1988). Teachers may refer bilingual children to special education programs that are not ideal for helping with language problems, resulting in inadequate assistance for these children. Mexican-American and Anglo high school boys, ages 16-22, were administered the Weschler Adult Intelligence Test (WAIS) and the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) in one study in order to determine reasons that Mexican-American students were being labeled as learning disabled at rates disproportionate to rates of Anglo students. The sample included 80 Anglo and 80 Mexican-American boys, and most of the Mexican-American boys were raised in Spanish-speaking households and were bilingual. One half of each ethnic group had been diagnosed as learning disabled and was attending special education classes. The other half of each group attended normal classes and had no diagnostic label. The learning disabled boys scored significantly lower on WRAT and WAIS scores, demonstrating that boys labeled as learning disabled actually had more difficulty with academics than boys with no diagnostic label. Mexican-American students in the learning disabled group obtained significantly lower scores than Anglo students in the learning disabled group on the WRAT Reading, Spelling, and Arithmetic scores (Whitworth, 1988). Because Mexican-American boys did worse on all three achievement measures, results suggest that teachers may have a higher threshold for referring minority children for special services. Thus, it could be argued that Mexican-American boys in this sample were not being referred often enough for assistance with learning problems. There were

no differences between ethnic groups with learning disabilities on the Performance IQ (PIQ) scores, but Mexican-American boys with learning disabilities scored significantly lower on the Verbal IQ (VIQ) and Full Scale IQ (FSIQ) scores than Anglo boys with learning disabilities. Because the PIQ scores were not significantly different between groups, but the VIQ scores were significantly lower for Mexican-American boys, it appears that the significant differences between the two groups of learning disabled boys on the FSIQ scores were primarily caused by VIQ score differences between groups. This finding suggests that the Mexican-American boys identified as having learning disabilities by their schools might actually have difficulty with English, probably due to the fact that most of these boys were raised in Spanish-speaking homes. Therefore, these boys were probably incorrectly given learning disabled diagnoses. While boys with English language deficits may require academic assistance, they are more likely to benefit from classes designed to help with language difficulties, rather than those designed to help with learning disabilities (Whitworth, 1988). Cultural bias in testing measures could have produced similar results, however. It is unclear whether bilingual boys in the study were administered Spanish versions of the WRAT and WAIS. If they were administered English versions, then it might be expected that their scores, particularly in the Verbal domain, would be significantly lower than native English speakers. Even if they were administered Spanish versions, there could be limitations to conclusions drawn by the researchers. The Spanish that is used in psychological testing may not accurately reflect the dialect of all Spanish speaking individuals, which could cause children in this sample to have lower mean Verbal IQ scores. It is important not only that teachers identify the students who have learning problems, but also that teachers

are accurate in identifying specific symptoms, so that students can be correctly classified and placed into a program that is most beneficial. According to Whitworth's (1988) results, there are at least some cases where schools are incorrectly identifying the type of problems that children have, leading to misplacement and decreased benefit of treatment.

Teachers' ratings of children's externalizing disorders carry the same importance in identifying psychopathology as teachers' ratings of learning problems. Teacher referral for externalizing disorders increases the risk that children will be placed in special education classes for treatment of behavior problems (Artiles & Trent, 1994). Thus, it is crucial that teachers rate children's behavior problems accurately in order for children to receive appropriate treatment. Research has suggested that Hispanic children may be underrepresented in classes for behaviorally disordered children (Carlson & Stephens, 1986; Langsdorf et al., 1979). Hispanic parents tend to have authoritarian parenting styles, causing Hispanic children to be more inhibited around authority figures (Roberts et al., 1985). As a result, their behavior problems may go overlooked by teachers more often than behavior problems experienced by children of other ethnic groups. Bilingual Hispanic children may also have difficulties with English that lead them to avoid interactions with English-speaking teachers and peers, resulting in less disruptive behavior in the classroom (Roberts et al., 1985). Research has shown that children who are quiet in the classroom are likely to be perceived more positively by teachers than those who frequently interact with peers (Coleman & Gilliam, 1983). Interestingly, some research has contradicted this theory of avoidance and underrepresentation, and has suggested that bilingual children may be more likely to be perceived as having behavior problems. In a study of teachers' ratings of Mexican-American and Anglo students who

had been labeled as behaviorally disordered by teachers, researchers determined that teachers rated Mexican-American children as behaviorally deviant primarily due to high ratings on items related to language use, including failure to respond to verbal cues and failure to initiate verbal exchanges (Carlson & Stephens, 1986). When Hispanic children are referred for behavior disorders, it is likely to be based on this type of linguistic deviance (Carlson & Stephens, 1986). However, children who have difficulty understanding instructions from teachers may also be more likely to develop behavior problems as a result of frustration and disengagement from school, therefore making referrals for these children more important. When Hispanic children from Spanish-speaking homes are misplaced in behaviorally disordered programs as a result of teachers' misunderstandings of their language problems, they are less likely to receive the help that would have been provided by a program for bilingual children. If they are placed in a class for English-speaking children with disabilities, as found in Whitworth's (1988) study, misunderstandings and frustrations are likely to continue, resulting in poorer prognoses for these Hispanic children. If they are placed in a class to assist with language deficits, they are more likely to have increased understanding of language and academics, and decreased frustration, resulting in a better opportunity for academic success.

Using data gathered by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, in 1992, Oswald et al. (1999) determined that African-American students were 1.5 times more likely than Anglo students to be placed in programs for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED; Oswald et al., 1999). Although the label "seriously emotionally disturbed" suggests that these programs are designed for children with

emotional problems, such programs are the placement of choice for children with serious externalizing disorders that result in severely disruptive behavior (Patton, 1998). The federal definition of SED includes children with inappropriate behavior and an inability to build relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults, as well as children with somatic concerns and internalizing disorders (Forness & Kavale, 2000). Children classified as SED may have problems with inattention, hyperactivity, severe mood swings, outbursts of anger and aggression, and conduct disorders (Wagner, 1995). However, children labeled as SED have significantly less prevalent internalizing problems than externalizing problems (Silver, Friedman, & Kutash, 1987, as cited in Wagner, 1995). There is evidence that placement of children in SED programs is related to socioeconomic status as well as ethnicity (Oswald et al., 1999). In communities with a high percentage of poverty among members, there were no significant differences among rates of placement in SED programs for children of different ethnicities according to Oswald et al.'s (1999) study. In communities with very low poverty rates, however, the chance of African-American students being identified as SED was significantly greater than that of students of other ethnicities (Oswald et al., 1999). Thus, it appears that socioeconomic status influences teachers' perceptions of children's behavior problems. This finding could be due to differences in cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of teachers and students (Chan & Rueda, 1979), which will be explored further later in this paper. Alternately, in areas where poverty is prevalent, minority and Anglo children may be equally deprived of benefits that financial resources provide, such as increased parental support, better schools, and more enriched learning materials. In areas where poverty is not as common, a higher proportion of minority children than Anglo children

may be deprived of these benefits, causing a higher proportion of minority children to require placement in SED programs for treatment of actual externalizing and internalizing disorders.

Critics argue that special programs designed for children with learning or behavior problems can have long-term negative effects on children's futures. Because the instruction given in special education programs is often substandard, children placed in such programs may not qualify for college and college scholarships (Delgado-Gaitan, 1988). Minority children who are placed in special education classrooms are less likely than their mainstream classroom peers to believe that school is important to future success, and are more likely to feel that school requires too much effort (Ford, 1992a). Children placed in special programs for behavior and learning problems may have higher levels of depression than their peers who are not identified as having learning or behavior problems (Stanley, Dal, & Nolan, 1997). Increased depression in children identified as having learning or behavior problems could be due to lowered self-esteem caused by children perceiving themselves as different than their peers, or due to negative feedback given on the basis of their disorders (Stanley et al., 1997). Of course, it could also be argued that children in special education programs have difficulty with academics, future education, and depression because of their disorders, rather than their placement in special classes. Because of the difficulties faced by students who enter special education programs, it is important that only children who truly need assistance with learning or behavior problems are placed in these classes. It is not likely to be beneficial for children who are incorrectly identified as having psychological disorders to be placed in special education, and, in some cases, may be harmful to those children's futures. In addition,

placing students without psychological disorders in special education overloads resources, such as teachers' instruction time and school funding, making it more difficult for students with actual psychological disorders to get necessary assistance (Whitworth, 1988).

In summary, it is important to consider the influence of ethnicity on teachers' perceptions of psychopathology for a number of reasons that are of clinical importance to psychologists. Many children with psychopathology never get treatment outside of school systems, so correct identification of children's problems by school personnel is crucial. Teachers serve as the primary referral source in schools, and are important informants about children's psychopathology. Ethnicity has been shown to influence teachers' referral practices and ratings of students on teacher ratings scales. These ratings and referral disparities contribute to minority children's disproportionate placement in programs for children with learning and behavior problems. It is important to understand why this occurs, because if a teacher's perception of psychopathology is influenced by ethnicity, rather than actual level of psychopathology that a child exhibits, then her ratings on teacher rating scales and other tools used by psychologists to diagnose children and plan appropriate treatment are likely to be inaccurate, which can have very negative effects for a child, such as limited access to future education, unnecessary stigmatization, and elevated risk for developing psychopathology. If minority children's psychopathology is underidentified, then children are going without interventions that might greatly improve their prognoses.

The Relationship Between Learning, Externalizing, and Internalizing Disorders

One possible reason for teachers' increased identification of both learning and externalizing problems in minority children is that there is a developmental link between the two types of psychopathology. Following school rules, not engaging in aggressive behavior, and not being referred by a teacher for discipline, have been shown to significantly predict academic success for African-American children in a recent study (Sanders, 1998). Another possible reason for disproportionate referral of minority students for behavior and learning disorders is that minority students may disengage from school due to frustration related to learning problems, causing them to be less inclined to follow school rules and less invested in creating a positive classroom environment (Sizemore, 1981). Baker (1985, as cited in Sanders, 1998) found that children with externalizing disorders are at greater risk for having learning problems, and Hinshaw (1992) found that 10-50% of children with learning problems had comorbid externalizing disorders. Definitions of learning problems used by researchers vary greatly from one study to the next, and can include low grades, achievement scores that are significantly lower than expected based on intelligence scores, poor performance on achievement scores across the entire achievement measure, and placement in special education classes. Thus, estimated comorbidity rates vary significantly by the definition of learning problems that used in a particular study (Hinshaw, 1992).

Children with externalizing disorders often have comorbid internalizing disorders, as demonstrated in a study by Gabel, Schmitz, and Fulker (1995). Children, aged 6-11, who had recently been referred to psychological services for hyperactivity were rated by

their parents on the Child Behavior Checklist. Children of both genders were found to have comorbid internalizing and externalizing disorders at rates significantly higher than chance (Gabel et al., 1995). Although Gabel et al.'s (1995) study used samples of clinically referred children, it is likely that a similar pattern of comorbidity would be observed among children who were identified by teachers as having an externalizing disorder. Internalizing disorders and learning problems may also occur comorbidly at rates higher than expected by chance. Research has shown that children diagnosed by school personnel as having learning disabilities experienced significantly higher levels of depression than children who were not diagnosed with any disability (Stanley et al., 1997). Unfortunately, it is very difficult to determine exact rates of comorbidity among children's disorders due to varying definitions of disorders used by researchers.

Regardless of the definitions or informants used in research, however, findings support that comorbidity of internalizing and externalizing, and learning problems is quite common (C. Epkins, personal communication, January 25, 2001). Given the empirical evidence that internalizing disorders often co-occur with externalizing disorders and learning problems, it is somewhat surprising that more research does not focus on teachers' identification of internalizing disorders. Perhaps, as suggested by Green, Clopton, and Pope (1996), externalizing disorders are simply of greater concern to teachers and educational researchers because externalizing behavior is quite disruptive to the class environment. In the same way, children with learning problems may concern teachers, because teachers are responsible for ensuring that children obtain mastery of school subjects. Children with internalizing problems, however, do not tend to be

discipline problems for teachers (Green et al., 1996). Thus, children's internalizing problems may often be overlooked by teachers and educational researchers.

Having any form of psychopathology, including externalizing, internalizing, or learning problems may cause teachers to see children as less interpersonally attractive (Pace, Mullins, Beesley, Hill, & Carson, 1999). Children with attention deficit disorders, conduct disorders, delinquency, oppositional defiant disorders and broad-band externalizing disorders are likely to be avoided by their teachers due their difficulty controlling their impulses and their tendency to choose conflict as a relational style (Pace et al., 1999). As previously discussed, when teachers and children do not interact positively, learning becomes more difficult for children, particularly those of minority backgrounds (Lee, 1984; Lee, 1999; & Sizemore, 1981). The link between learning disorders and behavior disorders may be stronger for minority children than Anglo children. In a study of African-American and Anglo adolescent boys, delinquency and truancy were significantly related to school failure (Voekl, Welte, & Wiczorek, 1999). For Anglo boys, there was no relationship found between grades, enrollment status, and delinquency. For African-American boys, lower grades were related to increased minor and serious antisocial behavior, and being enrolled in school was correlated with fewer minor crimes (Voekl et al., 1999).

Culture and Teachers' Perceptions of Psychopathology

Differences in expectations for behavior and learning, and culturally relevant beliefs may affect relationships between teachers and students. When minority children arrive at school with values from home that conflict with the values of teachers at school,

children have to choose whether they will try to fit in with their native culture, as taught by parents, or adjust to the Anglo cultural values taught by schools (Ford, 1992b; Fordham, 1988). Acculturating to Anglo values may cost children their connection to their native culture (Ford, 1992a). African- American children, in particular, may act out, drop out, or avoid achieving so that others do not see them as traitors to their own culture (Comer, 1988). According to Ogbu (1987), the relationship between a child's ethnic group and the dominant culture is the key factor in determining academic success and school adjustment for minority children. The issue involves three aspects: (1) whether the minority child is from a segment of society in which people have had unequal opportunities to use their education in a way that is economically and socially rewarding, (2) whether the minority group believes that education is being used by the dominant ethnic group to force the minority group to conform and compromise its uniqueness, and (3) whether the minority group trusts the schools enough to accept school practices and rules. Ogbu identifies two groups of minorities. The "immigrant minorities" are those who immigrated to the U.S. voluntarily in order to have greater access to social and economic opportunities. Children of voluntary minorities are likely to get support from their parents in academics, and are not likely to believe that by conforming to school expectations they are giving up their cultural identity. Involuntary minorities, on the other hand, are groups of people who were forcibly brought to the U.S. during times of slavery or colonization. These people have been traditionally assigned to the lowest position in society and have developed a cultural identity that is in direct opposition to that of the dominant Anglo culture. Ogbu assigns Mexican-Americans to the involuntary minority group because many people of that heritage came to the U. S. as a result of U. S.

conquering what was originally Mexican land. He asserts that even Mexican-American families who recently immigrated in order to allow their children more economic opportunities share a collective cultural identity with Mexican Americans, which is in opposition to the dominant American culture.

Although Ogbu's (1987) theory may explain some reasons that some minorities are not successful at academics, he fails to consider the strong influence of other factors on children's behavior and academic performance. His generalizations about ethnic groups are far too broad. His statement that recent Mexican-American immigrants share a cultural identity with Mexican Americans who were conquered in the past assumes that a very diverse group of individuals is homogeneous (Trueba, 1988). It seems doubtful that Mexican citizens who were absorbed by early Texas culture would share cultural identities with Mexican Americans who recently immigrated to the U.S., particularly due to the diversity of their experiences. Mexican citizens who immigrate to the U.S. often do so in order to improve their chances of economic success. While some struggle with poverty, other individuals are quite successful economically and are likely to encourage their children to strive for success at school. Individual members of ethnic groups who are successful, however, are ignored in Ogbu's theory (Trueba, 1988). Ogbu did not take into account the fact that many involuntary immigrants, and descendants of involuntary immigrants, are successful not only in school achievement, but also in improving their economic status (Trueba, 1988).

Trueba (1988) argued that culture does not completely define a child's school performance. In actuality, there are many more forces that affect children's attitudes toward school, children's learning styles, and children's development, and culture is one

influence of many on children's development. However, culture is not defined by when, how, or why an individual arrived in the U.S. as Ogbu asserted (1987). Instead, the cultural identity of a child is developed through social interactions with his or her parents, peers, teachers, and other significant people (Trueba, 1988). These interactions shape the development of each child's cognitive schemas about the world, including schemas about effective communication, appropriate goals, and values. Over time, these schemas become internalized and influence the child's individual thoughts and actions. Thus, academic success or failure is a product of multiple interactions over a long period of time across many settings. School success or failure cannot be blamed on whether one ethnic group fears losing its cultural identity or whether the child believes education will help him or her succeed in the future as Ogbu asserted. Instead, school success or failure must be considered in light of influences by many individuals across many settings throughout the child's development (Trueba, 1988).

Other researchers support Trueba's (1988) assertion that behaving well and achieving in school is not a matter of cultural identity, but one of cultural exposure. Minority children may have difficulty learning and behaving in school because their teachers' expectations are not the same as the cultural expectations of their families (Tharp, 1989). According to U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) (1994), a greater proportion of teachers is Anglo than any other ethnic group. Thus, it is Anglo styles of teaching that predominate in schools. However, children who are from minority backgrounds may have difficulty learning from teachers who come from Anglo backgrounds due to differences in cultural patterns of communication, cultural expectations, and culturally

influenced learning patterns (Chan & Rueda, 1979; Hayes, Ryan, & Zsella, 1994). Research has shown that minority students have different instructional and relational needs than their Anglo counterparts, and that learning styles are influenced by cultural backgrounds of students (Hayes et al., 1994). African-American students have been shown to prefer teachers who help with school work, encourage positive feelings, and motivate students, but Anglo students prefer teachers who are fun, humorous, responsive to individual needs, and are intellectually stimulating (Hayes et al., 1994). Sizemore (1981) found that Anglo students more often felt that teachers should be in control of the class, while also being interesting, stimulating, and organized, whereas African-American students emphasized the importance of teachers' warmth, caring, and helpfulness. Both African-American and Hispanic students have been shown to have a higher preference for teacher motivation (Dunn, Griggs, & Price, 1993) and to need more of a personal relationship with their teachers than their Anglo peers (Lee, 1984; Lee, 1999; & Sizemore, 1981). Hispanic students also prefer teachers who present material in a variety of ways as opposed to presenting material in a lecture format (Dunn et al., 1993). Compared to other ethnic groups, Hispanic students prefer more structure and more individual learning time in the classroom (Lubienski, 2000).

Perhaps because of these cultural differences in learning styles, students may prefer teachers from similar ethnic backgrounds over teachers from other ethnic groups. Vignettes describing Latino, African-American, Asian, and Anglo teachers were rated by 4th through 12th grade ethnically diverse students (Galguera, 1998). Teachers were also described as bilingual or monolingual. All students had the highest preference for bilingual teachers and African- American teachers, while Anglo teachers were the least

preferred. African-American and Hispanic teachers were both rated significantly higher on positive traits by all students than Anglo teachers, but there were no significant differences between the African-American and Hispanic teacher ratings. Hispanic students preferred Hispanic teachers, but had no preference when ratings of Anglo and African-American teachers were compared. Likewise, African-American students preferred African-American teachers, but had no preference between Hispanic and Anglo teachers. Asian students showed no preference for any teacher ethnicity. Therefore, it seems that most children preferred to have teachers from their own ethnic background rather than a different ethnic background. Asian students may not have had any preference because vignettes describing Asian teachers were not provided. Students may prefer teachers from their own ethnic background because they feel more comfortable interacting with teachers of their own ethnic group. Students and teachers who share ethnic backgrounds may also share similar expectations for learning and behavior. Bilingual students preferred bilingual teachers. Students who spoke only English were less likely than students who spoke both English and Spanish to indicate a higher preference for bilingual teachers than for teachers who spoke only English. The most likely explanation for these findings is that bilingual students find it much easier to communicate with bilingual teachers, but English-speaking students are likely to be able to communicate equally well with bilingual teachers and teachers who speak only English. Length of U. S. residency also affected children's preference for teachers' ethnicity. Students who recently immigrated to the U. S. rated Anglo and African-American teachers equally, and rated Hispanic teachers as significantly more preferable. Students who were born in the U. S. or had been in the U. S. at least four years displayed

increasingly negative attitudes toward Anglo teachers (Galguera, 1998). This finding is quite interesting and requires further research. Perhaps when students immigrate to the U. S., they have a positive expectation for working with Anglo teachers, and over time, experience leads them to feel slighted in some way. Another potential reason for this finding might be that over time minority students find that they simply learn better with teachers from minority backgrounds because the values and expectations of those teachers more closely resemble their own.

Cultural differences in expectations for behavior may cause minority children to have difficulty behaving in school, because teachers' behavioral expectations are so different than expectations of their families (Chan & Rueda, 1979; Tharp, 1989; Zimmermann, Khoury, Vega, & Gil, 1995). In order to provide insight into whether teachers rate a higher proportion of minority children as having externalizing disorders due to differences in cultural expectations of appropriate behavior, some researchers have compared teacher and parent ratings on complementary scales. If cultural differences in definitions of appropriate behavior exist, research would most likely demonstrate that minority parents, whose culture is shared with the child, rate minority children as having fewer behavior problems than the teacher, who is likely to have cultural values common among Anglos. One such study compared parental ratings on the Child Behavior Checklist to teacher ratings on the complementary Teacher Report Form (Horowitz et al., 1998). There were no differences in teachers' identification of internalizing disorders, social problems, or thought problems based on ethnicity. However, there were significant differences in teachers' ratings of externalizing disorders based on ethnicity. African-American children were rated by teachers as having more general externalizing problems,

and more aggression problems than Anglo children. However, ratings completed by parents of Anglo and African-American children showed no significant differences between the two ethnic groups. The fact that African-American children were rated as having different levels of externalizing problems by their parents than their teachers suggests that cultural differences in expectations for appropriate behavior may exist. African-American parents may have a higher tolerance for aggressive and externalizing behavior than Anglo teachers, resulting in disparate ratings of African-American children's behavior by the two raters. Results also demonstrated that teachers identified fewer externalizing problems in Hispanic children than in their Anglo or African-American counterparts, but Hispanic parents reported that their children had significantly more externalizing problems than either Anglo or African-American parents reported. Hispanic parents appear to have a lower tolerance for externalizing behaviors than Anglo teachers. Hispanic parents may have higher standards for behavior than most Anglo teachers, resulting in disparate ratings on the scales (Horowitz et al., 1998), or perhaps Hispanic children are socialized at home to avoid interactions with adults, causing their behavior problems to be overlooked by teachers (Roberts et al., 1985).

Differences in teachers' ratings of psychopathology may be caused by a complex set of interactions between cultural backgrounds and expectations of teachers, students, and parents. In a study by Zimmermann et al. (1995), approximately 7,000 African American, Anglo and Hispanic boys were rated by their African-American, Anglo and Hispanic teachers on the Teacher Report Form (TRF) and by their parents on the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL). African-American boys were given the highest mean TRF total problem score by all teachers, indicating that African-American boys may actually

have more externalizing and internalizing problems that are observed by teachers than Anglo or Hispanic children. However, teachers' ethnicities were shown to interact with ethnicities of students to influence teachers' ratings on the TRF. African-American students' mean TRF scores varied significantly according to the ethnicity of the teacher completing the ratings. African-American students who were rated by African-American teachers had significantly lower mean total problem scores on the TRF than African-American students rated by Hispanic or Anglo teachers. This finding suggests that African-American teachers may share cultural definitions of appropriate behavior with African-American students, causing those teachers to perceive African-American students as having fewer psychological problems than non-African-American teachers. Another possible reason for this finding could be that African-American teachers overlook psychological problems in African-American children more than non-African-American teachers. African-American students with Hispanic teachers had the highest mean total problem score (Zimmermann et al., 1995). This is an interesting finding when compared to some previous research which has suggested that Hispanic parents prefer authoritarian styles. Perhaps cultural preference for strict parenting and teaching of Hispanics (Roberts et al., 1985) interacted with African-American children's preference for active learning to produce this result. Another explanation for this finding might be that African-American children had culturally defined expectations for behavior that differed from those of their Hispanic teachers, causing Hispanic teachers to perceive their behavior as very disruptive. TRF scores decreased as income level increased (Zimmermann et al., 1995), indicating that socioeconomic status affected teachers' ratings. This is consistent with other research that demonstrates that income level

interacts with ethnic background to influence teachers' perceptions and ratings of children's psychopathology (Argulewiz, 1983; Horowitz et al., 1998; Pagani, Boulerice, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 1999), a finding which will be explored further later in this review. When teachers ratings on the TRF were compared with parents' ratings on the CBCL, there were no significant differences found between parents' and teachers' scores for Hispanic or Anglo boys. However, Hispanic and Anglo teachers rated African-American boys as having more psychological problems than African-American parents. There were no significant differences between African-American parents' and African-American teachers' ratings. Again, this finding suggests that African-American teachers may share cultural definitions of appropriate behavior with African-American families, causing ratings of African-American boys' psychopathology to be lower when they are rated by African-American teachers than when they are rated by teachers of other ethnic backgrounds. The disparity in ratings among parents and teachers, and among teachers of different races, suggests that there may be cultural differences in expectations for learning and for classroom behavior (Zimmerman et al., 1995).

In conclusion, cultural differences in expectations for behavior and learning may influence teachers' ratings of children's learning and behavior problems. Researchers differ in definitions of culture, and in the amount of emphasis given to the influence of culture on school success. Ogbu (1987), for example, asserts that a minority culture's relationship to the dominate Anglo culture is the defining factor in children's school achievement. Other researchers, however, consider culture as one influence of many on children's performance. Cultural differences in expectations for appropriate behavior and optimal learning styles may place minority students at higher risk for identification of

psychopathology by teachers, because most teachers have Anglo values that may differ significantly from values of minorities. Minority students have been shown to prefer to interact with teachers of their own ethnic backgrounds over interacting with teachers of different ethnic backgrounds. This preference could be due to shared cultural expectations for appropriate behavior, or teaching and learning styles, or it could be due to some other ethnic bias.

The Influence of Socioeconomic Status on Teachers' Identification Students' Psychopathology

The cultural gap between teachers and students created by ethnicity is increased when different socioeconomic levels enter into the equation. Understanding the influence of socioeconomic status on teachers' perceptions of children's learning problems is especially relevant to minority students, because a greater proportion of minority students than Anglo students live in lower-income households. Inner-city schools, where students are predominately poor and teachers tend to have middle-class values and life-styles are particularly affected by this culture clash (Juarez, 1974). Teachers use middle-class standards, such as obedience and respect for authority, to judge children's behavior (Juarez, 1974), perhaps not realizing that children from lower-class and minority backgrounds have not been exposed to middle-class values prior to entering school (Langsdorf et al., 1979). If minority children are from low-income homes, which is often the case, they are even less likely to be exposed to the values required by Anglo teachers (Chan & Rueda, 1979). Parents living in poverty are less likely than middle- and upper-classes to be exposed to books about baby and child care that would assist with socialization needed for school success. Minority and low-income families are not as

likely as higher income, Anglo families to expose children early in life to school-type tasks, putting minority children at a cognitive disadvantage. Minority parents are less likely than Anglo parents to condition their children to enjoy verbal praise, a reinforcer often used by teachers. Some Hispanic parents do not speak English in their homes, putting children at a disadvantage for learning in an English language classroom (Chan & Rueda, 1979). Minority children may not be required to sit quietly at home as they are required to do at school (Langsdorf et al., 1979). Hispanic children may tend to be more kinesthetic learners, preferring to touch more, have less interpersonal space, and manifest more active movements than their Anglo peers (Nine-Curt, 1979, as cited in Bauermeister et al., 1990.) Lower-socioeconomic, African-American children may develop an active, assertive style to cope with the stressful, inner-city environments that they are raised in (Pigott & Cowen, 2000). Because lower-class African-American children often grow up in inner-city environments, they may be more used to sensory stimulation than middle-class Anglo children (Boykin, 1982). For example, lower- socioeconomic status African-American households are typically comprised of more individuals, and often have higher noise levels and rates of physical activities than middle-class Anglo households. As a result, African-American children may excel at multitasking, such as working on school work while listening to music (Boykin, 1982). Hispanics are more likely than Anglos to prefer working on several tasks at a time, rather than focusing on tasks in sequence (Nine-Curt, 1979, as cited in Bauermeister et al., 1990). While minority teachers may be accustomed to handling the needs of several children at once because of socialization, Anglo teachers probably are not prepared to do so (Nine-Curt, 1979, as cited in Bauermeister et al., 1990). Minority children's adeptness at such tasks is in direct contrast

to Anglo children's tendency to perform better on monotonous, tedious tasks that more closely resemble traditional school work or the clerical work done by many adults (Boykin, 1982). Thus, coping styles developed by African-American children in lower-socioeconomic status areas may be very useful at home, but not very useful in terms of helping children excel at learning and behaving according to traditional school values, which are based on Anglo cultural values.

Argulewicz (1983) studied the effects of socioeconomic status and ethnicity on teachers' identification of learning problems and internalizing disorders in elementary students. Placement rate in special education was determined for approximately 10,000 children of Anglo, African-American, and Hispanic descent in kindergarten through sixth-grade in order to determine trends in placement by ethnicity and social class. Hispanic children were divided into two subgroups according to whether they spoke Spanish or English at home. Socioeconomic status was determined by assigning a score based on the number of children in the neighborhood who were eligible for free or reduced-price meals at school. There was a main effect for ethnicity, indicating Hispanic and African-American children had a higher probability of being identified as needing special education for learning problems or internalizing disorders than Anglo children. There was not a main effect for socioeconomic status. Therefore, socioeconomic status, when considered in isolation, did not significantly predict placement of children in special education. However, there was an interaction between ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Spanish-speaking Hispanics attending schools in middle-class neighborhoods were the most likely of any group studied to be identified by teachers as needing special education. Spanish-speaking Hispanic children attending school in lower-

class neighborhoods, and English-speaking Hispanics attending schools in either lower- or middle-class neighborhoods were significantly more likely than other non-Hispanic groups to be referred for special education. Thus, Hispanic children, particularly those who were bilingual, were at highest risk for placement in special education. Anglo and African-American children attending schools in lower-class neighborhoods were more likely to be identified as needing special education placement for learning problems or internalizing disorders than African-American children attending schools in middle-class neighborhoods. Middle-class African-American children were the group least likely to be identified as needing special education (Argulewicz, 1983). Results suggest that socioeconomic status influences placement of children in special education differently based on ethnic background. Though reasons for this disproportionate placement have not been determined, there are several possible explanations. The finding that bilingual Hispanic children were at highest risk for placement suggests that language differences may further complicate cultural and socioeconomic divisions between children and teachers. Bilingual children may have difficulty understanding the directions of teachers, making learning and behaving more difficult for these children (Carlson & Stephens, 1986; Whitworth, 1988). Also, bilingual children may be more likely to have recently immigrated to the U. S., and therefore, they may have had fewer opportunities to adapt to expectations of Anglo teachers in classrooms. Teachers may recommend placement in special education more for bilingual Hispanic children than for other children because they believe special education would be more helpful to those children than to others. Disproportionate placement of minority children in special education may have been caused by variables other than differences in teachers' referral of children. For example,

assessment instruments might have been biased against minority or low-income students, resulting in disproportionate identification of these students' psychological problems.

In summary, most teachers in the U. S. are not only Anglo, but also middle class. Thus, they are likely to use middle class, Anglo standards when judging children's behavior. However, a higher proportion of minorities than Anglos live in poverty, and many minority children are unprepared for these standards of behavior. While Anglo and middle-class children are likely to have the monotonous, tedious tasks common in schools modeled in their homes, low-income and minority children are more likely to be exposed to active, energetic tasks. The urban environments where many minority children reside tend to have more activity and interpersonal interactions than middle-class, Anglo areas, partly because housing tends to be more crowded. Thus, minority children may prefer group interactions and active tasks, while middle-class Anglo teachers prefer quieter, more individualized tasks. Minority children are also more likely to be comfortable in noisy environments that resemble inner-city areas, while Anglo teachers are likely to be disturbed by a high level of ambient noise. There is some evidence that socioeconomic background may have a different effect on special education placement for different ethnic groups. Lower socioeconomic status may also expose children to higher risks for developing psychopathology; the next section will focus on correlates of poverty that increase this risk.

The Influence of Ethnicity and Poverty on Children's Development of Psychopathology

The fact that poor minority children often are not exposed to the values common among middle-class Anglo teachers may be one aspect of the problem with obtaining

accurate teacher ratings of children's learning and behavior problems but poverty may also be a risk factor for the development of those problems. Because a higher percentage of the total population of minority children than Anglo children live in poverty, minority children are at increased risk for exposure to correlates of poverty that raise the risk that a child will develop psychopathology. Willerman (1973) noted that lower-class children are at increased risk for brain dysfunction, which can cause deficits in intelligence and learning, and aggression, impulsivity, and hyperactivity (Willerman, 1973). A recent study found that living in poverty predicted involvement with serious delinquency in adolescent boys, but was not related to minor delinquency (Pagani et al., 1999). Intermittent poverty, rather than constant poverty, predicted serious antisocial behavior. Boys living in vacillating socioeconomic status homes were two times more likely to be extremely delinquent than children who were never poor. Perhaps periods of economic security followed by periods of loss are more frustrating for children than never experiencing economic security at all. This increased frustration may lead to increased delinquent behavior (Pagani et al., 1999). Children who live in situations where economic security occurs intermittently may be more transient, having to move periodically between low-income and middle-income housing facilities. This may cause these children to have to change schools frequently, resulting in reduced social support from peers and teachers, which would increase frustration, and result in increased psychopathology. Also, moving frequently might cause these children to have difficulty with academics, resulting in increased risk for dropping out of school, which has been shown to be related to delinquency in minority children (Voekl et al., 1999).

The Influence of Ethnicity on Teacher-Student Communication

Because minority children are often not exposed to the cultural and class values used by many teachers to judge behavior and learning, feedback from teachers may be particularly important to the success of minority students. Feedback allows teachers to correct children's mistakes and misconceptions, and therefore increases students' learning opportunities. Research has demonstrated that cultural backgrounds of teachers and students affect the type and amount of feedback given to students (Irvine, 1985). A modified version of the Brophy-Good Dyadic Interaction System was used by African-American and Anglo observers to measure classroom feedback given by teachers of both ethnic backgrounds to students of both ethnic backgrounds. Anglo students received less total feedback on behavior than their African-American peers. African-American students were given more negative feedback on their behavior than Anglo students. Though the researcher suggested that the teachers might have been slightly biased against African-American students (Irvine, 1985), it is also possible that the teachers were attempting to help the African-American students remain on task by giving them extra feedback about behavior. Teachers also gave African-American students more messages containing mixed positive and negative feedback than they gave to Anglo children. For example, a mixed message would be, "No, that's wrong, but I like the way you raised your hand." Contradictory messages might be frustrating and perplexing to African-American students, thus interrupting their learning (Irvine, 1985). It is plausible that teachers were attempting to balance negative feedback with positive reinforcement, which, arguably could help decrease students' frustration levels. It is also possible that teachers were attempting to assist these African-American children with developing behavior skills

needed for school success. It could be considered unfair of the teachers if they did not provide frequent, direct feedback to students with behavior and learning problems.

Ethnicity may also influence teachers' subtle feedback (Byalick & Bersoff, 1974). In one study, feedback given to African-American and Anglo children was recorded on the Positive Reinforcement Observation Schedule. This instrument allowed for exploration of less obvious teacher feedback patterns, such as a teacher looking at a student or making physical contact with a student. Positive feedback was defined by things like a teacher looking at a child and smiling, listening to a child attentively, clarifying a child's feelings, developing a child's ideas, or giving a child a concrete or symbolic reward. Teachers tended to positively reinforce children of different ethnicities more often than children of their own race. Perhaps teachers give children of other races more positive feedback than children of their own race because they are concerned about favoring children of their own race (Byalick & Bersoff, 1974). Teachers might also recognize that minority children often struggle in school, and provide extra feedback to help these children succeed at school. The greater levels of negative and mixed verbal feedback given to African-American children in Irvine's (1985) study may be balanced by teachers' tendency to positively reinforce minority children in subtle ways, such as smiling, or providing rewards, more often than they subtly reinforce Anglo children (Byalick & Bersoff, 1974).

Regardless of the intent of the teacher, students may perceive feedback differently based on ethnicity (Coleman, Jussim, & Issac, 1991). When African-American and Anglo college students were given experimentally manipulated feedback from actors portraying African- American and Anglo teachers, African-American students, particularly females,

believed that the Anglo “teachers” were biased against them. African-American students reported that they believed the Anglo “teachers” thought they were not intelligent and that Anglo “teachers” judged the task they were given to be easy (Coleman et al., 1991). Lee (1999) found that students’ perceptions that teachers were biased against them had harmful, long-term effects on achievement by causing minority children to avoid class and avoid performing well for teachers.

In order for learning to occur, students have to be able to interact with their teachers, receive teacher feedback, and have good working relationships with teachers. Research has demonstrated that ethnicity influences students’ perceptions of teacher feedback (Coleman et al., 1991), and that it influences both subtle (Byalick & Bersoff, 1974) and overt communications between teachers and students (Irvine, 1985). Teacher feedback has been shown to directly affect students’ abilities to learn (Byalick & Bersoff, 1974). Therefore, teachers' provision and students’ reception of feedback is important in determining whether the student will be at risk for academic failure and subsequent referral for a learning or behavior problem.

The Influences of Ethnicity and Children's Views of Peer and Self on Children's Learning

Peer relationships have a significant influence on children's academic development and can encourage children to succeed or fail. Peer relationships have been shown to be more important to minority children's school success than Anglo children's success (Dunn et al., 1993). A study by Trotter (1981) found that low-achieving African-American males believed their peers held significantly more negative attitudes toward school than did high-achieving African-American males. These perceptions of peer

attitudes toward school were significantly correlated with the adolescents' school success. A study of Latino and African-American students indicated that, for minority students, having a network of high-achieving peers who provided emotional and academic support was important to academic achievement (Hebert & Reis, 1999). Low-achieving Mexican-American students in one study emphasized the importance of peer support in achievement when they indicated that they often felt unsupported in school because many of their friends had dropped out (Tan, 1999).

Self-esteem also plays an important role in children's academic success and motivation. The influence of self-esteem on academic success, however, may be different for children of different cultural backgrounds. High-achieving Mexican-American students were significantly more likely than their low-achieving counterparts to feel that their cultural background was valued by their teachers and their peers (Tan, 1999). The reason for this correlation has not been defined, but the correlation does suggest that children who feel good about their ethnic identities are more likely to excel in academics (Tan, 1999).

Children's learning can be affected by cultural differences, such as peer group views of education and self-esteem. The fact that minority students may have more influences that would lead them to reject school as a means to success might account for teachers' rating minority students as having more learning problems, because minority students may actually not be as invested in school and therefore, may not be as motivated to learn. Peers may also positively influence children's school success. When children have a strong peer network and feel that their culture is valued in school, some negative effects of poverty and cultural differences may be reduced.

Family Support and School Success

Parental support of children's education has also been shown to be important for children's academic success. Parents' expectations have a strong influence on children's beliefs about education. Successful African-American students cited wanting to please their parents as an important motivating factor in academic success (Lee, 1984). In a study of African-American children, parental support was found to have positive effects on students' conduct and self-esteem about academic ability (Sanders, 1998). Lower-class Puerto Rican and African-American high school students also identified family support as a key factor in educational attainment (Hebert & Reis, 1999). Hispanic students from low-income homes reported that their parents' encouragement and interest in school activities was important to their desire to succeed in school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1988). Children of supportive parents reported more confidence that they could work out difficult social, emotional, and academic school problems than those who felt unsupported. In a study of African-American children, parental support was found to have positive effects on students' conduct and self-esteem about academic ability (Sanders, 1998). Even if parents were not able to become actively involved in daily school activities due to economic pressures, parental emotional support and emphasis on education as an avenue of success positively influenced children's perceptions of school (Hebert & Reis, 1999). Differences in support were identified between parents of high-achieving and low-achieving Hispanic children in a study by Okagaki, Frensch, and Gordon (1995). Parents of the high-achieving children indicated that they expected their children to achieve higher grade point averages than parents of lower-achieving children. Parents of high-achievers felt they were more capable of assisting with schoolwork than

other parents. They were also more likely to model reading at home (Okagaki et al., 1995). Thus, modeling behaviors important to school success, such as reading, and successful techniques for studying, may help children develop skills necessary for school (Chan & Rueda, 1979). Children of highly educated parents are less likely than children with less educated parents to be identified by teachers as having externalizing disorders (Horowitz et al., 1998), which may indicate that parents who have been exposed to school values and who were successful in school environments may be better able to socialize children to perform in school. It could also indicate that highly educated parents teach their children that school is important to success, thus motivating these children to behave and perform better in the classroom.

Given that parental support is such an important aspect of children's academic development, it is important to consider the influence of family structure and ethnicity on school performance and behavior. Often, minority children who live in single-parent households are exposed to multiple risk factors for the development of learning and behavior problems. Not only do they lack the family support shown to be important to school success, but also they are more often exposed to problems related to lower-socioeconomic status (Horowitz et al., 1998). Lower-socioeconomic status Hispanic students were found to have significant trouble adjusting to school demands if they lived with a single-parent, whether the parent was divorced or never married (Delgado-Gaitan, 1988). These difficulties with adjustment may be related to lowered financial, emotional, and academic resources. Hispanic adolescents in the study expressed fear and guilt about turning to a single or divorced parent because the adolescents perceived that their parents were already overburdened by financial pressures and emotional stress related to being a

single-parent. Thus, these adolescents did not get as much help with homework or social problems as children from two-parent homes. Teens in the study also reported that having a single parent meant that they had to work themselves in order to help out their parents with household expenses, resulting in less time to devote to learning (Delgado-Gaitan, 1988). One study found that students identified with behavior and learning problems were working up to 50 hours a week outside of school to support their families (Lee, 1999). Students were unable to keep up with homework or stay actively engaged in coursework, causing them to fall behind in classes (Lee, 1999).

A study by Horowitz et al. (1998) supported the finding that family structure and parental support are important to children's school performance and teachers' ratings of children's psychopathology. Approximately 450 African-American, Anglo, and Hispanic children aged 6-8 were rated by their parents on the Child Behavior Checklist, and by their pediatricians on a checklist of social, behavioral, developmental, medical, and psychological problems. Children were then separated into two groups. One group was identified by at least one rater as having at least one problem, and the other group of children was not identified as having any problem by any rater. Each child's teacher then completed the Teacher Report Form. Teachers rated Hispanic, African-American and Anglo children of single-parent families as having more externalizing problems than their peers from two-parent homes. There were no differences found in teachers' identification of internalizing or mixed problems based on family structure (Horowitz et al., 1998). Children with one parent may not have their behavior supervised to the degree that children with two parents are supervised (Pagani et al., 1999). Lack of supervision may partially account for the higher rate of externalizing problems among children of single

parent homes, because children with less parental monitoring could be given less feedback that might shape appropriate behavior (Pagani et al., 1999). The fact that single parents have less time to monitor their children's behavior might also explain the finding that parents rated their children as having fewer externalizing problems than teachers, because parents may not have been around children frequently enough to identify problem behaviors accurately. Children from low-income families were rated by teachers as having more externalizing problems than their higher-income peers (Horowitz et al., 1998). Having a parent who was divorced, as opposed to always being single, increased children's risk of being identified by teachers as having internalizing and externalizing disorders, as well as social problems (Horowitz et al., 1998). Perhaps the family turmoil related to a divorce placed children of divorced parents at increased risk for developing psychopathology. Lowered emotional and economic resources might also account for this increased risk.

In summary, research has demonstrated that parental support influences children's learning, behavior and emotional development. Parents instill in their children beliefs about the value of education and are responsible for socializing children for school success. This socialization process may be more difficult for parents of minority backgrounds because minority parents may be less acculturated to school values and behaviors than Anglo parents, and therefore, are unable to acculturate their children to meet teachers' expectations (Chan & Rueda, 1979; Hebert & Reis, 1999; Okagaki et al., 1995). Research has shown that when minority parents have achieved higher levels of education, their children are also more able to achieve in school, demonstrating that parents who are more acculturated themselves are better able to help their children

succeed (Okagaki et al., 1995). Minority children, particularly those from one-parent homes, are exposed to multiple risk factors for development of psychopathology, including correlates of poverty and inadequate supervision.

School Characteristics Related to Teacher-Student Relationships

In addition to cultural, peer, and family influences, teachers' relationship with students are influenced by their school environments. In many high-minority schools, teachers and students must contend with increased pressures related to having access to fewer materials, problems related to inadequate funding, and increased difficulty relating to each other due to differences in cultural and economic backgrounds. These increased pressures influence students' development as well as teachers' perceptions of students' learning and behavior problems. To further complicate matters, children of different ethnic backgrounds may be affected differently by school characteristics. Kennedy (1992) found that the socioeconomic status and the characteristics of the student population of a school were significantly more important in the success of African American high-school boys than in the success of Anglo boys. African-American boys in larger schools were less comfortable asking questions in class than Anglo boys. This finding could also be due to African-American children's greater need for personal relationships with teachers (Kennedy, 1992). As class size increases, the opportunity for individual instruction decreases, resulting in less bonding between teachers and students. As average achievement in schools rose, African-American boys tended to be less comfortable talking in class. Alternately, African-American children may be uncomfortable speaking in large groups to a greater degree than Anglo children. African-American males were also less comfortable talking in higher socioeconomic status

schools (Kennedy, 1992). Perhaps African- American children, who are disproportionately impoverished, felt less confident in higher-income schools where other students were less likely to share their cultural backgrounds. Also, African-American children may not have felt their culture was as valued in higher-income areas, resulting in lowered self-esteem and decreased interaction with others. Regardless of the cause, these difficulties with communication may make it more difficult for African-American boys than Anglo boys to get help from teachers when needed (Kennedy, 1992). School characteristics were also shown to influence Mexican-American students school success in a study by Tan (1999). Mexican-American children were less likely than Anglo children to feel that their culture was respected in school and that they had opportunities to learn about their own culture in class. A greater sense of multiculturalism and cultural pride was related to perceived ease of learning and increased intent to stay in school for children of Mexican-American descent (Tan, 1999).

Teachers who are placed in schools with high-minority populations may experience difficulties relating to children who are of different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds than their own (Freeman, Brookhart, & Loadman, 1999). A recent study compared first-year teachers placed in schools with student populations of at least 25% minority children with first-year teachers placed in schools with student populations comprised of no more than 10% minority children. Teachers in the high-diversity schools had more trouble relating to students, reported less job satisfaction, and reported less self-assurance when compared with their peers in low diversity environments. Administrators of high-diversity schools placed more demands on their teachers, requiring them to teach subjects they were not certified in at a significantly higher rate than administrators of

low-diversity schools. Teachers in high-diversity environments were also more likely to experience and admit to having significant discipline problems in their classrooms (Freeman et al., 1999).

Lack of adequate funding forces teachers and children in predominately minority, low- income schools to deal with many hardships not faced by those in predominately Anglo, higher- income schools. Schools in lower socioeconomic, minority areas often do not have the money to keep the building structurally intact (Kozol, 1991). Because so much money is spent on building repair, teachers must either spend their own money on teaching supplies, such as supplementary books and videos, or do without classroom resources. Some schools do not even have enough textbooks for all students.

Technological advances that could enrich learning, such as computer access, are not as available to lower-income schools as they are to suburban schools. Urban schools are often overcrowded and have higher student-teacher ratios than their counterparts (Kozol, 1991), costing students individual instruction time that could be helpful to minority children by allowing personal relationships and chances to expand learning (Pianta, 1999)

Low-income, high-minority schools also have difficulty recruiting and retaining effective staff. Teachers' and administrators' salaries are negatively affected by shortages in funding, making these schools less attractive to well-qualified staff, who could easily secure higher paid positions elsewhere (Kozol, 1991). As a result, many classrooms in urban schools are staffed by substitute teachers or underqualified, untrained teachers (Kozol, 1991). Urban schools often have twice as many teachers on emergency certification, whereas teachers at schools that have records of high achievement have more teachers with advanced degrees and more experience (Waxman & Huang, 1997).

Negative stereotypes, or fear about racial tension and potential violence may cause quality teachers to avoid applying for jobs at low-income, high-minority schools (Cook & Van Cleaf, 2000). Because teaching in higher socioeconomic schools is often viewed as a privilege earned through seniority, teachers' unions fight efforts made by school districts to alter transfer policies (Krei, 1998). Again, lack of funding prevents urban schools from compensating teachers for service in troubled schools (Krei, 1998). Unsuccessful teachers are likely to be transferred to low-income schools instead of being fired (Krei, 1998). Thus, teachers in urban schools are likely to view their situation as undesirable and temporary, causing them to avoid investing heavily in relationships with students or commitment to schools (Kozol, 1991; Krei, 1998). As previously discussed, minority children's success is more dependent on relationships with teachers and school characteristics than Anglo children's success. It could be argued that children who are most in need of good teachers and schools are least likely to attend schools where such advantages are provided.

In conclusion, disparity in teachers' ratings of minority children's psychopathology when compared to ratings of Anglo children's psychopathology may be related to influences on children's development that occur outside the classroom. Research has suggested that children's learning, behavior, and emotions may be influenced by cultural heritage, religious socialization, and parental guidance. As a group, minority children may be exposed to more risk factors that predispose them to have learning or behavior problems. A higher proportion of minority children than Anglo children are exposed to poverty and its correlates. Children living in poverty are less likely than Anglo children to be socialized to Anglo ideas of appropriate school behavior

and traditional methods of learning, placing minority children at a great disadvantage from the time they enter school. Due to economic challenges faced by many minority parents, minority children may have less supervision and less support than many Anglo children. Minority children are also more likely to attend schools that lack opportunities for enriched learning through technology. In fact, the schools that minority children attend may lack basic instructional materials necessary for learning. The fact that many more teachers at high-minority schools are uncertified, less educated, and less experienced than teachers at low-minority schools also suggests that teachers rating minority children as having higher rates of psychopathology may lack the experience needed to make accurate ratings of children's problems on teacher rating scales. Thus, because of all of these issues, it is very important to consider the influence of ethnicity on children's psychopathology and teachers' perceptions of children's psychopathology in a context of demographic and school related variables instead of in isolation.

Problematic Assumptions of Homogeneity of Ethnic Groups

Of significant concern in this area of research is the assumption of homogeneity within ethnic groups (Zimmermann et al., 1995). In order to study differences in teacher-student relationships among ethnic groups, psychologists must assume that children who identify themselves as members of a particular ethnic group are much more similar than they probably are. In reality, an ethnic label, such as the designation "Latino", can contain individuals with extremely diverse experiences. For example, the term "Latino" can describe individuals who have immigrated from Mexico, South America, Spain, or Cuba, and Mexican Americans who have lived in the U.S. throughout their lives, to name just a few. Within that one ethnic description, there are likely to be very different cultural,

socioeconomic, religious, and family variables, and evidence presented in this paper demonstrates that all of those factors probably influence children's development. Thus, it cannot be assumed that such a diverse group of children are all perceived the same by teachers, that children in such a group would all be exposed to the same risk factors for psychopathology, or that all these children would manifest psychopathology in the same way. Individuals may be forced into racial categories by researchers, when, in actuality, they are of mixed ethnic heritage. On the most recent U.S. Census, approximately 3 percent of all Americans were expected to describe themselves as multiracial (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, as cited in Pugh, 2001). Such artificial racial groupings are probably necessary for research to advance. However, it is important to interpret findings about differences among ethnic groups with caution, and to realize that within any given ethnic label there is probably a great deal of variability in the experiences of individuals.

Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Background:
An Important Consideration

Evidence presented in this paper supports the conclusion that any research on the influence of ethnicity on teachers' identification of children's psychopathology must take the high correlation between poverty and ethnicity into account. There are many methods used to measure socioeconomic status, and not all of them are equal. For the sake of convenience, income levels are often divided into several ranges, creating a categorical variable. Just as in the case of categorical ethnic groupings, categorical socioeconomic groupings are likely to assume that groups within each category are much more similar than they actually are. Thus, this approach obscures differences within those artificially created ranges. For example, Horowitz et al. (1998) controlled for socioeconomic

differences by separating families into one of two categories: below the poverty line and above the poverty line. In reality, families can fall anywhere on the continuum of income, theoretically from zero dollars to millions of dollars. Pigott and Cowen (2000) separated students into socioeconomic categories based on whether students were receiving free or reduced-cost lunches or were not receiving any assistance with lunches. Argulewicz (1983) used socioeconomic status of the majority of households in neighborhoods surrounding schools as a measure of children's socioeconomic background. The artificial categorization of socioeconomic status in studies like Argulewicz's (1983), Horowitz et al.'s (1998), and Pigott and Cowen's (2000) ignores the fact that income levels probably vary greatly within each group, and that there may even be differences in ethnic groups within each category. Another common measure of socioeconomic status is the education level or job status of parents. Either of these measures could present a very skewed picture due to social factors related to ethnicity and gender. If an African American female head of household completed two years of college, and then was compared to an Anglo male head of household with the same education level and same profession, there would likely be large differences in income between the two people because of wage gaps between men and women, and between Anglos and minorities. For the same reason, the two people could have the same type of job, as measured by in job status rankings, and be at different levels of seniority that would affect income, or could have different earning potentials for the same job due to gender and ethnicity.

While it is very important to consider the relationship between socioeconomic status and ethnicity when designing studies and drawing conclusions based on results, ethnicity has been shown to have an influence on teachers' ratings and identification of

psychopathology independent of socioeconomic status. Argulewicz (1983) found that ethnicity had a direct influence on teachers' ratings of children's learning disorders, and Oswald et al. (1995) found that adding ethnicity to a regression equation predicting labeling of African American children as mentally retarded improved predictive value above what was predicted by other demographic indicators of socioeconomic status (Oswald et al., 1995). Both of these findings suggest that ethnicity should not be considered a proxy variable for socioeconomic status, and should be considered as important in its own right.

In summary, creating categorical groupings of socioeconomic status assumes that there is more homogeneity within each grouping than there is in actuality. Because it is more convenient for researchers to categorize socioeconomic levels, such methods will probably continue to be used frequently. However, it is important that findings regarding differences among categorical socioeconomic variables be interpreted with caution due to the large amount of variance that is likely to be present within each group. Such categorical groupings may also mask differences between ethnic groups that occur within categories. Furthermore, some researchers, such as Lubienski (2000), have suggested that socioeconomic status may be a proxy variable for other correlates of ethnicity, such as family status, that are not often measured in studies of ethnicity. However, several other researchers, such as Argulewicz (1983) and Oswald et al. (1999), have shown that socioeconomic status accounts for a significant amount of variance after other variables have been accounted for. Therefore, it is important to continue to evaluate socioeconomic status in studies of ethnicity and teachers' identification of children's psychopathology.

Perhaps examining socioeconomic status as a continuous, rather than categorical, variable could shed more light on this issue.

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Table 1. Mean Levels of Concern as a Function of Vignette Type and Teacher Ethnicity

Teacher Ethnicity	<u>N</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation
Learning Vignette			
Caucasian	37	3.97	.86
Hispanic	7	3.86	.90
African-American	2	3.00	.00
Total	46	3.91	.86
Behavior Vignette			
Caucasian	40	4.02	.80
Hispanic	11	4.00	1.00
African-American	3	3.67	1.53
Other	1	4.00	
Total	55	4.00	.86

Table 2. Teachers' Choice of Intervention Based on Ethnicity for Vignettes

Intervention	Vignette	<u>N</u>	<u>df</u>	χ^2 Value	p Value
Isolation/time out	Behavior	102	1	.71	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.10	>.05
Parent contact	Behavior	102	1	.29	>.05
	Learning	-	-	-	-
Detention/in-school-suspension	Behavior	102	1	.81	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.13	>.05
Removal of privileges	Behavior	102	1	1.18	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.33	>.05
Positive reinforcement	Behavior	102	1	.04	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.71	>.05
Behavior contracts	Behavior	102	1	.34	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.01	>.05
Classroom modifications	Behavior	102	1	1.25	>.05
	Learning	103	1	1.61	>.05
Placement in remedial classes	Behavior	-	-	-	-
	Learning	103	1	.02	>.05
Student-teacher conferences	Behavior	102	1	.64	>.05
	Learning	103	1	1.72	>.05

Table 2. Continued.

Referral to principal or team	Behavior	102	1	.03	>.05
	Learning	103	1	.22	>.05
Other interventions	Behavior	102	1	.28	>.05
	Learning	103	1	1.13	>.05

Note. A χ^2 value for parent contact for the learning vignette was not computed because all teachers indicated they would contact parents about the problems experienced by the boys. Because there was no variability in responses, a χ^2 would not have yielded any information. Similarly, a χ^2 value was not computed for option of placement in remedial classes for the behavior vignette, because none of the teachers indicated they would recommend such placement.

Table 3. Frequency of Interventions Chosen by Teachers for Vignette Types

Intervention	Vignette Type			
	Hispanic Behavior ($\underline{n} = 54$)	Anglo Behavior ($\underline{n} = 48$)	Hispanic Learning ($n = 57$)	Anglo Learning ($n = 46$)
Isolation/Time Out	27	20	4	1
Parent Contact	50	43	57	46
Detention	3	1	4	1
Loss of Privileges	28	30	29	26
Positive Reinforcement	49	43	49	42
Behavior Contract	41	34	29	23
Classroom Modifications	49	40	44	40
Remedial Classes	0	0	8	6
Student-Teacher Conference	43	35	52	38
Referral to Principal or Team	4	4	8	8
Other	10	7	27	17

Note. Examples of classroom modifications given on the questionnaires included providing special seating arrangements or modifying assignments.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO TEACHERS

October 12, 2001

Dear Teacher:

I am a graduate student in clinical psychology, and I am asking for your participation in a study of children's classroom behavior. I am interested in understanding the types of learning and behavior problems teachers see in their classrooms, and in finding out what types of interventions teachers feel are most effective to help children with these problems.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated, and should take no more than 15 minutes of your time. Please fill out the enclosed demographic questionnaire, then read the short vignette that is attached and answer the questions that follow. It is important that you answer all items on the questionnaire so that we can include your valuable input in the data. When you have completed all of the items, please use the addressed, stamped envelope to mail the questionnaires directly to Texas Tech. So that we can include your input, please return your questionnaire within two weeks.

Your participation will be very helpful to me and will help the field of psychology better understand and treat children who have behavior and learning problems. As a way to thank you for your valuable time, please find an incentive sheet enclosed in this packet. When you return your completed packet, you will be entered in a drawing. Two names will be chosen at random, and each will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Office Max.

Participation is completely voluntary, and all of your answers will be kept confidential. Code numbers on your materials, except your incentive sheet, cannot be connected with your name. The incentive sheet will be separated from your questionnaires as soon as it is received in order to insure your confidentiality.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at 806-742-3737 or my supervisor, Dr. Jim Clopton, at 806-742-3711, extension 282. Once again, thank you so much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Savener
Graduate Student, Clinical Psychology
Texas Tech University

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Sex: M_____ F_____

2. Race: Caucasian____ Hispanic ____ African-American____ American-Indian____

Other (please specify):_____

3. What grade do you currently teach? 3rd____ 4th____ 5th____

4. How would you describe the average socioeconomic level of your students?

____Low ____ Middle ____ High

APPENDIX C

BEHAVIOR VIGNETTE

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING VIGNETTE, THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

John is a nine-year-old Caucasian boy who is in the fourth-grade. His father is a construction worker and his mother is a secretary. John is often restless and squirmy, and sometimes seems to be very excitable. He sometimes acts as if he is driven by a motor. Occasionally, he leaves his desk when he is supposed to be seated. He frequently has difficulty waiting his turn. John often has trouble playing quietly.

APPENDIX D

LEARNING VIGNETTE

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING VIGNETTE, THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE NEXT PAGE.

John is a nine-year-old Caucasian boy who is in the fourth-grade. His father is a construction worker and his mother is a secretary. John very often expresses reluctance about doing his homework, and fails to finish things he starts. He very frequently misplaces his school supplies. He sometimes forgets things he has already learned. He very frequently has difficulty with arithmetic, but only occasionally has trouble with spelling and reading.

APPENDIX E
QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING BASED ON THE VIGNETTE:

1. How much does John's behavior concern you? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all concerned	Just a little concerned	Somewhat concerned	Fairly concerned	Very concerned

2. Would disciplinary action be appropriate for John? ____ YES ____ NO

3. Which of the following techniques would you use in dealing with John? (Check all that apply.)

- _____ Isolation/Time Out
- _____ Parent Contact (by phone, daily notes, conferences, etc.)
- _____ Detention/In School Suspension
- _____ Loss of Privileges (ex: free time, recess, line leader, etc.)
- _____ Positive Reinforcement (ex: extra responsibilities, praise, tangible rewards)
- _____ Behavior Contract
- _____ Modifications (ex: special seating arrangement, modified assignments, etc.)
- _____ Student-Teacher conferences
- _____ Referral to Principal or Team
- _____ Other: (please describe) _____

4. If you had used most or all of the above techniques and John were still having problems, would you refer him for evaluation for special education or special services?

_____ YES _____ NO (If NO, please go to question 7)

5. If yes, how many weeks would you try to work with John before making the referral?

6. If yes, which of the following outcomes would be **MOST** helpful? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE.)

- _____ Evaluation of a possible emotional disorder or behavioral disorder
- _____ Evaluation of a possible learning disability
- _____ Therapy or counseling

7. If your recommendation on the above questions were followed, what would be the most likely outcome for John's problems over the next two years? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE.)

- _____ They would improve.
- _____ They would stay the same.
- _____ They would get worse.

APPENDIX F
INCENTIVE SHEET

I have completed the enclosed packet and am returning it to you.

Please enter me in the drawing for the \$50 gift certificates for Office Max, which can be used at www.officemax.com, or at any Office Max store in the U.S.

If I win, you may contact me at:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____

E-mail address: _____

I prefer to be contacted by:

Snail mail

Phone

E-mail

Thank you again for your participation! ☺