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The impact of social disorganization and public school characteristics in explaining suspensions and expulsions

Amanda De Vries Liabeuf

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND PUBLIC SCHOOL

CHARACTERISTICS IN EXPLAINING SUSPENSIONS AND EXPLUSIONS

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Criminal Justice

by

Amanda De Vries Liabeuf

December 2004

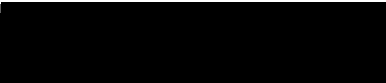THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Approved by:

Gisela Bichler, Chair, Criminal Justice   11/10/04
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine if school or

community characteristics are correlated with suspensions

and expulsions. The data examined in this study was drawn

from Riverside County schools. One hundred and twenty-six

schools, located in six school districts in Riverside

County, were examined to determine if school or social

disorganization characteristics are correlated with

suspension and expulsion rates.

This study showed that some schools tend to have

higher suspensions and expulsions rates than others. They

was significant correlation between suspensions and

minorities, API scores, gang territories, areas with a high

percentage of population aged 5-17, and areas with a high

proportion of Female-Headed households. For expulsions,

there was a significant correlation with minorities and

areas with a high percentage of population aged 5-17.

An ordinary least squares multiple regression analysis

was performed between the dependent variable and the

independent variables. Regression analysis revealed that

the API score was the strongest predictor of suspensions

and expulsions at schools.   Overall, this study showed

that some areas tend to have higher suspensions and expulsions rates than others.

Only school districts that provided their information and public schools were included in the study. Private schools were not included in this study. Out of 18 unified school districts that were called to provide information, only six school districts supplied it. Out of 404 schools sites that were attempted to be investigated, only 126 schools provided their information. There were some schools districts that were reluctant to give information and could not be included in this study.

Parents and community members need to be involved with students to improve schools. Administrators should have after school activities, such as homework centers, to help improve test scores and get parents involved. Parents should know about school's academic programs and student performances on test. School board policies should involve parents and community members in classrooms.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Suspensions and expulsions are currently the most widely administered form of school discipline used in United States public schools (Mansfield & Farris, 1992). Although there is a wealth of information about the numbers of students suspended and expelled, there is little information on the reasons. The purpose of this study is to examine if school or community characteristics are correlated with suspensions and expulsions.

The data examined in this study consisted of information drawn from Riverside County, California schools. Seven independent variables were examined: minority concentration, low API scores, gang territories, population aged 5-17, cultural differences, female-headed households, owner occupancies of students families. One hundred and twenty-six schools, located in six school districts in Riverside County, were examined to determine if school or social disorganization characteristics are correlated with suspension and expulsion rates.

Hypotheses examined in this study included:

School Hypotheses

1) Schools that have a high percentage of minorities are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those with a low percentage of minorities.

2) Schools with low API Score are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those that have a high API score.

Social Disorganization Hypotheses

3) Schools located in gang territories are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those that are not in a gang territory.

4) Schools with a larger percentage of youth aged 5-17 are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those with an older population.

5) Schools that are in an area with a high percentage of minority population are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those in an area with a low percentage of minority population.

6) Schools with neighborhoods in low owner occupancies are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions

and expulsions than those in a high owner
occupancies.

7) Schools in neighborhoods with a high proportion of
female-headed households are more likely to have
higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than
those in a low proportion of female-headed
households.

This study showed that some schools tend to have
higher suspensions and expulsions rates than others. The
results suggest that there was a significant correlation
between suspensions and minorities, low API scores, gang
territories, areas with a high percentage of population
aged 5-17, and areas with a high proportion of Female-
Headed households. In addition, there was a significant
correlation between expulsions and minorities and areas
with a high percentage of population aged 5-17.

An ordinary least squares multiple regression analysis
was performed between the dependent variable and the
independent variables. Regression analysis revealed that
the Academic Performance Index (API) was the strongest
predictor of suspensions and expulsions at schools. The
API score measures school performance, sets academic growth
targets, and monitors growth over time based on Math and

English scores. This study showed that some areas tend to have higher suspensions and expulsions rates than others.

Only school districts that provided their information and public schools were included in the study. Private schools were not included in this study. Out of 18 unified school districts that were called to provide information, only six school districts supplied it. Out of 404 schools sites that were attempted to be investigated, only 126 schools provided their information. There were some schools districts that were reluctant to give information and could not be included in this study.

Parents and community members need to be involved with students to improve schools. Administrators should have after school activities, such as homework centers, to help improve test scores and get parents involved. Parents should know about school's academic programs and student performances on test.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In an effort to address misbehavior on school campuses, administrators commonly use suspensions and expulsions. School suspensions and expulsions are not a new issue. However, further understanding about the relationship between schools, social disorganization, and the impact it has on suspensions and expulsions needs to be explored to reduce the number of cases on school campuses.

Students can be suspended or expelled for any action that threatens the safety of students or staff. For example, students can be expelled or suspended for possessing a weapon, assault, possession or use of drugs, theft, or willful disobedience, profanity, or destruction of property (Jenkinson, 1995).

School administrators may decide to suspend a student for a period up to five days from a specific class, riding the bus, or from the entire school. The suspension can be in school, which involves supervision, and is less favored by the student. Expulsion is a final decision and is decided by the school board (Jenkinson, 1995); the school

broad may expel a student from a particular school or the entire school district.

Discipline is consistently ranked at or near the top of concerns facing educators today (Dupper, 1998). A majority of teachers stated that student behavior has gotten worse during the past 5 years (Dupper, 1998). More than one-third of those teachers stated that they lose 2 hours or more of teaching per week as a result of discipline problems (American Federation of Teachers, 1996). In response to these discipline problems, an increasing number of school districts are implementing a zero tolerance policies on discipline problems (Brendtro & Long, 1995).

A national survey, conducted by the National School Boards Association, found that suspension was the most frequent school response to student discipline problems (Amundson, 1993). The increasing use of suspension and expulsions as a response to student misbehavior is increasing problem in many school districts. Expulsions went up 30 percent between the 1992-93 and 1993-94 school years (Jenkinson, 1995).

Reasons for Suspensions and Expulsions

With a concern for school safety, suspensions and expulsions have increased to respond to student misbehavior and maintain a positive educational environment. Suspensions and expulsions are perceived has an extreme response because it involves the exclusion of students from the learning process. From a problem-solving perspective it is important to know the reasons for suspensions and expulsions at the different school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high, and alternative schools).

In their survey Wright and Clymer (2001), analyzed the number of suspensions and expulsions rates in the 1997-98 school year for Oklahoma School Districts. The purpose of the study was to assess what schools were doing to prevent violence and to develop a baseline for the level of school violence. Out of the 547 public school districts in Oklahoma, 370 responded to the survey. Findings included that one-fourth of the nearly 44,000 suspensions and expulsions were for violent offenses.

Dupper and Bosch (1996) collected reasons for suspensions from one school district over a period of 8 years. This public school district was in a Midwestern town with approximately 8,500 students. The school

district was made up of 10 elementary, 3 middle, and 2 high

schools. Data on reasons for suspension were obtained from

the school district for the years 1988-1995.

Findings were that the majority of out-of-school

suspensions result from offenses that are not criminal in

nature or directed at school staff. The two most serious

of offenses was criminal activities and physical

confrontations with staff only counted for 12% of overall

suspensions. The majority of suspensions resulted from

physical confrontation with other students and other

behavior problems.

Delinquency Theories

Children living in poverty are vulnerable to a wide

variety of problems, including poor nutrition, inadequate

housing, substandard medical attention, and physical or

emotional abuse (Kratcoski & Kratcoski, 2004). Adolescents

from these backgrounds become part of a cycle of low income

or unemployment and end up of having problems in schools

(2004).

Neighborhoods rates of family disturbed (divorce rates

and rates of female-headed households) are strongly related

to rates of violence (Sampson, 1995). Neighborhoods with

high percentages of African Americans have higher crime rates (Sampson, 1995). In addition, Kornhauser (1978) explains that neighborhoods with high poverty, high racial and ethnic heterogeneity, and high residential mobility should also have high rates of crime and delinquency.

American families vary in structure, economic status, racial and ethnic group, styles of life in neighborhoods. From 1970 to 1997, the proportion of children in the United States living in two-parent homes declined from 85 to 68 percent (Kratcoski & Kratcoski, 2004). The problems that face the young, never-married female head of one parent-family often include dropping out of school, inability to work outside the home, and an environment of poverty and social deprivation for the children.

Social disorganization theory argues that three factors are needed to understand variation in neighborhood crime levels, which are low socioeconomic status, high population turnover, and racial and ethnic differences (Elliott, Hamburg, & Williams, 1998). Given that schools are an integral part of the communities they serve it is important to study the impact of social disorganization.

Research into the social disorganization theory has shown that certain urban neighborhoods have significantly

higher crime rates and social problems than other

communities (Elliott, et al., 1998). These neighborhoods

tend to have the highest levels of problems in the city,

regardless of the population. Neighborhoods that are

located near old industrial areas and are characterized by

physical deterioration have higher crime rates. A large

number of rental properties and low level of home ownership

contribute to higher levels of crime (1998).

Sampson examined the relation between neighborhoods

and crime in an attempt to determine how community

structures and cultures create different crime rates

(Sampson, 1995). Sampson found that although poverty

itself is not associated with crime, poverty combined with

residential mobility is associated with crime.

Social Disorganization

Minority Characteristics

The purpose of a study done by Mendez and Knoff (2003)

was to investigate out-of-school suspensions by race,

gender, school level, and infraction type. Suspension data

from the 1996-1997 school year were examined for all

general education schools in central Florida. Results

showed that the African American males are suspended at a much higher rate than White and Hispanic males.

Teachers attitudes toward students have a significant impact on classroom climate. Minority groups are often confronted in classrooms by teachers who view them as intellectually deprived and unlikely to succeed, which may lead to labeling theory (Bickel & Qualls, 1980).

Owner Occupancy

Research on the relationship between communities and crime begins by asking why certain neighborhoods have higher crime rates than others (Elliott, et al., 1998). In Roncek and Faggiani's (1985) study, they found that the proximity to public high schools only increase crime on city blocks, which are immediately adjacent to the schools. One of the variables used in study was owner occupancy because the value of owned housing is one indicator of economic status (1985). According to the 2000 US Census, children growing up in homes near or below the poverty level are more likely to be expelled (Howards, Frankowski, McGrath, Mears, Murray & Young ,1993).

Female-Headed Households

The proportion of female-headed families in the United States has grown considerably during the years

(Amundson,1993). Often there is no acceptable adult male role involved in the teenager or young adult's life (1993). Among African-Americans families the proportion that is female headed rose from approximately 18 percent in 1940 to more than 40 percent by the 1980's (1993). Furthermore, approximately half of all African-American families with children under 18 are now female headed (Wilson, 1987).

Female-headed households have direct implications for students. Children with single parents are between 2 and 4 times as likely to be suspended or expelled from school as are children with both parents at home (Howard, et al., 2003).

Population Age 5-17

Age clearly appears to be a major influencing factor in American schools (Park, 1995). Relative to student age (or grade level), the greatest rates of suspensions tend to be at the middle school and early high school levels (Mendez & Knoff, 2003). Suspensions tend to rise steadily from 7th through 8th grades and peak in 9th grade (Mendez & Knoff, 2003).

Gang Territories

The rise of youth gangs since 1980 has contributed to the public's fear and created possible misconceptions about

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youth gangs (Howell & Lynch, 2000). Youth gangs are linked with serious crime problems in elementary and secondary schools (2000). Schools are primary facilities where recruitment, socialization, and control take place (Arthur, 1992). Gang activity on school grounds centers on the concept of "protection" and school "ownership" (Parks, 1995). Gangs that seize various parts of the school can manipulate fellow students for various reasons. Many gangs have claimed this new school turf as their own and have begun to take over housing projects or school environments (Ruble & Turner, 2000). A far lesser amount of research has focused on gangs in the nation's schools and the impact that these groups have on the school, students, staff, and educational climate (2000).

The lack of research on gangs in school is due to school administrators' reluctance to permit outside researchers to study their school (Harootunian, 1986; Rubel, 1977; Yearwood & Hayes, 2001). The lack of gang research in schools can also be credited to school administrations underreporting, or even outright denying the presence of gangs within their school (Yearwood & Hayes, 2001). In addition, the lack of available, reliable

data, and statistics may also explain the lack of research in this area (Yearwood & Hayes, 2001).

Chandler, Chapman, Rand and Taylor, (1998) examined the findings of the 1989 and 1995 School Crime Supplements (SCS) to the National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS). The supplements were distributed to approximately 10,000 students. Respondents were between the ages of 12 and 19 and had attended school at some point during the last six months preceding the interview.

Results from Chandler et al.'s (1998) study found that the percentage of students reporting the presence of gangs at school nearly doubled between 1989 and 1995. In addition, the findings included a strong correlation between the presence of gangs, guns, and drugs in school. Additionally, gang presence increased the likelihood of seeing a student with a gun at school: 12 percent of the students surveyed reported having seen a student with a gun in school when gangs were present, compared with 3 percent when gangs were not present. Additional findings included that 28 percent of the surveyed students reported gangs in schools.

School Types

Elementary Schools

A study conducted by Mendez, Knoff, and Ferron (2002),
examined out of school suspensions in a large, ethnicity
diverse school district. Correlations were used to
identify the school level variables that showed the
strongest relationship to suspension rates among elementary
schools.

The differences between high and low suspensions
focused mainly on how appropriate behavior was taught and
reinforced, and parent involvement (Mendez, Knoff, &
Ferron, 2002). Low suspension schools were more likely
than high suspension school to report the use of positive
reinforcement for positive behaviors as a formal part of
the school-wide discipline plan. High suspension schools
focused more heavily on punishment for inappropriate
behavior than low suspensions school (Mendez, et al.,
2002).

Middle Schools

In a study done by Power and Wagner (1984), 601
students enrolled in a large school district in the
Southwest, participated in a survey. Findings from this
study included that the transition from elementary to

middle school is particularly problematic for many students with behavior problems (Powers & Wagner, 1984). It is during the middle school years that youths' misbehavior becomes more intense (Powers & Wagner, 1984).

Research also indicates that there is increase in middle school suspension (Howards, et al.,1993; Mendez & Knoff, 2003). In a study done by Mendez & Knoff (2003), they investigated out of school suspensions in a large, ethnically diverse school district. Findings found that from elementary school to middle school suspensions increase and then decline slightly in high school.

High Schools

In a study done by Costenbader and Markson (1997), they conducted a survey on school suspensions with 620 high school students. The research was within two school districts. The survey consisted of 15 items that were designed for the study plus a 48 item Student Rating Scale.

Findings included that males and African-American students were over represented in the suspended groups. In addition, students who had been suspended were more likely to be involved with the legal system (Costenbader & Markson, 1997). In addition, responses from the suspended group of students indicated that physical aggression was

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the most common reasons for the suspension (Costenbader &
Markson, 1997).

Alternative Schools

In a study done by Bickel and Qualls (1980), they
studied eight secondary schools using the lowest and
highest suspension rates. Data were collected from two
primary sources. The first was a series of classroom
observations and the second was a questionnaire.

Findings included that students in low suspensions
schools perceived more frequent use of nonverbal skills by
teachers than those in high suspension schools. Second,
there was evidence of different reactions to students on
the basis of sex in low and high suspensions schools, but
not on the basis of race. White students in low
suspensions schools perceived that teachers were more
attentive than those in high suspension schools.

School Structure in Riverside County

Schools located in the within Riverside County were
examined. Riverside County is the fourth largest county in
the state. It stretches nearly 200 miles across California
and includes over 7,200 square miles of river valleys, low
deserts, mountains, and rolling plains. (Riverside County

History, 2003). Riverside County was formed in 1893 from a small portion of San Bernardino County and a larger part of San Diego County (Riverside County History, 2003).

Over the years, a dramatic population growth occurred in Riverside County (Riverside County History, 2003). Between 1980 and 1990, the number of residents grew by over 76%, which makes Riverside the fastest-growing County in California (Riverside County History, 2003). By 1992, the County was "home" to over 1.3 million residents (Riverside County History, 2003).

Currently there are 1,545,387 people living in the County of Riverside (Riverside County History, 2003). There are 23 school districts within Riverside County and a projected enrollment of 364,180 students (Riverside County of Education, 2004). There are 230 elementary schools, 65 middle schools, 51 high schools and 42 alternative schools.

Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that are related to suspensions and expulsions on school grounds in Riverside County. There were a total of seven hypotheses: two hypotheses examined school variables and five explored social disorganization variables.

Hypotheses examined in this study included:

School Hypotheses

1) Schools that have a high percentage of minorities are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those with a low percentage of minorities.

2) Schools with low API Scores are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those that have a high API score.

Social Disorganization Hypotheses

3) Schools located in gang territories are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those that are not in a gang territory.

4) Schools with a larger percentage of youth aged 5-17 are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those with an older population.

5) Schools that are in an area with a high percentage of minority population are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those in a low percentage of minority population.

6) Schools with neighborhoods in low owner occupancy are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those in a high owner occupancy.

7) Schools in neighborhoods with a high proportion of female-headed households are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions than those in a low proportion of female-headed households.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLGY

This research examined if suspensions and expulsions are correlated with a population aged 5-17, ethnicity, female-headed households, API scores, owner occupancies of students families, and gang territories. Schools were located in Riverside County. The research examined whether the proximity to social disorganization characteristics are correlated with suspensions and/or expulsions.

There were two types of analysis done. The first analysis included all of the schools together. The second analysis examined alternative schools, high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools separately.

Sampling

There were 404 school sites in Riverside County and only 126 schools that provided information. Out of 18 unified schools districts that were contacted for the study, only six school districts provided information. There were some school districts that were reluctant to give information and could not be included in this study. Since this happened, only school districts that provided

their information were included in this study. All public

schools located in the Alvord Unified School District,

Beaumont School District, Coachella Valley School District,

Desert Sands School District, Moreno Valley School

District, and Temecula Valley School District are included

in the study.

Data Collection

Data were gathered from three different data sources:

suspensions and expulsions, school characteristics, and

social disorganization characteristics. All data were

integrated into one database by the unit of analysis, which

were individual schools. The dependant variables were

suspension and expulsion rates. The school variables and

social disorganization variables were independent.

Suspensions and Expulsions

To identify suspensions and expulsions on school

grounds, school districts were called to obtain information

on the number of students suspended and expelled for the

school year of 2002-2003.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the

dependent variables. The expulsion rate per 100 students

was 0.5 on average with a standard deviation of 1.84. The

suspension rate per 100 students was 9.5 on average with a standard deviation.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics For The Dependent Variables

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Expulsion	115	.00	17.86	.5267	1.84
Suspension	113	.00	74.40	9.5770	11.02

School Characteristics

To identify school characteristics, information was collected through publicly available School Accountability Report Cards. Each public school throughout California is required to provide information about themselves to the community in the form of an annual School Accountability Report Card. These report cards provide a variety of data to allow the public to evaluate and compare schools in terms of student achievement, environment, resources and demographics. This publicly available information was pulled from each schools website.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the school variables. The Academic Performance Index (API) is one of three components of the Public Schools

Accountability Act (PSAA) passed in 1999. The API measures school performance, sets academic growth targets, and monitors growth over time based on Math and English scores.

The API score ranges on a scale from 200 to 1000. On an interim basis the state has set 800 as the API score that school should strive to meet. For the 126 schools examined in this study, the API score ranged from 413 to 856. The average schools API score was 636, which is somewhat lower than the state want to achieve.

Percentage of African-American, White, and Hispanic students in the schools were calculated by divided the total number by the school population and multiplying by 100. African-American students ranged from 0 percent to 27 percent and Hispanic students ranged from approximately .5 percent to 54 percent.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics For The School Variables

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
API Score	107	413	856	636.24	106.59
% African-American	116	.00	27.20	1.36	2.90
% Hispanic	115	.48	53.66	8.40	8.62

Social Disorganization Characteristics

A school is one land use that draws many people into residential areas throughout the year (Roncek & Lobosco, 1983). Children arrive and depart from this location during the day and then arrive in the evening for leisure activities (Roncek & Lobosco, 1983).

School locations were collected by using phone books (Pacific Bell Yellow Pages) and online sources. After cleaning school addresses, which involves adjusting street addresses so that the mapping software can read the data, they were geocoded in Arc View 3.2 against the 2000 Census street file.

In order to clean the street file, it was necessary to clean the street file in Excel by separating the street names into prefixes and street names. For example, Avenue 60 would have a prefix of Avenue and a street name of 60. The Geocoding software runs into problems when attempting to plot (match) addresses of several different street names. For example, Spanish names streets (i.e. Calle Vente), state or U.S. highways (i.e. State Highway 111), and street with names beginning with a street type (i.e. Avenue 57).

Variables reflecting social disorganization characteristics were extracted from the Census 2000 TIGER files at the block group level. The term TIGER comes from the acronym Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). U.S. Census Bureau developed the system and the digital database to support its mapping needs for the Decennial Census and other Bureau programs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Five variables were used to identify uniqueness within each school neighborhood: Female-headed households, population aged 5-17, owner occupancies, ethnicity, and gang territories.

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the social disorganization characteristics. The minority percentage was calculated by adding together the African-American, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Hispanics, and Native Hawaiian and than divided by the total population. Minorities in neighborhoods ranged from 9 percent to 74 percent. The average census block was 41 percent minority and the standard deviation was 17.02.

The percentage for the population aged 5-17 was calculated by dividing the total population for the census blocks. The population age 5-17 ranged from 9 percent to

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30 percent. The average census block had 25 percent of their population age 5-17 and the standard deviation was 4.51.

The percentage for the Female-Headed Household was calculated by dividing by the total households for the census blocks. Neighborhoods that were Female-Headed ranged from 2 percent to 30 percent. The average census block had 8 percent Female-Headed Households and the standard deviation was 4.33.

The owner occupancies percentage was calculated by dividing by the total housing units. The lowest range was 4 percent with the highest was 69 percent. The average census block had 27 percent Owner Occupancies and the standard deviation was 17.64.

To identify known gang territories, probation and police officers were questioned. Maps were created using Thomas Guides (2003 edition) and were provided to probation and police officers. Police and probation officers were asked to shade in areas of the city that are known to be part of each gang turf. Once the maps were returned, they were digitized using Arc View 3.2.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics For The Social

Disorganization Variables

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
% Minority	123	8.79	73.60	41.17	17.02
% Female-Headed	123	2.27	30.51	8.61	4.33
% Age 5 – 17	123	9.23	30.38	24.93	4.51
% Owner-Occupancies	124	3.81	68.77	26.96	17.64
Gang Territory	125	0	1	.18	.389

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

This study included all alternative schools, high
schools, middle schools, and elementary schools from Alvord
Unified School District, Beaumont School District,
Coachella Valley School District, Desert Sands School
District, Moreno Valley School District, and Temecula
Valley School District. There were 126 school sites
examined from six school districts. There were two types
of analysis done. The first analysis included all of the
schools together. The second analysis required separating
the alternative schools, high schools, middle schools, and
elementary schools.

There were three types of statistics used during this
study. The first analysis included Pearson's Correlation.
This estimated the correlation between
suspensions/expulsions and the school/environment
variables. The second Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was
used to test the differences in the means between
elementary, middle, high, and alternative schools. The
last analysis was an ordinary least squares multiple
regression. This helped in understanding the relationship

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among all the variables and the factors that are directly responsible for suspension and expulsions.

School Correlations

The first two hypotheses tested the relationship between the school elements and suspensions and expulsions. The first hypothesis stated that schools with a higher percentage of minorities are more likely to have a higher rate of suspensions and expulsions. As Table 4 shows, there was a significant correlation linking high suspensions and expulsions to schools that have larger percentages of African-American students. In addition, the same relationship occurred with schools that have a high percentage of Hispanic students. Schools that have a higher percentage of minorities have a higher percentage of suspensions and expulsions.

The second hypothesis stated that schools with a low API scores are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. As hypothesized, there was a significant correlation between suspensions and API scores. As the API scores goes up percentages of suspensions goes down. However, schools with a lower API score did not have a higher rate of expulsions.

Table 4. Correlations of School Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
African-American Students	.219**	.517**
N	115	113
Hispanic Students	.505**	.206*
N	115	113
API Scores	-.118	-.329**
N	106	106

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

Social Disorganization Variables

The last five hypotheses tested the relationship between census data and the dependent variables. In Hypothesis 3, schools located in gang territories hypothesized to result in higher rates of suspensions. There was a significant correlation with suspensions, but not for expulsions. Schools that are in gang territories have a higher percentage of suspensions and expulsions

Hypothesis 4 predicted that schools with a younger population living in the area are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. As seen in Table 5, there was significant correlation for suspensions. Conversely, there was not a significant correlation between the younger population and expulsions.

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Hypothesis 5 speculated that schools that are in an area with a high percentage of minority population are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. This only held true for the suspensions and not the expulsions. There was a significant correlation linking high suspensions to neighborhoods with a high percentage of minorities.

The sixth hypothesis suggested that schools with neighborhoods in low owner occupancies are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. Neither suspensions nor expulsions had a significant correlation in lower owner occupancies.

The last hypothesis stated that schools in neighborhoods with a high proportion of Female-Headed Households are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions or expulsions. There was no significant correlation between female-headed households and expulsions. However, there was a significant correlation between suspensions and female-headed households. Neighborhoods that are female-headed have a higher percentage of suspensions.

Table 5. Correlations of Social Disorganization Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
Gang Territories	.062	.261**
N	115	113
Age 5-17	-.017	.198*
N	113	111
Minority	-.016	.225**
N	113	111
Owner Occupancies	.105	.061
N	114	112
Female-Headed	.118	.176*
N	113	111

**. $p<.01$, *$p<.05$ (one-tail)

School Type Analysis

To examine the relationship between suspensions and expulsions in more detail a separate analysis were done for, alternative schools, high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools. Analyses were conducted for both school and social disorganization hypotheses.

Table 6 shows that there is no correlation between the percentage of African-American students and suspensions and expulsions in elementary schools. However, there is a significant correlation linking Hispanic students with an increase in the number of expulsions. Additionally, there is a significant negative correlation between the API scores and suspensions. In elementary schools, when the API scores increase the number of suspensions decrease.

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Table 6. Correlations of Elementary School Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
African-American Students	-.109	-.007
N	75	75
Hispanic Students	-.229*	.026
N	75	75
API Scores	-.078	-.387**
N	73	73

**. $p<.01$, *$p<.05$ (one-tail)

Table 7 shows the social disorganization factors for
suspensions and expulsions. There is a significant
correlation between female-headed households and
suspensions. When the neighborhoods have a high percentage
of Female-Headed households there is an increase in
suspensions. Additionally, there is a correlation between
the increase in minorities in the increase in suspensions.
Lastly, there is a strong correlation linking owner
occupancies and suspensions.

Table 7. Correlations of Social Disorganization Variables

For Elementary Schools

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
Gang Territories	-.051	.032
N	75	73
Age 5-17	.053	.190
N	73	73
Minority	.090	.321**
N	73	73
Owner Occupancies	-.039	.221*
N	74	74
Female-Headed	.154	.218*
N	73	73

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

Table 8 shows the correlation between middle schools

and the school variables. There are no significant

correlations between the middle schools and suspensions and

expulsions.

Table 8. Correlations of Middle School Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
African-American Students	-.214	-.336
N	19	19
Hispanic Students	-.149	.238
N	19	19
API Scores	-.212	-.356
N	19	19

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

Table 9 shows the correlation of social

disorganization variables for the middle schools. There is

a significant correlation between the younger population in neighborhoods and suspensions. Neighborhoods that have a higher percentage of adolescents have higher rates of suspensions. In addition, there is a strong correlation between minority and suspensions. Areas with a higher percentage of minority population have higher rates of suspensions.

Table 9. Correlations of Social Disorganization Variables For Middle Schools

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
Gang Territories	.325	.251
N	19	19
Age 5-17	.226	.493*
N	19	19
Minority	.213	.482*
N	19	19
Owner Occupancies	.101	.212
N	19	19
Female-Headed	.243	.306
N	19	19

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

Table 10 shows the correlations of high school variables. There is a significant correlation between the percentage of Hispanic students and expulsions. Schools that have a higher percentage of Hispanic students have a higher rate of expulsions.

Table 10. Correlations of High School Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
African-American Students	.328	.016
N	13	12
Hispanic Students	.653**	-.47
N	13	12
API Scores	.001	-.346
N	11	11

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

Table 11 shows the correlation of social disorganization variables for High schools. There is a significant correlation linking female-head households and suspensions. When the percentage of female-headed Households in the neighborhoods goes up the number of suspensions goes up. Analysis could not be done on gangs because there are no high schools in gang territories.

Table 11. Correlations of Social Disorganization Variables For High Schools

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
Age 5-17	-.032	-.140
N	13	12
Minority	.023	.309
N	13	12
Owner Occupancies	.115	.431
N	19	12
Female-Headed	.304	.678**
N	13	12

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

For alternative schools, Table 12 shows the
correlations of variables. There is a strong correlation
between the percentage of Hispanic students and expulsions.
When the percentage of Hispanic students increases so does
suspensions and expulsions. When the percentage of
Hispanic students increases the number of suspensions and
expulsions increase. There is a strong correlation between
the percentage of African-American students and
suspensions. When the percentage of African-American
students increase the number of suspensions increase.

Table 12. Correlations of Alternative Schools Variables

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
African-American Students	.066	.934**
N	8	7
Hispanic Students	.821**	.715*
N	8	7
API Scores	-.108	.306
N	5	3

**. $p<.01$, *$p<.05$ (one-tail)

Table 13 shows the correlation between social
disorganization variables and alternative schools. There
is strong negative correlation between owner occupancies
and suspensions. When there is a high percentage of owner

occupied houses the number of suspensions decreases in alternative schools. Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between gang territories and suspensions. When there is a gang territory in or around the school the number of suspensions increases.

Table 13. Correlations of Social Disorganization Variables For Alternative Schools

Variable	Expulsion	Suspension
Gang Territories	-.039	.825*
N	8	7
Age 5-17	-.280	.448
N	8	7
Minority	-.558	.451
N	8	7
Owner Occupancies	.191	-.762*
N	8	7
Female-Headed	.134	-.207
Sig.	.376	7
N	8	

**. p<.01, *p<.05 (one-tail)

This study examined the reasons for suspensions and expulsions on school campuses between the school types. An analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the differences in the means between elementary, middle, high, and alternative schools.

Table 14 shows an ANOVA table for suspensions and expulsions between each school type. As found in prior research, middle schools suspension rates are higher than high schools (Howard, et al., 1993; Mendez & Knoff, 2003)

Table 14. ANOVA Model on School Type With Suspensions and Expulsions.

Expulsion		M	SD	N	F	SIG.
	Elementary	.0739	.2144	75	10.494	.000
	Middle	.5765	.4499	19	10.494	.000
	High	1.1773	1.5110	13	10.494	.000
	Alternative	3.5972	6.0639	8	10.494	.000
Suspension						
	Elementary	5.337	5.731	75	14.550	.000
	Middle	17.323	9.92	19	14.550	.000
	High	15.841	9.19	12	14.550	.000
	Alternative	23.232	26.49	7	14.550	.000

Multiple Regression Analysis for Suspensions

An ordinary last squares multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables for all the schools. Regression analysis revealed that the model significantly predicted suspension. R^2 for the model was .286, and adjusted R^2 was .227. The N was 104. Table 15 displays the unstandardized coefficients and standardized regression coefficients.

Table 15. All Schools Multiple Regression For Suspensions.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	B		
Constant	41.92	9.596		4.369	.000
API Base	-.053	.012	-.633	-4.568	.000
Hispanics	-.618	.155	-.442	-3.993	.000
African American	-.792	.625	-.121	-1.268	.208
Gang Terr.	-.097	1.386	.006	-.070	.944
Female-Headed	.302	.259	.154	1.166	.247
Age 5-17	.309	.244	.168	1.265	.209
Minorities in Area	-.122	.091	-.243	-1.348	.181
Owner Occupancies	.009	.072	.018	.123	.902

Results of the stepwise multiple regression showed that API score was significantly related to suspensions, $F(104)=12.740$, R=.332, beta=-.332, p<.05. R^2 for the model was .110, and adjusted R^2 was .101. The N was 104.

School Type Multiple Regression For Suspensions

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables for elementary schools. Regression analysis revealed that the model significantly predicted suspension. R^2 for the model was .280, and adjusted R^2 was .189. The N was 71. Table 16 displays the unstandardized coefficients and standardized regression coefficients.

Table 16.   Multiple Regression For Elementary Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.		
	B	Std. Error	β	T	Sig.
Constant	32.56	9.970		3.267	.002
API Base	-.037	.011	-.695	-3.393	.001
Hispanics	-.502	.161	-.467	-3.128	.003
African American	-.001	.536	.000	-.002	.999
Gang Terr.	-.369	1.117	-.037	-.330	.742
Female-Headed	.006	.199	.005	.030	.976
Age 5-17	.031	.196	.027	.159	.875
Minorities in Area	-.027	.078	-.079	-.343	.733
Owner Occupancies	.047	.055	.144	.860	.393

Results from the analysis revealed that API score and Hispanic's in elementary schools each significantly predicted suspensions. The weakest variables were African-Americans and Female-Headed households.

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables for middle schools. Regression analysis revealed that the model was not significant in predicting suspension for middle schools. R^2 for the model was .583, and adjusted R^2 was .249. The N was 18. Table 17 displays the unstandardized coefficients and standardized regression coefficients.

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Table 17.   Multiple Regression For Middle Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	36.340	35.509		1.023	.330
API Base	-.057	.049	-.579	-1.154	.275
Hispanics	.242	.859	.104	.281	.784
African American	-3.257	2.008	-.490	-1.622	.136
Gang Terr.	1.255	3.788	.083	.331	.747
Female-Headed	.997	1.105	.469	.902	.388
Age 5-17	.781	.973	.355	.803	.441
Minorities in Area	-.052	.320	-.088	-.161	.875
Owner Occupancies	-.318	.329	-.515	-.969	.355

Results from the analysis revealed that there was no significance.   The weakest variables were Hispanics' in school and minorities in the area.

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables for high schools.   Regression analysis revealed that the model was not significant in predicting suspension for the high schools. R^2 for the model was .754, and adjusted R^2 was .179.   The N was 10. Table 18 displays the unstandardized coefficients and standardized regression coefficients.   Gangs could not be

displayed because there were no gang territories in or around the high schools.

Table 18. Multiple Regression For High Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	-55.70	61.49		-.906	.432
API Base	.166	.147	1.811	1.135	.339
Hispanics	.468	.624	.578	.750	.508
African American	-20.58	17.34	-.882	-1.187	.321
Female-Headed	2.182	2.152	.670	1.014	.385
Age 5-17	-3.391	2.557	-1.484	1.326	.277
Minorities	1.345	1.054	2.656	1.276	.292
Owner Occupancies	.290	.354	-.577	-.819	.473

Results from the analysis revealed that there was no significance. The weakest variables were Hispanic's in school. An OLS multiple regression could not be used for alternative schools because there was only a small amount of data that could be collected on them.

Multiple Regression for Expulsions

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables. Regression analysis revealed that

the model significantly predicted expulsions. R^2 for the
model was .282, and adjusted R^2 was .222. The N was 104.
Table 19 displays the unstandardized coefficients and
standardized regression coefficients.

Table 19. All Schools Multiple Regression for Expulsion.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	1.644	.438		3.751	.000
API Base	-.002	.001	-.522	-3.760	.000
Hispanics	-.033	.007	-.519	-4.673	.000
African American	-.051	.029	-.173	-1.802	.075
Gang Terr.	-.012	.063	-.017	-.191	.849
Female-Headed	.023	.012	.252	1.906	.060
Age 5-17	.009	.011	.112	.837	.405
Minorities in Area	-.006	.004	-.245	-1.356	.178
Owner Occupancy	-.003	.003	-.117	-.808	.421

Results of the stepwise multiple regression showed
that API score was significantly related to expulsions,
$F(104)=8.735$, R=.280, beta=-.280, p<.05. R^2 for the model
was .078, and adjusted R^2 was .069. The N was 104.

School Type Multiple Regression for Expulsions

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was
performed between the dependent variables and the

45

independent variables for elementary schools. Regression analysis revealed that the model significantly predicted expulsions. R^2 for the model was .259, and adjusted R^2 was .165. The N was 71. Table 20 displays the unstandardized coefficients and standardized regression coefficients.

Table 20. Multiple Regression For Elementary Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	1.057	.351		3.014	.004
API Base	-.001	.000	-.559	-2.691	.009
Hispanics	-.022	.006	-.580	-3.283	.000
African American	-.036	.019	-.245	-1.892	.063
Gang Terr.	-.042	.039	-.124	-1.076	.286
Female-Headed	.014	.007	.315	1.967	.054
Age 5-17	-.006	.007	-.140	-.812	.420
Minorities in Area	.000	.003	-.013	-.056	.956
Owner Occupancies	-.003	.002	-.233	-1.371	.175

Results from the analysis revealed that there was significance between API score and Hispanic's in school. The weakest variable was minorities in the area.

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variables and the independent variables for middle schools. Regression analysis revealed that the model was not significant in

predicting expulsions for middle schools. R² for the model

was .564, and adjusted R² was .215. The N was 18. Table

21 displays the unstandardized coefficients and

standardized regression coefficients.

Table 21. Multiple Regression For Middle Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	2.916	1.645		1.773	.107
API Base	-.005	.002	-1.026	-2.001	.073
Hispanics	-.080	.040	-7.59	-2.001	.073
African American	-.049	.093	-.162	-.524	.612
Gang Terr.	.84	.176	.268	1.051	.318
Female-Headed	.075	.051	.774	1.456	.176
Age 5-17	.050	.045	.504	1.117	.290
Minorities in Area	-.021	.015	-.792	-1.415	.187
Owner Occupancies	-.006	.015	-.224	-.412	.689

Results from the analysis revealed that there was no

significance. The weakest variables were African-

American's in school and owner occupancies in the area.

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was

performed between the dependent variables and the

independent variables for high schools. Regression

analysis revealed that the model was not significant in

predicting expulsions for the high schools. R² for the

model was .762, and adjusted R² was .207. The N was 10.
Table 22 displays the unstandardized coefficients and
standardized regression coefficients. Gangs could not be
displayed because there were no gang territories in or near
the high schools.

Table 22. Multiple Regression For High Schools.

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeffic.	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	-8.061	3.894		-2.070	.130
API Base	.018	.009	3.059	1.950	.146
Hispanics	.036	.040	.686	.906	.432
African American	-1.967	1.098	-1.309	-1.791	.171
Female-Headed	-.005	.136	-.025	-.038	.972
Age 5-17	-.264	.162	-1.795	-1.631	.201
Minorities in Area	.141	.067	4.310	2.108	.126
Owner Occupancies	-.016	.022	-.494	-.714	.527

Results from the analysis revealed that there was no
significance between the variables and expulsions. The
weakest variable was Female-Headed households.

Multiple regression could not be used for alternative
schools because there was only a small amount of data that
could be collected on them.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This study included all public schools in Alvord, Beaumont, Coachella, Desert Sands, Moreno Valley, and Temecula Valley Unified School District. The first analysis included all of the schools together. The second part analysis examined alternative schools, high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools.

Information was collected from school districts regarding suspension and expulsion rates. School variables were collected by using publicly available 2002 School Accountability Report Card. Social Disorganization variables were gathered by using Census 2000 TIGER files. Gangs were identified by querying probation and police officers. Maps were created using Thomas Brothers Guides (2003 edition) and were provided to probation and police officers. Police and Probation officers were asked to shade in areas of the city known to be part of each gang turf.

The hypotheses were designed to examine the reasons for suspensions and expulsions. Hypotheses were tested using Correlations, ANOVA, and Multiple Regression.

Correlations with School Variables

Minorities

The first two hypotheses tested the relationship between the school elements and suspensions and expulsions. As Table 4 shows, there is a significant correlation linking high suspensions and expulsions to all schools that have a larger percentage of minority. Findings were similar to Howard et al. (2003) were minority groups were suspended at nearly 2 times the rate of white students in some regions. In Mendes and Knoff (2003) research, half of all African-American males experienced at last one suspensions.

When looking at school type, alternative schools had a strong correlation connecting both expulsions and suspensions to a high percentage of Hispanic students (Table 12). However, there is only a strong correlation between high suspension rate and a high percentage of African-American students not for expulsions unlike it was for all schools.

When looking at just the high schools, there is only a strong correlation linking high expulsions to majority Hispanic students not African-American students (Table 10).

There was no correlation linking suspensions to a higher rate of suspensions for either ethnicity like there was for all schools.

Middle schools showed no correlations between the percentage of minorities and a higher rate of suspensions and expulsions although there was for all the schools (Table 8).

For elementary schools, Table 6 shows that there is no correlation between the percentage of African-American students and suspensions and expulsions. However, there is a significant correlation linking Hispanic students with an increase in the number of expulsions. There was no correlation linking them with a higher rate of suspensions.

API Scores

The second hypothesis stated that schools with a low API scores are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. As hypothesized for all schools, there was a significant negative correlation between suspensions and the API scores (Table 4). Has the API scores goes up percentages of suspensions goes down. However, schools with a high API score did not have a significant correlation with lower rate of expulsions.

For alternative schools, high schools, and middle schools there was no significant correlation linking a low API score with a higher rate of suspension or expulsions like there was for all the schools. However, in elementary schools, there was a significant negative correlation linking a high API score with a lower rate of suspensions. When the API scores increase the number of suspensions decrease.

Correlations with Social Disorganization Variables

Gang Territories

The last five hypotheses tested the relationship between census data and the dependent variables. There was a significant correlation linking all schools that were surrounded by or close to a gang territory to a higher rate of suspensions not for expulsions (Table 5).

When looking at school type, there was also a significant correlation for alternative high schools (Table 13). Yet for high schools, middle schools, and elementary school there was no significant correlation between gang territories and suspensions or expulsions.

Youth Aged 5-17

Hypothesis 4 indicated that schools with a larger percentage aged 5-17 living in the area are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. The hypothesis only held true for suspensions not for expulsions (Table 5).

For alternative schools, high schools and elementary school, there were no significant correlations linking the younger the population living in the area to having a higher rate of suspensions and expulsions.

Table 9 shows the correlation of social disorganization variables for the middle schools. There is a significant correlation between the younger population in neighborhoods and suspensions. Neighborhoods that have a higher percentage of adolescents have higher rates of suspensions.

Minority

Hypothesis 5 speculated that schools that are in an area with a high percentage of minority population are more likely to have higher rates of suspensions and expulsions. This hypothesis only held true for the suspensions and not the expulsions for all schools. In the breakdown, this

only held true for middle and elementary schools, not for alternative and high schools.

Owner Occupancies

For all schools, neither suspensions nor expulsions had a significant correlation to a lower percentage of owner occupancies (Table 5). For alternative and elementary schools, there was significant negative correlation linking a higher rate of owner occupancies to a lower rate of suspensions. According to Howard et al. (2003), children growing up in homes near or below the poverty level are more likely to be expelled.

Female-Headed Households

Howard et al. (2003) pointed out that children with single parents are 2 and 4 times as likely to be suspended. The current research found that for all schools there was a significant correlation between suspensions and Female-Headed households. The same correlations occur for high schools and elementary schools only unlike all schools.

Multiple Regression Analysis

An ordinary square multiple regression analysis was performed between the dependent variable and the independent variables. Regression analysis revealed that

the API score predicted suspensions at schools. The model held true with elementary schools but not with middle schools or high schools.

For expulsions, regression analysis revealed that API score predicted expulsions at schools. Like suspensions, the model held true with elementary schools but not with middle schools or high schools.

When looking at the school level, elementary school was the only one that had significance, however, they was significance in all the schools. This might be caused by there being more elementary schools then middle or high schools. Elementary schools might be outweighing the others when looking at all the schools together.

Validity and Reliability

One major limitation of the study is that some schools were reluctant to give information. In some cases there were too busy or they refused to give it. Since this happened, only school districts that provided their information were included in the study. Out of 18 unified school districts that were called to provide information, only six school districts actually supplied it.

Out of 404 school sites that were attempted to be investigated only 126 schools were actually examined in this study. There were some school districts that were reluctant to give information and could not be included in this study.

Another limitation is that private schools were not included in the study. This limitation should not affect the outcome because private schools have different regulations than public schools. Private schools do not have the same regulations as public schools and do not have to fill out School Accountability Report Cards. This study will just be based on public schools.

Another weakness was that the school is not in the middle of the census block. In this case, aggregation by political unit does not reflect the neighborhood. This was dealt with by averaging all the census blocks that surround the school. If the school was within .10 miles of another census block it was added together and divided by the number of census blocks.

By using census data, there is a lot of undercounting. Not everybody fills out census information. For example, the transient population, minority or undocumented people are not accounted for in the population.

The final problem was the design is not a random sample. It is only of one county in California not the whole state. This study is only a dense sample of Southern California public schools not of the universe.

Implications

In this study, API scores showed significant correlation to suspensions and expulsions. This implies that parents should make an effort to learn about school's academic programs and student performances on test so that they are in a better position to monitor their children. This will also enhance a parents ability to select schools and programs that suit the needs of their children. A study done by Harmon and Dickens (2004) showed that few parents and community members know what academic program opportunities are available for students or how they are performing in these subjects.

Harmon and Dickens (2004) found that they were few meaningful policies that target math and science. The issue is how to adjust school board policies in order to involve parents and community members in classrooms. Administrators should have after school activities, such as homework centers, to help improve test scores and get

parents involved. When improving test scores, there needs

to be a continuous improvement and sustained efforts by the

family, community, and schools.

In this study, there was a relationship between

minorities in the community showed to impact the school.

Schools need to have programs that are culturally sensitive

to address the needs of the community. For example, there

needs to be interpreters to help with the communication

between the teacher and parent. Schools need to remove the

child from being the interpreter.

At the high school level, the major differences that

emerged between high and low suspensions school were

related to parent involvement (Mendez, et. al., 2002). Low

suspension schools were more likely than high suspension

schools to include parents in the development of the school

wide discipline plan. They also were more likely to

include them in the plan to get parents involved before

students' problems become severe.

While parental involvement was not addressed in the

current study, the level of female-headed households in the

neighborhood was related to levels of suspension. This

finding suggests that when developing mechanisms to involve

parents in disciplinary plans that can be taken to address

the needs and concerns of one parent households. For example, evenings and weekend meetings combined with the provision of child care services may enhance the ability of single parents to become involved.

Parents and community members need to be involved with students to improve schools. Parent and community involvement requires hard work but is worth the efforts. If schools can improve test scores than the rates of suspensions and expulsions will improve.

Conclusion

School administrators seeking to lower suspension and expulsion rates at their schools need to consider the area around them. Overall, this study showed that some areas tend to have higher suspension and expulsion rates than others. Findings from this study included that for all schools there was a significant correlation between suspensions and Female-Headed households, gang territories, minority, and schools with a low API score. In addition, there was significant correlation between expulsions and minorities and areas with a high percentage of population aged 5-17.

More research is needed on reasons for suspensions and expulsions, especially linking API Scores with suspensions and expulsions. There has been little or no research done on this topic.

APPENDIX A

MODEL VARIABLES SELECTED

Concept	Variable	Description	Source
Age 5-17	Proportion of children aged 14-18	# of people 14-18 divided by # residents	Census 2000
Minorities	Proportion of Hispanic Proportion of African-Americans	# Hispanic residents divided by # residents # African-American residents divided by # residents	Census 2000
Female Head of Household	Proportion of female-headed households with children in the household	# female-headed households w/ children divided by total # households w/children	Census 2000
Owner Occupancies	Proportion of owner units	# of owner occupied units divided by # residents	Census 2000
Gang Territories	Gang Turf	Areas have gang activity	Police Agencies
School Report Cards	Proportion of students by schools	# of Hispanic and African-American students divided by school population API score	Online – school websites

APPENDIX B

DEPENDANT VARIABLES

Concept	Variable	Description	Source
Suspensions and Expulsions Recommendations by Offense for Education Code 48900	Number of students Suspended or Expelled	# of students suspended or expelled by school	School Districts

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