ABSTRACT

SIMS, CALVIN MATTHEW. A Mixed Methods Approach to Understanding Preservice Teachers’ Racialized Attributions of Students’ Perceived Misbehaviors (Under the direction of Drs. Amy Halberstadt & Shevaun D. Neupert).

Preservice teachers’ interpretations of student motivations are key in understanding their reactions to behaviors in the classroom. Preservice teachers’ beliefs about students may be racialized due to implicit biases that preservice teachers may not be aware they hold. The current study sought to understand if preservice teachers make racialized attribution decisions after viewing misbehaviors at school. Preservice teachers (N = 122) viewed four different video vignettes depicting boys’ misbehaviors in school settings; two were deemed mild and two were deemed slightly more severe, and within each level of severity, one boy was African American and one boy was European American. After viewing each interaction, preservice teachers reported what they viewed in the vignettes and what their responses would be if these actions actually took place in their classrooms. Preservice teachers’ answers for each vignette were coded for (a) their attributions of locus of control and (b) the punishment strategies they would apply. I predicted that preservice teachers would make more internal attributions for misbehaviors for African American boys and more external attributions for European American boys. Results confirmed that a) preservice teachers made more locus of control attributions about African American students than European American boys and b) preservice teachers did not use the harshest forms of discipline often but when they did, they used these discipline types more so for African American boys than European American boys. The discussion focuses on how education courses may help to better prepare future teachers to be aware of racialized beliefs they may hold and what consequences may arrive when preservice teachers are not aware of their biases.

Keywords: Attribution Theory, Locus of control, Education, Motivation, Punishment, Race, Preservice Teachers
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A Mixed Methods Approach to Understanding Preservice Teachers’ Racialized Attributions of
Students’ Perceived Misbehaviors

by
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DEDICATION

First, I need to dedicate this entire body of work to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This entire journey summed up in four words is “faith”, “hope,” “perseverance” and “strength”. There have been many nights I have worked late in Poe Hall listening to “Come to Me” by Jenn Johnson, and rested upon the strength of God to get me through. Thank you for being my Rock always.

This work would never have been possible without the love and support of my family and closest friends. Thank you to my father, Willie B. Sims, and my sister, Carol Annette Sims. Thank you for all the times you helped me pay rent, get groceries and have gas money because graduate funding was not enough. Thank you for the many prayers and your continued belief in me that I could chase a dream and pursue it fully. I will never ever forget that when no one was there, my family was. While my mother helped me to get through undergraduate school, it was my father and sister I leaned upon for my graduate studies. This is my work, and I hope this makes you proud to see my passion.

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I dedicate this work to the memories of two people who mean so much to me. First, my mother Carolyn Ann Williams Sims, whose final act before going home eternally was forcing her sick body out to see me graduate from Wake Forest University. You inspire everything I do,
still. Daily I ask myself if I am making you proud, and with the completion of this journey, I hope that I have.

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Far too many others have invested in my life and success over the years. I just want to say I love you all: John and Heather Kiger, Sarah Dawson, Destiny Deater. To Teena Curry, thank you for the never-ending encouragement, and kindness. As you said to me, before, the journey is not over. He is making all things new, and I’m glad you’re here. You all mean the world to me and I thank you for your presence in my life.
BIOGRAPHY

The author, Calvin Matthew Sims, was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina on November 17, 1979 as the third child of Carolyn Ann Williams Sims and Willie Bill Sims. Calvin began his research career at Wake Forest University while taking up a major in Psychology. Within the major, Calvin’s interests included racism, sexism and the study of racialized beliefs about African American males and the law. Under the research mentorship of Dr. Charles Richman, Calvin completed his Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and went on to attend the University of North Carolina – Wilmington. Training under Dr. Nora E. Noel in the B.E.A.C.H. (Behavioral Examination of Caffeine and Health) Lab, Calvin gained a more clinically based understanding of substance abuse, recovery and the behavioral mechanisms that drive addiction. At UNCW, Calvin earned his Master’s degree in general psychology. After then spending 2 years studying under the tutelage of Dr. Stephen A. Maisto at Syracuse University researching safe sex practices among the LGBT+ population, Calvin worked at Crouse Hospital as a Quality Improvement Analyst. With this position, Calvin gained important knowledge in the research metrics that drive change within medical institutions and gained insight in applied research while working on the Emergency Room, Stroke Center and Information Systems administrative teams. Upon returning to North Carolina, Calvin then worked with Drs. Alison Parker and Tracy Scull at Innovation, Research and Training (iRT) in Durham. It was this position that served as a bridge from clinical study to working with Elementary and Middle School aged children with mindfulness training. The work he did here led Calvin to want to further explore the connection between Developmental Psychology and Education in children’s lives. Calvin began work at North Carolina State University under the direction of Dr. Amy Halberstadt. Through many hours of training and vexing Dr. Halberstadt, Calvin solidified his
passion for school based developmental research and for teaching at the undergraduate level. It is with from that passion and sense of urgency that the current dissertation began to take shape.

When not performing research, Calvin is a life-long comic book fan with a newly burgeoning love for anime. His favorite all time superhero is Spider-Man, whom he considers a model for carrying great feelings of responsibility. Calvin has a great love for languages and at the time of this writing is planning to learn Mandarin and Japanese, while taking refresher courses in Spanish and French. During NFL season, Calvin can be found cheering on his beloved Houston Texans.

Calvin currently lives in Baltimore, MD. At present, he works for DukeTIP academic programs.
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you forced me to dig down deep to remember why I started this. Thank you so much. You took an interest in me when you didn’t have to and helped me to have success and victory. Thank you for helping Dr. Halberstadt to get me ready for success. You and she will both have an indisputable mark on my career.

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .......................................................................................................................... ix
LIST OF FIGURES ....................................................................................................................... x

**INTRODUCTION** ...................................................................................................................... 1
  - Negative Beliefs about African American Children ............................................................. 4
  - Disproportionality in School Discipline for African American Boys .................................... 6
  - Disproportionality in School Discipline for African American Girls .................................... 8
  - Racialized Expectancies in the Classroom ........................................................................... 10
  - Teacher Attributions: Locus of Control .............................................................................. 12

**Study Aims** ............................................................................................................................. 14
  - Hypotheses .......................................................................................................................... 16

**METHOD** .................................................................................................................................. 17
  - Participants ......................................................................................................................... 17
  - Measures .............................................................................................................................. 17
  - Severity of Vignettes .......................................................................................................... 18
  - Demographics .................................................................................................................... 21
  - Procedure ............................................................................................................................ 21
  - Coding Locus of Control Attribution .................................................................................. 22
  - Development of Disciplinary Strategies ............................................................................. 24
  - Do Teachers Choose different Disciplinary Strategies by Child Race? .......................... 27
  - Thematic Content .............................................................................................................. 28

**RESULTS** ................................................................................................................................ 29
  - Analytical Plan .................................................................................................................... 29
  - Attributions .......................................................................................................................... 30
  - Race of Misbehaving Boy .................................................................................................... 33
  - Severity Level ...................................................................................................................... 34
  - Disciplinary Strategy Groupings .......................................................................................... 34
  - Qualitative Analysis of Preservice Teacher Analysis: Disciplinary Strategies .................. 38
  - Moderate Vignettes (Homework & Gameboy): ................................................................. 39
  - Mild Vignettes (Comment & Artwork): ............................................................................. 44

**DISCUSSION** ............................................................................................................................ 54
  - African American Preservice Teachers ............................................................................ 58
  - Limitations ........................................................................................................................... 60
  - Conclusion ........................................................................................................................... 64

**REFERENCES** .......................................................................................................................... 65
**LIST OF TABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Attribution Theory: Causal Dimensions and Appraisals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Disciplinary Strategies identified by Raters</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Rating of Disciplinary Strategy by 25 Elementary School Teachers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Frequency count per vignette by Race and by Severity level of vignette</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Selected responses of hands off approach utilized in moderate vignettes</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Selected responses by preservice teachers comparing disciplinary strategies across moderate vignettes</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Selected responses by preservice teachers comparing moderate levels of disciplinary strategies across Moderate vignettes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 8</td>
<td>Selected responses demonstrating use of discussion strategy for mild vignettes</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 9</td>
<td>Selected responses demonstrating use of hands off strategy for mild vignettes</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 10</td>
<td>Selected responses demonstrating use of moderate disciplinary strategies for mild vignettes</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 11</td>
<td>Selected responses demonstrating use of moderate disciplinary strategies for mild vignettes 2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 12</td>
<td>Comparison of Participant ID#3194 severe responses across vignettes</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 13</td>
<td>Sample responses from African American preservice teachers</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 14</td>
<td>Comparison of Participant ID #3133 across vignettes</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1  Disciplinary Strategies chosen for African American and European American boys within moderate vignettes ................................................................. 36

Figure 2  Disciplinary Strategies chosen for African American and European American boys within mild vignettes ............................................................... 37
INTRODUCTION

As stated by Edward Morris, “Schools not only serve as sites for the construction of race, class and gender identities, they also reproduce existing inequalities in these areas. Schools solidify or even exaggerate the inequalities children bring with them to school” (Epstein, Blake, Gonzalez, 2017). The year 2014 was a noteworthy one as the shooting deaths of unarmed Black children sent shockwaves throughout the United States. Eric Garner’s lifeless body lay in the streets after his dying words, “I can’t breathe” were stated to no avail to his arresting officers, who had placed Garner in a choke hold in July 2014 in New York City. This interaction between law enforcement and citizen took place because Garner had apparently been selling single cigarettes on the street without a tax stamp. One month later, the shooting death of Michael Brown by a police officer in Ferguson, MI on August 9, 2014 stirring feelings of anger, confusion, curiosity and helplessness amongst Black citizens nationwide. A panic set in that young Black males who “appeared a certain way” or “looked a certain type” could be shot and killed with little to no provocation. In this case, two sides held completely different accounts of what actually happened, with neighbors stating the young man had surrendered with his hands up and kneeling on the ground, and yet authorities claimed the same man had viciously attacked a police officer. What all sides agree is that what started the interaction was Brown, 18 years old, was walking in the middle of the street when a police officer approached him. Brown’s death soon followed that interaction. Perhaps most shocking was Tamir Rice, an African American male child of only 12 years old, gunned down and killed by a police officer on November 2 of the same year for displaying a pellet gun. As scores of African American parents came together to express their anger, and, moreover, their fear that this could happen to their sons, a national outcry went forward. As of early 2019, police in East Pittsburgh shot an unarmed African-
American teenager, Antwon Rose, three times, because the car he was riding in had possibly been used in a non-fatal shooting some 15 minutes earlier. The continued use of lethal force against African American males, regardless of age, demonstrates the continued issue of African American males being killed due to quick assumptions made about them by law enforcement (Hall, Hall & Perry, 2016; Plant & Peruche, 2005). The literature has been clear that African American individuals are more likely to be arrested, receive excessive force by police officers, and killed by law enforcement, even when they are unarmed (Goff, Thomas, & Jackson, 2008; Gilbert & Ray, 2016; Hall, Hall & Perry, 2016; Moore et al., 2016; Nix et al., 2017).

The perception that African American males are violent, aggressive and criminal has led to the frequent and disparate shooting deaths that make national headlines. However, this perception of African American males as malevolent entities in society begins far sooner than confrontations with law enforcement. Beginning at a young age, African American males may be viewed differentially from European American males in the classroom. It is perceptions of young African American males in the classroom that can set the stage for how they are later viewed by law enforcement and how law enforcement reacts to them. The connection between Black children’s experiences in the classroom, and their experiences in the criminal justice system is strong and will shape the trajectory of African American families for years to come, both at a local level and nationally. This dissertation explores how racialized perceptions of African American boys as more violent and aggressive compared to European American boys may influence education-related processes, resulting in biased views and harsher disciplinary strategies for misbehaviors within the classroom. The focus of this study will be on how preservice teachers’ views of misbehaviors are shaped by their own racialized biases.
It is important to understand preservice teachers’ racialized views of students, and to understand the long-term implication of these views, especially as related to African American students. African American students may experience more trouble in school because of receiving different disciplinary strategies than other students. From both a developmental and educational standpoint, the constant barrage of disciplinary events may lead to increased time out of the classroom for African American students due to in school suspensions, out of school suspensions, and expulsions (Tenanbaum & Ruck, 2007). Time missed from educational activities in addition to feeling devalued and unwanted, may be a precursor to the “school to prison pipeline”: the process through which young African American males engage in crime to satisfy daily financial, career or emotional needs in the absence of a fulfilling academic experience (Wald & Losen, 2003). Researchers have determined that students are more likely to be arrested on days that they are suspended from school, have higher dropout rates and have earlier contact with the prison system (Losen et al., 2013; Monahan et al., 2014). Teachers’ perceptions of students can determine how students regard education and how well they feel that school is a fit for their future success.

In contrast, teachers’ positive attitudes towards minority students may affect school achievement and performance for students (Van den Burgh et al., 2010). Teacher beliefs matter because positive school and classroom environments help students to achieve and overcome obstacles (Willis, 1995; 1998). Beliefs governing attitudes and expectations drive the school experience for both teachers and students (Willis, 1995). In this way, the structure of school is similar to that of the home with parents setting the tone for how children should act. How teachers conduct their classrooms and establish expectations for all students help classroom members to have a sense of purpose and engagement with the learning process. For example, in
predominantly African American schools where teachers established strong relational ties with
students by showing a strong interest in their lives, communicating with their parents regularly,
and relating world and cultural events back to the classroom, students performed much better and
felt more valued by their teachers (Willis, 1998).

**Negative Beliefs about African American children**

African American students’ actions may be viewed as more adult-like, and more
intentional in causing harm to others than European American students (Rattan, Levine, Dweck
& Eberhardt, 2012). In one study, African American boys’ photos were viewed as less innocent,
less childlike, and more aggressive than European American peers were and African American
boys as a whole were less likely to be associated with childhood characteristics such as
playfulness, joy, and having innocent fun (Goff et al., 2014). African American children are
often misperceived and interpreted as overly aggressive, dangerous, and provoking (Kunjufu,
1985; Neal et al., 2003; Oliver, 2003; Rome, 2004; Thomas & Coard, 2009, Welch, 2007). Social
psychologists have studied in depth the robust finding that African Americans in general are
viewed as relatively more violent and as having more criminal behavior for well over 40 years
(Allport & Postman, 1945, 1947; Devine, 1989; Duncan, 1976; Gershenshon, Holt &
Papageorge, 2016; Greenwald, Oakes & Hoffman, 2003; Sagar & Schofield, 1980;; Payne,
2001;;). The effects of this stereotyping have been demonstrated with different outcome
variables, such as trying to recall who held a deadly razor in a subway (Allport & Postman, 1945,
1947); determining if a held item was a weapon or not (Hall, Hall & Perry, 2016; Payne, 2001; );
and whether a participant chooses to shoot a weapon at an individual and how fast they decide to
shoot that weapon (Correll et al., 2002). Both European Americans and African Americans may
hold prejudicial beliefs about African Americans people (Devine, 1989; Devine & Elliot, 1995; Krueger, 1996; Madon et al., 2001).

Further studies have found, for example, the presence of an African American target may automatically yield thoughts that the person is violent, criminal, uneducated, and unmotivated, regardless of the target’s age (Smith, Allen & Danley, 2007). This automaticity of associating negative traits to African American males is important to the current study in that thinking about African Americans may lead individuals to evaluate ambiguous behavior as more hostile and aggressive (Goff, 2004). The cultural stereotype of African Americans as criminals influences how individuals perceive minorities, process information about them and their motivations, and evaluate them (Devine, 1989; Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004). The racialized belief of African Americans as more aggressive and violent can then lead to a miscategorization of African Americans’ intentions and motivations.

Teachers’ racialized views of African American students’ externalizing behaviors may be responsible for differential disciplinary strategies given to these students. For example, when teachers provided assessments of externalizing behaviors for children at ages 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9 years old, African American children’s externalizing behaviors were seen as increasing with age by teachers as compared to European American children’s externalizing behaviors. However, mothers in the study reported African American children’s externalizing behaviors decreasing in comparison to teachers (Miner & Clarke-Stewart, 2008). In a study of 11,001 students in a metropolitan area with 56% African American students, minority students were much more likely than European American students to be sent to the office by teachers for infractions that were a) less serious and b) more subjective (Skiba et al., 2000). These included: “disrespecting the teacher,” “making excessively loud noise,” “not paying attention,” and “daydreaming”. By
comparison, teachers referred European American students to the office for more serious and less objective actions such as: “smoking”, “leaving the classroom without permission”, “vandalism”, and “assault”. Also, in a sample of 27,884 students, African American males were more likely to be referred to the administration for subjective behaviors like “disobedience”, “defiance”, “not adhering to the school dress code”, “fighting with another student”, “making threats” and “profanity” than European American students when they were in fact actually not engaged in these behaviors at all (Lewis et al., 2010).

It is easy, and perhaps enticing, to package these as a simple issue of race in the classroom. However, Moore (2002) believes “establishment bias” dictates that even African American teachers do not favor African American male students. In a qualitative study, African American teachers viewed female, light skinned, mature children from middle-class families as ideal students while viewing male, dark skinned children from lower SES families and unstable / dysfunctional families as problem children (Moore, 2002). These teachers held firm beliefs that students from this unfavorable background require strict surveillance and that they needed to be much more cautious of these students (Moore, 2002; Nance, 2016).

Disproportionality in school discipline for African American boys

Teachers frequently apply harsher disciplinary strategies to African American male students, such as longer suspensions (Skiba, Arredondo & Rausch, 2014), compared to European American male students in the same school districts for the same infractions. The literature on teachers’ disciplinary strategies in the classroom often notes a varying set of criteria and thresholds for discipline severity based on preservice teachers’ attitudes toward discipline (Reyna & Weiner, 2001; Scott-Little & Holloway, 1992; Tulley & Chiu, 1995; Walker
Greenwood & Terry, 1994; Wan & Salili, 1996; Weiner, 2000). In classroom settings, teachers’ reactions to students’ bad behaviors are usually either utilitarian or retribution seeking (Reyna & Weiner, 2001; see also Gert, 1988; Vidmar & Miller, 1980). Utilitarian goals are aimed at changing students’ future behavior. This is accomplished by reducing the likelihood that the undesirable behavior will happen again in the future by the student or by other students (Murphy & Coleman, 1990; Wan & Salili, 1996; Wolfgang & Brundenell, 1983; Wynne, 1990).

Teachers report different rates of defiant behavior and these rates vary by race and gender. African American males have the highest rates of suspension followed respectively by European males, African American females, and European American females (Skiba et al., 2002). Referred to as an “uneven hand” for African American students (Monroe, 2006), African American males receive the greatest numbers of disciplinary actions (see also, Ferguson, 2000; Monroe, 2005; Skiba & Peterson, 1999; Skiba & Rausch, 2006) in the classroom. There has been very little evidence that African American males are more disruptive in class than European American male students, yet they receive suspensions at much higher rates (Skiba et al., 2000; Wu et al., 1982). The research literature reveals many studies showing exclusionary practices of African American males from the classroom, and that African American males have a higher probability of exclusion from the classroom than other racial groups (Bowman-Perrott, et al., 2013; Bradshaw et al., 2010; Lo & Cartledge, 2007; Losen, 2011; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Townsend, 2000; U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Vincent, Swain-Bradway, Tobin, & May, 2011). One such study, (Losen, 2011) demonstrated that African American males were 28% more likely to be suspended at least once from middle school, with European American male odds dramatically lower at 10%. The U.S. Department of Education in 2014 determined that African American students were three times more likely than
European American students to be expelled or suspended from school (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014). These numbers are staggering given that African American students made up only 15% of the students’ whose data was collected yet of this number, 35% had been suspended at least once, 44% had been suspended more than once and 36% had been expelled (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014). While it may be asked if African American students really are displaying bad behavior in the classroom, Losen (2013) states that in fact, these students are suspended much more for discretionary (behaviors or situations that may or may not pose a safety concern such as sagging pants or being loud) than non discretionary behaviors (clear behavioral infractions such as carrying a loaded weapon or selling drugs at school).

Teachers may interpret African American students’ expressive styles of communication, learning, and exploration as combative, aggressive, maladaptive, provoking, angering etc. These expressive and communication style mismatches between African American students and teachers who expect less dynamic and expressive communication in the classroom can be part of the reason that African American students are singled out with greater frequency by teachers for suspension and expulsion (Barbarin, Chin & Wright, 2014; Rowley et al., 2014).

Disproportionality in school discipline for African American girls

Teachers frequently apply harsher disciplinary strategies to African American female students, such as longer suspensions, compared to European American male students in the same school districts for the same infractions (Skiba, Arredondo & Rausch, 2014; Epstein, Blake & Gonzalez, 2017). Disparities within school discipline have revealed that African American girls receive harsher punishment by school administrators, teachers, and school resource officers as compared to European American girls (Epstein, Blake & Gonzalez, 2017). In fact, 90% of all
Girls suspended in New York City public schools in 2011-2012 were African American girls (Crenshaw, Ocen & Nanda, 2015). Further, the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality concluded that, compared to European American girls of similar ages between 5 - 14, African American girls are perceived as being in less need of protection, support, nurturing, and comfort (Smith, 2017). Additionally, African American girls are viewed as more knowledgeable about adult issues, more independent and more sexually active (Epstein, Blake & Gonzalez, 2017). These stereotypic beliefs about African American girls have an impact on how they are viewed in the classroom and what experiences they are likely to have in the classroom. Within the educational system, African American girls receive less mentorship, and less leadership opportunities.

Disproportionate rates of disciplinary actions taken against African American girls in schools has been well documented in the research literature (Guevara et al., 2006; Morris, 2007; Blake et al., 2011; Nanda, 2012; Blake, Butler & Smith, 2015; Wun, 2015; Morris, 2016; Blake, 2017). African American girls were found to experience higher levels of exclusionary discipline outcomes subjective reasons disobedience, defiance, defiance, detrimental behavior, third degree assault, and other behaviors dependent upon the subjective evaluations of school personnel (Epstein, Blake & Gonzalez, 2017). Black girls were punished more severely compared to European American girls for the same infractions (Annamma, 2016). Between 2013 – 2014, of Black girls comprised 15.6% of all girls enrolled in schools, yet of this number, 52% were suspended from schools more than once (Onyeka-Crawford, Patrick & Chaudry, 2017). Again, from this same 15.6%, Black girls from this group were arrested 37.3% of the time. European American girls, who made up 50.1% of all girls enrolled in school during this same time period were suspended from school more than once 22.7% of the time and were arrested 30.2% of the
time (Onyeka-Crawford, Patrick & Chaudry, 2017). Within one school district in Kentucky, African American girls were 2 times more likely than European American girls to be disciplined for violations such as dress code violations, cell phone use and loitering, almost 3 times more likely to be disciplined for disobedience to authority, disruptive behavior, fighting and bullying (Morris & Perry, 2017).

The unequal application of punishments for both genders of African American children result in time away from the school experience, which has long term effects on these children. It is necessary to understand the real world ramifications for these children in order for both preservice and in service teachers to better mitigate, de-escalate and educate problems as they arrive for these children.

**Racialized expectancies in the classroom**

Student performance, behavior, attitudes, and likability may influence teacher expectations and evaluations (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993; Da Laet et al, 2015; Engels et al., 2016; McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015). These expectances then shape the actual performance and success of the student in the classroom (Wiley & Eskilson, 1978). Expectancies for students can be influenced by student and teacher race (Cooper, Baron & Lowe, 1975; DeMeis & Turner, 1978; Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015; Gershenshon, Holt & Papageorge, 2016; Simpson & Erickson, 1983; Wiggan, 2007). Teachers’ experiences with minority students may be limited or previously may have not been positive (Allen, 2015). Racialized expectations or misjudgments of African American students’ behaviors may be based in mistakes of causal attributions about these students.
Because teacher attributions are likely affected by ideas about race within classrooms, it is important to understand not only how teachers come to these beliefs and attitudes but what those attitudes lead teachers to want to do about preserving the control of their classrooms. Preservice teachers’ beliefs about teaching presumably are already well-formed by the time they enter college before formally pursuing teaching as a profession (Buchmann, 1987; Florio-Ruane & Lensmire, 1990). These beliefs are crafted and formed during the “apprentice of observation” (Lortie, 1975), which happens over the years that preservice teachers themselves are in school and helps to form ideas about what it means to teach students. These ideas are based in such areas as to how to gain control of the classroom, how students ought to behave and what classroom management looks like. These ideas are then the foundation of the beliefs preservice teachers will take with them through their education programs (Clark, 1988; Nespor, 1987). This suggests that ill-formed ideas about race in the classroom are problematic for minorities, in that they deny them opportunities that others may receive, and perpetuate these beliefs in all students in the classroom, regardless of race.

Given the points above, it is of concern that many preservice teachers have little knowledge, exposure, or understanding in the cultural background of minority students (Akiba, 2011; Barry & Lechner, 1995; Schultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996; Su, 1996, 1997). Researchers have found that European American preservice teachers may endorse stereotypic beliefs about minority children, such as believing that certain backgrounds have attitudes, which interfere with their success in school (Schultz et al., 1996). Two studies (Su, 1996, 1997) found that many European American preservice teachers believed that programs designed to teach about racial discrimination in education were actually biased and racist against European Americans. Other studies have observed that many European American preservice teachers prefer to defer to a
policy of “color blindness” in the classroom, purposely trying to not emphasize differences in racial experiences and their impact within the classroom (McIntyre, 1997; Valli, 1995; Marx & Pennington, 2003; Case & Hemmings, 2005; Kreamelmeyer, et al. 2016). However, this approach minimizes the unique social structures that minority students must navigate in order to be successful in school and professionally. Since preservice teachers may have limited ideas of how to successfully instruct minority children, many preservice teachers feel ambivalent about their ability to teach, and discipline African American students (Dilworth, 1998; Pang & Sablan, 1998; Siwatu, 2007).

This study investigates a pathway through which preservice teachers may be making attributions in ambiguous situations. Additionally, this study researches which disciplinary decisions preservice teachers make when limited information is given, and they must rely on their experiences and expectations of what should happen in the classroom.

**Teacher Attributions: Locus of Control**

One explanation of how teachers determine the antecedent causes of children’s perceived behavior in the classroom is provided by Weiner’s Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1972, 1985, 1986). Weiner suggests that individuals seek to interpret the causes for an event or behavior. Several principles of behavior formulate these interpretations: behavior must be observed or perceived, it must be accidental or intentional, it must have external or internal causes, and those causes are continuous across time or merely situational. Weiner’s theory focuses specifically on achievement as the ultimate goal of actions and these actions are comprised of four factors: effort, ability, task difficulty, and luck. Attribution Theory has the ability to incorporate the antecedents of attributions, and specific causes of attributions as well as affective and cognitive
understandings of consequences. The theory uses causal appraisals in the understanding and evaluation of motivations for actions (see Table 1). Causal attributions that teachers make about students’ performances appear to shape the formation of expectances regarding those students (Wiley & Eskilson, 1978).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causal Dimension</th>
<th>Type of Appraisal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Control</td>
<td>Internal (Intention) vs External (No intent / Accident / Outside events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>Stable (traits) vs Temporary (circumstance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability</td>
<td>Skill / Aptitude vs Mood, Luck, Chance, Divine Intervention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from Weiner (1986).*

Three causal dimensions make up these attributions: Locus of control (determining whether internal or external factors cause the behavior), stability (whether the causes of the behavior change over time or not), and controllability (whether causes of action can be willfully changed, such as if luck or skill level was responsible for the action). For a complete review, see Weiner (1986). The focus of the current study is on locus of control, the most well researched of the three attributions (Furnham & Steele, 1993; Lefcourt, 1976; Martinko, Harvey & Douglas, 2007; Ng, Sorensen & Eby, 2006; Rotter, 1966; Weiner, 1972, 1986; See also Ng, Sorensen & Eby, 2006 for a complete review).

The concept of locus of control was first introduced by Rotter (1966) who defined it as a problem-solving expectancy. Locus of control has the greatest impact when an individual has little experience in a new situation, or in situations that are amorphous, undefined or ambiguous. How preservice teachers attribute intention in children may also be reflective of racialized views
(Ross & Jackson, 1991; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Südkamp, Kaiser, & Möller, 2012). That is, teachers with little expertise in the classroom may utilize their own beliefs, cultural understandings, and stereotypic views in determining the level of control that students have in their behaviors, and these racialized beliefs could then direct the responses that preservice teachers feel is necessary to address the behavior. These views could also solidify whether preservice teachers see these actions as stable across time; if so the preservice teacher may come up with a script for future interactions with this student and this may place the student at a disadvantage within the classroom. Thus, preservice teachers’ attributions of intentionality may begin a cascade of other attributions and behaviors toward the student.

Teachers view students as being responsible for their own actions and the negative outcomes or consequences resulting from those actions (Weiner, 1995). Thus, teachers are likely to experience anger when believing that students had full control of their actions, had some awareness of what the consequences were going to be, and decided to proceed with the action anyway. For teachers, when causes are thought to be stable (the 2nd dimension of causality), the same effects and consequences would be expected to happen repeatedly since the behavior would be expected to happen repeatedly (Weiner, 1986). Removal of stable causes would result in removal of expected consequences.

**Study Aims**

In this study, I examined if preservice teachers made racialized attributions when they viewed misbehaviors during a videotaped interaction between boys of different races. I also examined if preservice teachers utilized varying disciplinary strategies and if those strategies differed by the race of the boy doing the misbehavior. In order to assess these questions, I
utilized videotaped vignettes depicting the actions of four boys. Within these vignettes, two boys were African American and two were European American. The literature has examined the use of disciplinary strategies in the classroom and the differential use of severe strategies such as suspension and expulsion directed towards African American students, and the long term effects of time spent away from class. These studies have mostly been either quantitative in nature within the Psychology domain or qualitative in nature within Educational domains of study. Such separation of study does not fully or adequately integrate the voices of preservice teachers to describe the meanings and reasonings for their choices to punish African American students in the classroom or address whether preservice teachers are aware of these decisions. Quantitative or qualitative results alone do not fully describe how preservice teachers think at the moment of either real or perceived classroom disruption.

This mixed methods study had three goals: First, I wanted to determine if preservice teachers made attributions about what they have seen. Secondly, utilizing locus of control as a framework, I wanted to determine if preservice teachers made attributions about the boys engaging in misbehaviors and what types of attributions they made about those boys. Finally, I sought to determine whether the types of disciplinary strategies preservice teachers stated they would implement if these events happened in their own classroom were influenced by the race of the boy in the vignette.

This mixed methods study will address preservice teachers’ decisions to use punishment in the classroom, and what types of punishments they prefer to use differentially for African American boys and European American boys and whether the race of the student matters for more or less severe classroom behavioral infractions. A convergent parallel mixed methods design will be utilized. This type of design is unique in that both quantitative and qualitative data
are collected in parallel, analyzed separately and then merged together to present a complete picture of participants’ experiences within the study, with greater understanding of how participants act outside of the study. In this study, quantitative data will be used to test the theory that race of boy in the vignette will determine the harshness level of punishment assigned to the boy for misbehaviors in the classroom. The qualitative data will explore the centralized themes as to what types of punishments are predominantly used and why those punishments are selected.

My hypotheses are as follows:

1) I predicted that preservice teachers would judge the two African American boys in the vignettes as having more internal control over their actions as compared to the European American boys. I also predicted that preservice teachers would make more external attributions for European American boys than for African American boys.

2) I predicted preservice teachers would assign more severe levels of discipline to the African American boys than to the European American boys, regardless of the severity of the misbehaviors.

To test these predictions, I presented 122 preservice teachers with four video vignettes. The vignettes showed four different interactions between boys displaying varying levels of misbehaviors. Two of the boys were African American, and two were European American. Also within the four vignettes, two interactions depicted mild interactions between children, and two depicted more hostile interactions. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were implemented in this study. Contingency table analyses provided insight into whether preservice teachers made more attributions and what the association between race and misbehavior was for use or non-use of attributions about the interactions. Additional contingency table analysis explored if preservice teachers differentially applied more severe forms of disciplinary strategies by race of
A further qualitative analysis explored the content of preservice teachers’ written responses and what how those responses indicated teachers’ preferred disciplinary strategy following the misbehaviors.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 122 self-identified preservice teachers recruited from an educational psychology course for preservice teachers. Participants had a mean age of 20 years old ($SD = 3.40$), with a range from 18 to 34 years old and currently enrolled in a teacher education licensure program at North Carolina State University; 78% were women ($n=95$). Most students had some classroom experience. Most participants were in the 2nd to 3rd year of the program ($N=116$) and had some classroom experience with a range of no experience in the classroom ($N=31$) to one week to one month in the classroom ($N=48$) to one semester ($N=25$) to one or more years ($N=18$). Participants identified as European American ($N=98$), African American ($N=7$), Asian American ($N=2$) and Biracial ($N=15$).

Measures

Attribution Vignettes (Kupersmidt, Stelter, & Dodge, 2011). Four vignettes were selected from a larger library of 20 vignettes used with older elementary school aged children in another study (Kupersmidt, Stelter & Dodge, 2011). Originally, the videos were designed to test hostility attributions of elementary school aged children and the vignettes were designed to include behaviors that were “intentionally hurtful,” “teasing behavior”, or “accidentally insensitive”. Each of the interactions was between boys, took place in an environment where other students
and adults are present and can see what is happening and depicted everyday social situations within peer groups. The target child’s experience of the interaction was filmed from the point of view of the viewer.

Four focus groups were iteratively involved to help create reasonable scenarios and evaluate the storylines and language for realism, clarity and age appropriate misbehaviors. Three of the four groups focused on generating scenarios regarding times when boys got angry or got into fights as the result of a misunderstanding between peers. Scripts were formed based on the created story lines and the age typical language suggested by the boys who participated in the focus groups. Each vignette included a fictitious child (the target child) who was provoked during a social situation by a second child (the perceived perpetrator or misbehaving boy). In all cases the intent of the perpetrator was ambiguous. The fourth focus group reviewed the scripts to ensure that the scenarios and language were realistic, clear and age appropriate. The researchers then worked with an experienced media production company to audition and hire professional child and adult actors; record voice actors; direct, film, and edit the scenarios; and produce the digitized video recordings that were integrated into the Web-based SIP-AP assessment (Kupersmidt, et al., 2011).

I chose the final four vignettes for this study from an initial pool of 20 vignettes. I settled on “Homework Ruined”, “Taken Gameboy”, “Class Presentation” and “Trashed Artwork”. These vignettes represented different forms of aggression such as property destruction, verbal aggression and covert aggression.

Severity of Vignettes. An ethnically diverse sample of 244 boys aged 8 through 12 in grades 3, 4 and 5 from public elementary schools in five school districts from three states (California, Ohio & North Carolina) reviewed the vignettes and rated them as realistic within
school settings (Kupersmidt et al., 2011). For this study, to determine which vignettes would be moderate and which would be mild, four additional and independent researchers judged the vignettes as including two moderate and the two mild vignettes, and that the two moderate vignettes were comparable across race, and the two mild vignettes were also comparable across race. Race was not counterbalanced within vignettes, but was counterbalanced across vignettes in this study (see Appendix A).

1. “Ruined Homework” (Moderate): Students are walking to class. The child target is walking hurriedly on his way to class, when he kneels to tie his shoe. The viewer can see the target child’s hands placing his homework on the ground beside him. As he is tying one of his shoes, the African American boy walks up behind him. As he passes by the target child, the African American boy steps on the target child’s homework, leaving behind a muddy shoe print. The African American boy then smiles and laughs while walking away.

2. “Taken Gameboy” (Moderate): Students are waiting around in the classroom before class starts. The target child is playing on a Nintendo Gameboy. He places it on a windowsill and turns to retrieve something from his backpack. At this point, a European American boy takes the Gameboy from the windowsill, and gives a smirk towards the target child (and therefore the audience) as he walks away with the Gameboy in hand into the classroom.
3. “Class Presentation” (Mild): The target child is finishing a presentation to the class. The target child receives praise from the teacher for how good his presentation is. Upon returning to his seat, an African American boy looks at the target child (and therefore the audience) and states to him, “You’re right, that stunk.”

4. “Ruined Artwork” (Mild): A student (behind the camera as well) completes a piece of art and lays it down on the table. The camera focuses on the piece of art. The target child walks to put away his supplies in the designated area. While returning to his seat, he notices that the European American boy is talking with another classmate. As they talk, the boy throws away the artwork of the target child.

In none of the videos does the viewer see the face, skin color or any defining image of the target boy. The anonymity of the target child allows the viewer to hold sustained focus on the misbehaving child. For the “Ruined Homework” vignette, the camera focuses on the muddy shoe of the boy stepping on the homework before panning out to reveal that the perpetrator is African American by showing his full body as he turns away and walks away from the camera. Sustained focus is also on the boy’s face as he laughs at what just took place. The “Taken Gameboy” vignette begins in a loud hall presumably at a middle school. The camera shows the face of the perpetrator revealing he is European American. The viewer sees him head away from the camera after he grabs the Gameboy. The “Class Presentation” begins by focusing on the teacher of the classroom (a European American adult male) before moving to focus from the point of view of the student walking back to his seat. The camera zooms out and shifts to his neighbor, an African American boy who makes the statement before the vignette suddenly ends. The final vignette
shows the perspective of the target child as he packs up his markers and walks to an area of the classroom to put them back on the shelf. The camera follows the boy as he turns around just to see his artwork thrown in the garbage can. The immediacy of the camera turns instills in the viewer the suddenness of the artwork being thrown away, as the European American boy and his friend come into focus of the vignette. They are talking nonchalantly through the entire ordeal, seemingly unaware that anything wrong has taken place.

*Demographics.* Demographic information included ethnicity, gender, current year in the program, length of time in the classroom and grade level that preservice teachers were preparing to teach (see Appendix B).

**Procedure**

The attributions gathered for this study were collected as part of a larger study on preservice teacher beliefs and response styles. Following the consent procedure, a research assistant instructed the participants to take the perspective of a teacher who was watching these events. The assistant responded to questions, and left the room, but was available nearby. Vignettes were provided in a web-based format and in random order; participants typed in their responses on the computer. After viewing each video, participants responded to two prompts: “Please write down as much as possible about what you just saw,” and “Please write down how you would handle this in your classroom”. Participants were asked to write at least three sentences in response to each question. The web based design of the study forced participants to write something before moving on to the next screen to either answer the second question or to if they were on the second question to proceed to the next vignette or the exit screen. Since answering these questions was obligatory, most participants did this with no problem or
assistance; very few participants wrote nonsensical answers in an effort to proceed to the next screens. Participants’ answers to the first question was the basis for determining their level of attribution ascribed to each boy in the vignettes.

Coding Locus of Control Attribution

To assess whether preservice teachers made attributions about the events they witnessed, and what specific attributions they made in regards to locus of control (internal vs external), coders took part in an iterative process of establishing reliability and then coded the preservice teachers’ responses to the question, “Please write down as much as possible about what you just saw.”

A coding manual guided coding decisions (see Appendix C), which took place over three weeks, and involved two coders who were blind to each other and to myself. Two European American, female coders with extensive knowledge coding psychological data for research analyses were identified through their connections to the university graduate school website via a query asking for volunteers. Coders began the coding process by reviewing the manual and emailing questions or requests for greater clarity. Coders then began coding the first round of responses. I encouraged questions from the coders which were resolved quickly through the use of email.

Coders chose between four options: 1) No Attribution Made –the answer did not provide an attribution either way for locus of control; 2) Internal Attribution –the preservice teacher thought the reason that the boy in the vignette did the action was from purely internal reasons; and 3) External Attribution –the reason the boy did the action was due to factors outside of themselves. 4) Non codable –the preservice teacher answered nonsensically, demonstrated
confusion, or otherwise failed to clearly answer the prompt given to the them; Reliability checks took place over a series of five rounds, with the number of responses reviewed gradually increasing in number. For each of the first four rounds, coders reviewed the same participants. For the 5th and final round, coders each reviewed half of what was left, with coder 1 reviewing even numbered IDs and coder 2 reviewing odd numbered IDs. Round 1 of coding included 5 participants per coder, Rounds 2-3 included 10 participants per coder, Round 4 included 20 participants per coder and Round 5 was the final round where responses were selected according to if they were odd or even. Agreement between coders (using kappa, (Cohen, 1968; Landis & Koch, 1977) was satisfactory for each of the vignettes: homework (κ = .81), Gameboy (κ = .80) presentation (κ = .79) artwork (κ = .84). Total reliability was (κ = .83). I resolved disagreements between coders myself.

While trying to maintain the standards established in the coding manual, coders still sometimes went beyond the scope of the responses to try to determine how to code each response. Within the homework vignette, discrepancies were usually about whether a response was internal or if no attribution was made, and normally these disagreements focused on the boy smiling after stepping on the homework. Similarly, for the Gameboy vignette, discrepancies that occurred mostly centered on the boy smirking at the victim after removal of the Gameboy. In both instances, I resolved the discrepancy by trying to determine if the preservice teacher had at all mentioned causal factors relating to the action; if they merely mentioned a smile or a smirk was present without regard to the why of the action, I assigned “no attribution” because there were no statements about causality. If the responses mentioned the smiling taking place due to the boy’s purposeful enjoyment of the action, I held this answer as making an attribution. Disagreements on the less severe vignettes almost always focused on the role of the environment
in the interaction between boy and victim; this was particularly clear in the trashed artwork vignette. The most common source of disagreement between coders was whether the boy trashed the artwork on accident because of the chaos going on in the room or if this happened purposefully. I coded accidents in the room as being external attributions. However, if the preservice teacher mentioned no information regarding the action as purposeful or accidental and instead only mentioned that the room was busy or chaotic, I assigned the code as “no attribution”, as nothing was stated related to the boy.

Development of Disciplinary Strategies

Because the preservice teachers had many ideas about how they would handle the situations, I needed to organize their responses into types of disciplinary strategies. Two coders followed several rules when coding the vignette responses by disciplinary strategy. When participants suggested their choice of disciplinary strategy might escalate hypothetically depending on the student’s prior or subsequent behavior (e.g., “If he refuses to apologize...”) the coders made a note about this in their coding. For cases in which participant responses were vague (“I would give the student an appropriate punishment”), the coders used the general code for an in-class disciplinary strategy. If the participant stated the use of multiple disciplinary strategies, coders retained the code for the most severe disciplinary strategies (e.g., if the participant suggested that they would make the child apologize and assign detention, the response would then be coded for detention).

To confirm this order of increasing intensity of disciplinary strategy, 25 elementary school teachers were recruited by word of mouth. They had between 1 and 40 years of teaching experience ($M=15.33$ years, $SD = 3.35$), and taught kindergarten to fifth grade students (with
some having additional middle or high school teaching experience). The teachers responded to an online survey in which they rated each disciplinary strategy for severity level. From these responses, a final scale was generated to quantify the severity of participant responses. Table 2 lists and defines the final 9 codes selected (see Table 2 below).

Table 2

**Disciplinary Strategies Identified by Raters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplinary Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 Hands off / Minimizing</td>
<td>Any non-response or response that didn’t address the behavior that the boy performed, including ignoring, choosing not to do anything, or suggesting the action wasn’t really a big deal or required any type of response.</td>
<td>“I wouldn’t do anything really”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“This was no big deal, so I don’t see a point of doing anything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I might look to see if anything else happens but I would continue on with the lesson.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Asking questions, facilitating discussion about misbehavior</td>
<td>Any response to either understand what happened, understand why the boy did the behavior, or using questioning as a form of dialogue to get the boy to think about this behavior.</td>
<td>“Why did you do that?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Can you tell me what happened?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would ask the student to explain why that action wasn’t good or was harmful”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would try to determine if the student knew what they were doing was wrong.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Requiring student to apologize or make restitution</td>
<td>Involves any action the boy is required to perform to “make up for” or “fix” his mistake for the behavior, in the presence of the protagonist, teacher or otherwise. This includes returning an item to owner, retrieving item from trash, re-writing assignment for protagonist, etc.</td>
<td>“I would make the student apologize to the other student.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student redo the other boy’s homework that he ruined.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would just make the student give the game back to the original boy.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (continued)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Giving a “warning” or “strike” implying future consequences</strong></td>
<td>“Warning” involves the threat of future consequences should the undesired behavior continue. Simply advising the student to do better next time was not included with this code.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would tell the child that the next time this happens, they are heading to see the principal.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I will give them detention.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I am making them go outside for time out.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“They will be forced to write a letter explaining what they did and why it was wrong.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stern verbal scolding or reprimand</strong></td>
<td>Stern verbal scolding includes responses in which teachers would state that they would yell at the boy or fuss at him or get in his face to make him understand what he did was wrong.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would pull him aside right then and there and give him a piece of my mind.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would tell him he’s a bully.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Right there in front of everyone I would fuss at him, and scare him into behaving”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>In Class punishment</strong></td>
<td>This was any mention of a disciplinary strategy where that was directed within the domain of the classroom and may often have served as an outward warning to other students within the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student write on the board in class.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student give a presentation explaining why bullying is wrong.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student tell everyone why what they did was wrong.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>Parent contact</strong></td>
<td>This was any mention that parents would be contacted followed up by actual parental contact.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student call home to their parents.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I would make the student write a letter home to be signed”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“We would have the principle call the parents to discuss the bad behavior.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do teachers choose different disciplinary strategies by child race?

To try to identify whether teachers use different disciplinary strategies when considering the misbehavior of African American vs. European American students, I determined what specific disciplinary strategies were utilized based on the content of preservice teachers’ responses. Frequency counts were then obtained based on the number of disciplinary strategies utilized in each vignette that preservice teachers responded to. Additionally, the 25 teachers ranked severity of disciplinary strategies (as shown in Table 3) which then provided a reference from which to determine which discipline types had perceived similar levels of severity associated with them as ranked by actual teachers. Finally I combined the disciplinary strategies into four different levels: 1) Hands Off or minimizing disciplinary strategies was kept separate since for many preservice teacher responses, this represented no action taking place at all; 2) Lower severity
strategies where the strategies represented only mild discussions between preservice teachers and students (discussion, apology/restitution, warning); 3) Moderate severity in which teachers did a more intense discussion and made the child actively engage in an action (in class punishment, scolding, parental contact) and; 4) High severity, consisting of actions where the child was removed from the class room or had to spend additional time in school due to the discipline received (detention, going to the office, suspension).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order by Ranking</th>
<th>Average score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sending to Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Detention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Contacting Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Scolding/Reprimanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In Class Punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “Hands off / minimizing not considered a strategy for this analysis and is not included.

Thematic Content

Thematic analysis is the process of finding themes and patterns throughout qualitative data. Often described as a method rather than a methodology (Clark & Braun, 2013), it is not tied to a specific theoretical or epistemological perspective. It allows for maximal opportunities of interpretations given the richness with which participants express themselves in their answers. There are two levels of thematic content analysis: semantic and latent (Braun & Clark, 2006). Semantic focuses on simply what was said, and latent focuses on going beyond those words to determine patterns, conceptualizations, assumptions, and ideologies (Braun & Clark, 2006).
I followed inductive analysis procedures to create meaningful themes of the disciplinary
drategies from the preservice teachers’ responses. In order to accomplish this, I had to become
familiar with the data, generate themes consistent with what participants stated, and determine
what specific evidence supported the development of these themes. Then I reviewed these
themes, and refined them until saturation of data was achieved (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

For this dissertation, I present preservice teacher responses based upon several factors. I
included responses when they demonstrated clear examples of multiple students’ thinking. I also
included responses that demonstrated atypical use of a disciplinary style or revealed certain
patterns about the preservice teacher who stated them. In sum, with the responses that preservice
teachers gave, responses that I felt provided in depth information about the preservice teachers’,
expectations or beliefs were chosen as were responses that gave insight into any racialized
patterns of disciplinary strategy use.

**RESULTS**

**Analytical Plan**

First, I was interested if preservice teachers made attributions at all for any of the
vignettes they viewed. Second, if preservice teachers did make attributions, I was interested if
the race of the misbehaving child and/or vignette severity level influenced the frequency and
kind of those attributions. I predicted that they would make more internal attributions for the
African American boys than the European American boys, and more external attributions about
the European American boys than the African American boys. I also predicted that preservice
teachers would use more severe disciplinary strategies for African American boys, and utilize the
less severe disciplinary strategies more for European American boys.
To explore these questions, I utilized IBM SPSS version 19. Because the data are categorical, I conducted contingency analyses exploring the association between race of the misbehaving boy (African American vs. European American), the severity of the vignettes (moderate, mild), and presence of attribution (none vs internal vs external).

I was also interested in the types of disciplinary strategies that preservice teachers would apply when faced with these misbehaviors in the classroom, and as enacted by African American and European American boys. In order to assess this question, I used a qualitative approach to analyze the preservice teachers’ responses. I coded preservice teachers’ responses about what they would do in their classrooms, in order to understand what disciplinary strategies they would use and how they came to those decisions.

This integrative approach of using a mixed methods approach was most appropriate in order to better understand both facets of the current research: 1) the presence of attributions and 2) the differing use of disciplinary strategies.

**Attributions**

Many preservice teachers did not make attributions at all (*as shown in Table 4*). For the moderate misbehaviors, nearly half of the preservice teachers’ responses indicated no attributions made (*n=115*) with the other half involving either internal or external attributions (*n=123*). For the mild vignettes, a slightly different pattern appears, with a majority of no attributions (*n=166*), and a smaller number of attributions of either kind (*n=72*).

Of the attributions made for the moderate misbehaviors, almost all were internal (*n=119*). Only 4 external attributions were made for these moderate vignettes, 3 of which were for a European American boy, indicating that these preservice teachers felt that the European American boy had less control of his circumstances. There was only one preservice teacher
response that indicated external locus of control for the African American boy. For the attributions made for the mild vignettes, there were similar numbers of internal and external attributions. For the internal attributions, there were also similar amounts by child race, with 22 internal attributions for the African American child, and 18 attributions for the European American child. However, the majority of external attributions were given to the European American boy (n=31) with only (n=1) given to the African American boy.

Participant ID #3212 was the only preservice teacher in the study who gave an external attribution to the African American child in the moderate vignettes. This preservice teacher’s response reflected a belief that the misbehaving boy had a prior discussion with the hurt child and that they had staged the entire thing to get out of having to turn in the homework assignment that day. A unique response such as this indicates a possible situation this preservice teacher actually experienced. Further, the level of involvement from the African American boy is limited to his not being an agent in the misbehavior but rather to helping his friend, signifying that the boy whose homework was destroyed is actually the primary child responsible for this interaction. This participant went above and beyond to try to explain how this situation was not at the control of the African American child. Additionally, this preservice teacher took a hands off approach to this interaction. An example such as this is useful in that it demonstrates that many preservice teachers look holistically at an interaction between the boys instead of focusing solely on one child as an actor in the misbehavior. Here, the preservice teacher bases her understanding of the interaction on what may have taken place sometime earlier.
Table 4

*Frequencies counts per vignette by Race and by Severity level of vignette*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Attribution type</th>
<th>Non-Codable</th>
<th>No Attribution Made</th>
<th>Internal Locus of Control</th>
<th>External Locus of Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework (AA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gameboy (EA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation (AA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artwork (EA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mild Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>166</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: AA = African American boy, EA = European American boy.*

Participant #3123 was the only preservice teacher to give an external attribution for the African American student in the mild vignettes. This preservice teacher actually stated the blame for the interaction on the learning environment and the teacher of the class in the vignette, stating, “the children had an apprehensive view of the presentation and a negative view about the assignment”. While such responses were rare in this study, it is useful for a discussion on African American children in the classroom. While most preservice teachers focused solely on the interaction of the African American boy and the presenter in the presentation vignette, this preservice teacher brought in a belief that the classroom as a whole was not being supportive of either student. The apprehension about presenting and perhaps the creation of the presentation assignment itself did not add to the classroom experience and as such put the African American child in the position of having to make the statement towards the presenter. The classroom environment may sometimes promote or allow for certain interactions or behaviors to take place and a child’s behavior may be symptomatic of that environment. While this was the only preservice teacher to give an external attribution to the African American child in this case, other
preservice teachers did make note in their responses that the class seemed without direction and that many of the children in the vignettes were fidgeting or just bored.

For the Artwork vignette specifically, the presence of external responses reflected preservice teachers’ beliefs about factors not present in the other vignettes. First, this was the only vignette where there was no direct interaction between the boys. In this vignette, coders marked that the student had left and returned to discover what the misbehaving boy had done. Additionally as depicted in the vignettes, the misbehaving boy seems unaware that he has done something harmful. Also, in this vignette, coders justified use of the external code due to the room: they were much more likely to say that the interaction was an accident and that this accident was the result of a messy, loud and chaotic area as compared to the Presentation vignette where the room was much less noisy and disorganized. Finally, a higher prevalence of responses stated that the problem could be easily resolved, unlike the other three vignettes. Participants’ responses for this fourth vignette displayed appeasing language such as “this is no big deal” and “I don’t really see anything wrong that took place here” and that the artwork “could simply be taken out of the trash”.

**Race of misbehaving boy.** Two contingency table analyses were conducted to examine whether race of Misbehaving boy (African American vs. European American) was related to whether or not the preservice teachers made any attribution at all (none vs. internal/external). For the more moderate vignettes (Homework versus Gameboy; $X^2(9) = 86.54, p < .001$); that is, race was significantly related to attributions made for the moderate vignettes. Preservice teachers viewing the moderate vignettes made more attributions for the African American boy than they did for the European American boy. For the mild vignettes (Presentation versus Artwork) ($X^2(9)$
race significantly related to attributions made in the mild vignettes. Again, preservice teachers made more attributions for the African American boy than for the European American boy after viewing the mild vignettes.

**Severity Level**

Two contingency table analyses examined how severity level of vignettes (moderate, mild) related to level of attribution (none vs. internal/external) for the African American and European American boys separately. For the two African American boys’ vignettes (Homework, Presentation) there was a strong association between attributions and severity level ($X^2 (9) = 44.86, p < .001$); that is, severity level mattered for attributions about the African American boys. For the European American boys’ vignettes (Gameboy, Artwork), the association between severity level and attribution was similarly strong ($X^2 (9) = 68.56, p < .001$). These findings demonstrate that how preservice teachers assigned attributions was related to the severity of the vignette that they viewed.

**Disciplinary Strategy Groupings.**

For the following qualitative analyses, I grouped the preservice teacher disciplinary strategies into four groups. I kept the “Hands Off” approach separate since for many preservice teacher responses, this represented non action on their part which is different from actively engaging directly with the students. The other three groupings of strategies involved dealing with the misbehaviors in increasing levels of severity. I separated the disciplinary strategies into low, moderate and severe groupings, based on both the rankings made by the actual teachers and the theoretical similarities amongst the disciplinary strategies. The low severity grouping reflected
the disciplinary strategies of discussion, apology and restitution/warning. These low-level strategies engaged the preservice teacher and were presumed to involve 1 on 1 discussions between the student and the teacher and an immediate but low level consequence before moving beyond the interaction to something else (e.g., “I gave a warning so that it wouldn’t happen again”.)

Moderate severity disciplinary strategies escalated the conflict between the misbehaving boy, the child who was harmed, and the preservice teacher. For this grouping, the preservice teacher actively punished the child in front of the classroom or scolded the child, making discussion more adversarial. This also involved the use of parental contact. This grouping is marked as the first point where preservice teachers involved others outside of the classroom to help discipline the child. The most severe grouping involved the misbehaving boy missing time in class from short term (trip to office, in school / after school detention) to longer term (in school / out of school suspension, expulsion).

A contingency table analysis (4 severity X 2 race) was conducted to determine whether preservice teachers applied more severe disciplinary strategies to African American boys than European American boys, $\chi^2(1) = 14.716, p < .001$. 
Figure 1. Disciplinary strategies chosen for African American and European American boys within moderate vignettes
A contingency table analysis (4 disciplinary strategies X 2 race) was performed to determine within the moderate vignettes whether preservice teachers applied more severe disciplinary strategies to African American boys than European American boys. Chi square findings were significant, $X^2(1) = 18.12, p = .023$, as shown in Figure 1. Post hoc $t$-tests revealed that there were no significant differences for the Hands Off group $M=1.67, SD = 2.87$, $t(2)=1.000, p = .423$, or high severity group $M=2.00, SD = 1.00, t(2)=3.46, p = .074$, but that there were differences for the low severity, $M=6.00, SD = 6.24, t(2)=1.000, p = .023$, and moderate severity groups $M=2.33, SD = 6.05, t(2)=.607, p = .05$. Lower severity strategies were most often implemented for European American boys compared to African American boys. When moderate
levels of discipline were implemented, African American boys received higher frequencies of this discipline than European American boys.

A contingency table analysis (4 disciplinary strategies X 2 race) was conducted to determine within the mild vignettes whether preservice teachers applied more severe disciplinary strategies to African American boys than European American boys. Chi square findings were significant, $X^2(1) = 12.10, p = .013$, as shown in Figure 2. Post hoc $t$-tests revealed that there were no significant differences for the Hands Off group $M=2.00$, $SD =3.46$, $t(2)=1.000$, $p=.423$, or high severity group $M=0.50$, $SD =1.00$, $t(2)=.100$, $p=.907$ but that there were differences for the low severity, $M=7.00$, $SD =13.24$, $t(2)=2.111$, $p=.0393$, and moderate severity groups $M=5.67$, $SD =9.87$, $t(2)=1.995$, $p=.043$. Consistent with the patterns in Figure 1, lower severity strategies were most often implemented for European American boys compared to African American boys. When moderate levels of discipline were implemented, African American boys received higher frequencies of this discipline than European American boys.

**Qualitative analysis of Preservice teacher responses: Disciplinary Strategies**

Following are examples of the thematic content gained from the preservice teachers’ answers to what they had witnessed in the vignettes, as well as how they would handle the situation in their own classrooms. Additionally, the messages conveyed by each theme from participants were examined to reach a deeper understanding of their meanings and contexts. The selected responses shown for this section demonstrate preservice teachers’ clear examples of certain disciplinary strategies, with many answers explaining the reasoning behind picking these ways to respond to the boys’ interaction. Where noted, some preservice teachers’ answers seemed to be more severe in their responses and these are displayed as well. Due to the richness of the responses by the teachers, I chose those responses which most reflected preservice
teachers’ beliefs about the boys’ and those which I felt demonstrated possible racialized thought processes in addressing the boys’ misbehaviors.

**Moderate Vignettes (Homework & Gameboy)**

Preservice teachers did not heavily endorse the use of the hands off approach for these vignettes regardless of student race. The very low use of a minimizing strategy for either vignette from preservice teachers seemed to indicate that in both, the misbehavior by the boys was enough to warrant some type of response to the action. Of the 15 preservice teachers who used this strategy, only 5 used it in the Homework vignette (African American boy,) but 10 used it in the Gameboy vignette (European American boy); this suggests that within the current sample, preservice teachers tended to respond in some concrete manner to classroom misbehaviors and race of the misbehaving boy (see *Figure 1*). The majority of minimizing answers by preservice teachers for the moderate vignettes reflected uncertainty over what the preservice teacher actually saw in the interaction between the misbehaving boy and the target child, suggesting that even though the vignettes were designed to depict more severe behaviors situation, the preservice teachers may have felt the two boys were playing or teasing one another and thus, discipline of any kind wasn’t warranted. This is especially the case in the Gameboy vignette (European American boy), where the hands off approach reflected preservice teachers’ beliefs that the boys were friends (*as shown in Table 5*).
Table 5

Selected responses of hands off approach utilized in moderate vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3180</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, C</td>
<td><em>I don’t think I would have done anything as there doesn’t appear to be a problem here.</em> (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3216</td>
<td>EA, F, 29, D</td>
<td><em>It would depend on the context of the situation. It appeared as if the student was putting the papers on the ground intentionally, so it looked as if the student wanted the other student to mess them up, therefore, I wouldn’t have done anything.</em> (Homework)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and level of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).

A pattern that I began to see was that as the severity level of a disciplinary strategy increased, more preservice teachers would implement that strategy first for the African American misbehaving boy compared to the European American boys, who typically were given discipline at lower severity levels.

Preservice teachers showed a pattern of choosing the three lowest levels of disciplinary strategies (discussion of the incident, making the misbehaving boy give an apology and giving a verbal warning) for the European American misbehaving boy. Of these strategies, making the European American misbehaving boy give a verbal apology was the most popular choice used. When detailing their reasons why, preservice teachers’ answers were varied. Of the 36 teachers who wanted the European American the misbehaving boy to give a verbal apology, 23 of those teachers also stated that they would make the African American the misbehaving boy give an apology (see Figure 1).
Table 6

Selected Responses by Preservice teachers comparing disciplinary strategies across moderate vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3151</td>
<td>AA, F, 19, A</td>
<td>I would call them both over. I would ask the boy who stepped on the paper why he had done what he had done and how he would have felt if someone did that to him. I would also ask him to apologize. (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I would ask the student to return the other student's item. I would then explain to the first student how he should not bring those types of things to school for that reason: because they can get stolen. I would also say that these things are distracting. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3157</td>
<td>EA, M, 19, A</td>
<td>Ask the boy why he stepped on the other boy's homework. Have him apologize to the boy whose homework he stepped on. Then, instruct him on why vandalizing other people's stuff is wrong. (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I would ask the boy to give the Gameboy back. Ask him why he took it. Then, enforce some kind of instruction as to why stealing is wrong. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6).

Participant ID #3151, a young African American female stated that she would try to get the African American the misbehaving boy to take the target child’s perspective and that an apology would be necessary (as shown in Table 6). She however noted that for the European American misbehaving boy, she would ask that the item be returned while trying to explore further why the item was brought to school in the first place. Participant ID #3157 for example, a young European American male preservice teacher thought the interaction was a chance for instruction, and that an apology would be a good way to begin that teaching moment.

The rest of the preservice teachers who wanted the European American student to give an apology (as shown in Table 7) often chose much harsher forms of discipline for the African American student. Of those 36 preservice teachers, 8 chose in class punishment, 2 chose going to
the office, 2 chose parent contact, 5 chose scolding and verbally reprimanding (see Figure 1). In class punishment and scolding / reprimanding represent two areas of interest for this study, since they represent overall the two most popular disciplinary strategies given to the African American misbehaving boy, regardless of what other types of disciplinary strategies were given to the any of the other boys’ preservice teachers viewed.

Table 7

Selected Responses by Preservice teachers demonstrating moderate levels of disciplinary strategies across moderate vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3108</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, A</td>
<td>In Class Punishment</td>
<td>I would tell that student to apologize to him. Then I would ask why he stepped on his paper, and give a suitable punishment for his actions. (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>I would ask the boy to return the Gameboy to the other student. I would then ask him why he did it, and make him apologize for it. Then I would move on. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3120</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, B</td>
<td>In class punishment</td>
<td>I would punish the child. In the end he would need to apologize. Also, if this was an assignment, I would still accept it because it was not his fault. (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>I would make the second child give back the game and make sure that the first was more careful with his things. The second child would need to apologize and possibly be punished if he was not repentant. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Scold/Reprimand</th>
<th>Apology</th>
<th>In class punishment</th>
<th>Apology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3122</td>
<td>BR, F, 19, B (European American / Asian American)</td>
<td>I would talk to the student whose paper it was to see how they feel about it. If they feel as though it's a joke from a friend, I would take it lightly but still ask the peer not to do that. But if the student is hurt I would sternly speak to the bully. (Homework)</td>
<td>I would probably tell the boy who took the game to return it, away from other students, so as not to draw drama to a situation that may not be more than friendly play. I would be authoritative about this request, but not grave, in case it was a non-issue. (Gameboy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3152</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, B</td>
<td>In class punishment</td>
<td>I would immediately pull the two aside and first try to assist the student who just got bullied to keep them from any further discomfort. Then, I would talk to the other student about how his actions were wrong and then give an appropriate punishment. (Homework)</td>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>I would remind the other boy that it wasn't his toy and to give it back. Then, I would tell the owner to put it away for the rest of the day or I would take it until the end of the day. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3203</td>
<td>BR, F, 22,B</td>
<td>In Class Punishment</td>
<td>If I were the teacher and I saw this happen, I would approach the students. I would ask the bullied student if that was his paper, then ask the bully what he did to it and why. I would tell him that that is inappropriate and give some sort of punishment. (Homework)</td>
<td>Apology</td>
<td>I would ask the boy why he stole the Gameboy and that I saw him do it. I would also ask the owner why he laid the Gameboy down in the first place. I'd make the boy give the Gameboy back to the owner. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, BR=Biracial (European Mixed with Asian), F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).
Of the almost 30 preservice teachers who chose in class punishment as the appropriate response to the African American misbehaving boy, only 9 also said that in class punishment was appropriate for the European American misbehaving boy. Of these preservice teachers, 15 chose the lesser disciplinary strategies of minimizing, discussion, or making an apology for the European American misbehaving boy (see Figure 1).

**Mild Vignettes (Comment & Artwork)**

The pattern of disciplinary strategy endorsed for the mild misbehaviors were focused at the lower end of severity. Most preservice teachers reported the hands off, discussion and apology/restitution disciplinary strategies. The most popular strategy on the lower end of severity endorsed by preservice teachers was the use of a discussion with the misbehaving boy (as shown in Table 8): For the African American vignette, 50 preservice teachers chose this option and for the European American vignette, 54 preservice teachers chose this option. In contrast, 23 preservice teachers chose this option for both of the less Moderate vignettes (see Figure 2). Race of child did not seem to affect disciplinary strategies for these mild kinds of strategies.
Table 8

*Selected responses demonstrating use of discussion strategy for mild vignettes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3104</td>
<td>EA, F, 18, D</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td><em>I would try to focus on the student's reactions. I would ask the student's what they were feeling. I would specifically speak with the student would said it &quot;stunk.&quot;</em> (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td><em>In this situation I would take the artwork out of the trash. I would ask the student who threw it away why he/she did so. I would explain the value of the artwork.</em> (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3131</td>
<td>EA, F, 31, C</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td><em>I would try to engage my students more. I would ask the student who spoke up to speak to me after class. I would ask the student why he felt the way he did, this way I can determine why maybe other students may feel the same way, but are reticent to speak.</em> (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td><em>I would pull the project out of the trash and hand it back to the owner. I would likely pull the student who threw away the project aside and ask him why he did so. I would likely console the owner of the project by giving the work a complement.</em> (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).*

The second most popular strategy endorsed was the hands off / minimizing strategy (African American vignette, 19; European American vignette, 11) Of these, 6 preservice teachers used the hands off strategy throughout both mild vignettes (as shown in Tables 9-10).
Table 9

Selected responses demonstrating use of hands off strategy for mild vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3109</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, B</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Nothing, the student is entitled to his opinion. As long as the situation does not get out of hand it is not a big deal if he didn’t like it. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>I would simply get the artwork out of the trashcan and tell the other student not to be offended it was simply an accident. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3153</td>
<td>EA, F, 19, B,</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>I would probably just laugh it off and tell the boy let me see you do better. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Grab my [sic] project and confront the boy. Ask him why he threw it away. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).
### Table 10

*Selected responses demonstrating use of moderate disciplinary strategies for mild vignettes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3165</td>
<td>EA, F, 19, B</td>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>I would punish the boy in an appropriate way. Begin by talking with him and having him do the usual punishment (pull a ticket, etc.). If his behavior continues to be worse, take away recess, progressively send him to the principal's office. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3176</td>
<td>EA, F, 22, C</td>
<td>Scold/Reprimand</td>
<td>If I were the teacher, I would have explained why the students' presentation was exemplary so that students would know exactly what I was looking for. I would also reprimand the child for speaking out against the other's presentation. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apology / Restitution</td>
<td>I would address the boy who threw away the project. I would ask him to retrieve it from the trash and apologize to the other boy. If he does not respond well, penalize him in an appropriate way. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apology / Restitution</td>
<td>I would commend the first student for cleaning up his/her station. I would ask the other student why he threw away the poster. I would then tell the student to take the poster out of the trash and give it back to its owner. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).*
While scolding / reprimanding represented a moderate level of disciplinary strategies, preservice teachers used this tactic 18 times for the African American child compared to 1 time for the European American child. Preservice teachers very rarely endorsed any strategies more severe than this strategy for either misbehaving boy, but of the most severe, this represented the highest number given to the African American child. The reasons and statements for this were unique. None of the preservice teachers who would scold / reprimand stated that they would do the same for the European American the child with the vast majority of these instead choosing to use discussion as a strategy for the Artwork vignette (as shown in Table 11).
Table 11

Selected responses demonstrating use of moderate disciplinary strategies for mild vignettes 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3127</td>
<td>EA, F, 20, B</td>
<td>Scold / Reprimand</td>
<td>In this situation, I would reprimand the student who was discouraging his classmates. Mention once again that the student who just presented did a good job. I would also ask the student causing the disruption to present next. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3159</td>
<td>AA, F, 19, B</td>
<td>Scold / Reprimand</td>
<td>I would ask the student who made the comment what he was referring to. If it was the other student’s presentation, I would tell him to keep his negative comments to himself. I would also reassure the other student and let him know he still did a good job. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>I would remove the poster from the trash and give it back to the student. If the student who was cleaning had a motive for throwing another student’s work in the trash, I would discuss his actions with him and tell him why he was wrong. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion
To prevent this, I would have students put their work elsewhere before cleaning up or make each student responsible for their own station. The boy didn’t throw it away on purpose. I’d get it out of the trash and ask the students to be careful. (Artwork)

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).
One preservice teacher (Participant ID #3194) chose parent contact for the African American misbehaving boy. However, this participant also chose detention for the European American the misbehaving boy. Overall this preservice teacher’s disciplinary style tended to be the most severe; when looking at her answers for the moderate vignettes, for the African American and European American boys, she chose sending the boy to the office and parental contact respectively (*as shown in Table 12*).
Table 12

Comparison of Participant ID# 3194 severe responses across vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3194</td>
<td>EA, F, 21, 2</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>I would make the boy who smeared the paper apologize for what he did. I would also go to tell the principle because this is a form of bullying. I would also go to tell the student’s teacher who had the paper so he/she would know what happened. (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Contact</td>
<td>I would ask the boy to return the stolen item. I would also make a phone call to both students’ parents to explain what had happened. I think communication is important in these types of situations. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Contact</td>
<td>First I would make the boy apologize. Next I would make him find something nice in every student’s presentation. I would also call his parents and tell them the situation. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Detention</td>
<td>I would first ask the child what was going on because he seemed a little distracted [sic]. I would ask him to recover the work and make him apologize [sic]. I would give him lunch detention for his actions. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AA = African American, EA = European American, F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).

African American preservice teachers represented a small sample of participants in the study.

See Table 13 for a summary of the most used disciplinary strategies for this subset of teachers.
Table 13

*Sample responses from African American preservice teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years in the Classroom</th>
<th>Strategy: Homework</th>
<th>Strategy: Gameboy</th>
<th>Strategy: Presentation</th>
<th>Strategy: Artwork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3117</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>* Parent Contact</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3133</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3151</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Apology / Restitution</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3159</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>In Class Punishment</td>
<td>Apology / Restitution</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3206</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Scold / Reprimand</td>
<td>Apology / Restitution</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: F = Female, M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings). * = answer left blank*

Participant ID #3133 represents one of the only African American male preservice teachers in the study. His responses (as shown in Table 14) reflected lower severity discipline use compared to other preservice teachers.
Table 14

Comparison of Participant ID #3133 responses across vignettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Number</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3133</td>
<td>AA, M, 20, C</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Ask the second child why they stepped on the paper and laughed about it. Second, comfort the student who just lost their work. And while talking to both, try to find what is the connection between the two. Was this random or is this a common occurrence (Homework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Ask why the game was taken away from the other student. Then take the game away so neither has it. After class, pull the two aside to talk about what happened. Then give the game back to the rightful owner after the conflict is resolved. (Gameboy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hands Off</td>
<td>I would wait to see how the situation plays out to see if the comment had any negative impact on the other student. Without knowledge of previous conversation, the comment is vague on its own. The reaction to the comment will determine what to do next. (Presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Stop the one with trash and first get the artwork out of the trash. Return that and ask the other student did they realize they threw away someone else's art. Based upon the explanation, either give a warning to be more careful or talk out the problem. (Artwork)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:  M = Male, followed by age of the participant and number of years of classroom experience (see Appendix B, question 6 for listings).
DISCUSSION

Given the importance of preservice teachers’ beliefs about students, and the impact these beliefs have on students’ trajectories in the classroom, I assessed teachers’ attributions in situations that involve elementary or middle school boys who are potentially misbehaving, and how they use their interpretations of events to determine what disciplinary strategies are appropriate within that context. As schools become more diverse and inclusive, it is important to understand if preservice teachers have ideas about students and their misbehaviors that are based in longstanding ideas about race. I assessed preservice teachers’ responses to what they saw happen in four video vignettes. I sought to understand the extent to which preservice teachers made attributions about locus of control and if they did make attributions, if they were internal or external in origin. I also sought to determine if preservice teachers made racialized decisions in how to punish students for their misbehaviors, seeking to determine if African American boys would receive more severe disciplinary strategies than European American boys would. Comparisons were made across two vignettes of a mild nature and across two vignettes that were more moderate in severity level.

Several analyses in the study revealed differences in the ways in which preservice teachers thought about discipline, and in relation to race. Comparatively speaking, the milder disciplinary strategies or no use of disciplinary strategies at all were the more frequent strategies for European American boys. Within the moderate vignettes, low severity strategies were more commonly used with the European American student, while high severity strategies were more commonly used with the African American student. The exception to this rule was with parent contact, which is a high severity strategy but was used more frequently with the European American student, perhaps based on assumptions about family involvement in African American
and European American families. It could be that participants believed that European American parents were more involved than African American parents in their children’s lives and would want to know about what happened. Additionally, preservice teachers may have thought parental contact alone would not be enough for African American students.

While schools have become more diverse, preservice teachers as a whole are tasked with several duties throughout the school day. They must teach all the students in their class regardless of race of student, and they must maintain control and leadership of the classroom throughout the school year. When misbehaviors arise, preservice teachers must deal with those interruptions as quickly as possible in order to return to teaching and maximizing learning for other students. Unconscious ideas about race may be activated quickly when ascertaining a situation and trying to understand the best course of action in dealing with it. Now more than ever, preservice teachers can benefit from some type of training focused on the changing cultural makeup of the classroom (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002; Booker, Merriweather, & Campbell-Whatley, 2016). The fact that severity level in this study mattered but reactions to it differed by race suggests that many preservice teachers at this point in their training may still harbor ideas about races and cultures. This presents a unique conundrum for the preservice teacher who must focus on their class and constantly self-monitor for feelings of prejudicial treatment towards their students. Through their academic careers, preservice teachers must continually strive to learn more about cultural differences, and their own place since they may find themselves as a European American teacher in a class with a majority African American makeup (Bottani, Bradshaw & Mendelson, 2016; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Lindsay & Hart, 2017). Additionally, training programs for preservice teachers must continue to emphasize the importance on understanding diversity so that teachers and students may have the best classroom
experiences and understand each other in light of cultural differences. Educational outcomes improve for African American children when these students remain in the classroom instead of being suspended or expelled (Howard, 2014; Wright & Ford, 2016).

When preservice teacher programs focus on changing disciplinary strategies to keep the focus on learning and classroom engagement instead of removal from the classroom, preservice teachers gain understanding in maintaining the educational environment for learning, as opposed to discipline. Preservice teacher programs should focus on culturally relevant pedagogy, and allowing preservice teachers to understand their own racial identities and how these identities interact with students in the classroom (Matias, 2013; Boutte, 2015; Miller, 2015). Self-awareness of race is necessary or preservice teachers may miss the opportunity to catch or acknowledge how race plays a role in some decisions at all levels of education (Matias, 2013). Additionally, preservice teacher programs should focus specific courses on African American students’ in the classroom and the unique needs or experiences they may have that separates them from other students (Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015). This is especially useful given the prevalence of stereotypes present in media about the lifestyles of African Americans. Such courses can help to offer a more factual, empirically based view into the histories and present day experiences of African American students. Finally, preservice teacher programs must encourage preservice teachers to engage in more classroom facilitation with students. Specifically, programs need to allow preservice teachers to effectively engage more with African American students and allow them a space to voice their concerns, ideas, fears and experiences in the classroom (Howard, 2014). By allowing African American students to have this space, preservice teachers may gain insight into perceived disciplinary issues in the classroom from the African American student perspective and this creates dialogue about discipline, instead of the
preservice teacher learning to unilaterally and impulsively assign it. This recommendation for preservice teacher programs allows African American students to have agency; it assumes that they already know what they need from a school, from a classroom and a teacher and allows the preservice teacher to have time with the student to discuss these needs (Howard, 2014).

If preservice teachers misunderstand African American students’ emotional displays then African American children’s behaviors may be viewed as more aggressive, dangerous, provoking (Kunjufu, 1985; Hargraves, 2000; Neal et al., 2003; Oliver, 2003; Rome, 2004; Welch, 2007; Thomas & Coard, 2009; Rowley et al., 2014) and these racialized views of their behavior tend to follow them throughout school aged years and into adulthood. Training programs for preservice teachers must be sure that a part of the curriculum includes normalizing perceived misbehaviors by African American children and also taking into consideration cultural differences that could be misperceived. This would also help to reduce labeling of minority children’s actions as “good” or “bad”. Racialized views of students affect the preservice teacher, the student and the classroom as a whole.

Additionally, racialized views of a student can follow them throughout their academic careers, and preservice teachers may experience a confirmation bias on who African American students are as a whole, as they find more “evidence” that they feel supports their views. Preservice teacher programs have the opportunity to address racialized bias directly within the purview of their instruction. Anti-bias curricula have existed in teacher programs for some time (Lin, Lake & Rice, 2008). In order for anti-bias curricula to be successful, the “oppressed” must have the freedom to reject images and symbols they see daily reminding them of their oppression (Freire, 2002). While it is necessary for education programs to train teachers to look into what systems may promote bias or hold minority students back, of equal importance for programs are
they allow preservice teachers to take an in depth look at their own cultures, and cultural history and make connections to how that history has shaped the current beliefs that they hold today (Goulet, 1998). These programs must not be unrealistically idealized though, at preservice teachers have noted programs to the full implementation of these programs (Van Hook, 2002). Additionally, implementing a curriculum based on anti racialized bias is difficult due to fears, uncertainty and discomfort with changing established rules or figuring out what rules should actually be changed (Van Hook, 2002). Strategies to help productively and permanently alter education programs, and the messages that preservice teachers come away with about culture have included varying steps such as 1) inviting parents of minority children into teacher education programs, 2) home visits to actually see the children that are being taught in their home life context, 3) self reflection on culture, race identity and exposure to minority children actually means to the preservice teacher, 4) role playing and trying to better understand what it means to actually live life as a minority child, 5) service learning; which may mean helping children directly or helping in the community to see how the child and child in the context of peers, family and the neighborhood functions. Advocacy for minority childrens’ rights as well as research into this area can also assist preservice teachers learning how to navigate these learning and understanding these racialized experiences of children (Lin et al, 2008).

**African American Preservice Teachers.** Of note in this study as well are the unique beliefs that African American preservice teachers held. Previous research has suggested that African American students benefit academically from having African American teachers (Bone & Slate, 2011; Easton-Brooks, 2014). African American teachers are often led to believe that they must make it their goal to ensure the success of African American students (Foster, 1997; Milner &
Howard, 2004) however educators’ responsibilities are to ensure the success of every student in their classroom, regardless of race. In this study, African American preservice teachers mostly chose to implement the moderate severity levels of discipline for the misbehaviors (as shown in Table 12). This could be due to this pressure to ensure the success of African American students. In either case, it is hard to separate identity from the role of educator for these participants. For example, Participant ID #3133, an African American male preservice teacher, focused his addressing of the misbehaviors to discussion and hands off approach (as shown in Table 14). As Participant ID #3133 represents one of the only occurrences in the study of an African American preservice teacher interacting with an African American boy, his choice to either discuss the matter (Moderate vignette) or take a hands off approach (Mild vignette) was interesting on its own but especially in contrast to Participant ID #3194. Other African American preservice teachers in the study chose to utilize moderate levels of disciplinary strategies such as apology, in class punishment, scold/reprimand (as shown in Table 13) in regards to the African American boy in the homework vignette and chose hands off or discussion based strategies in the presentation vignette. African American preservice teachers’ decisions to use these strategies helped to address the misbehavior, though no preservice teacher stated overt cultural reasons why they felt that these strategies would be best for use with the African American misbehaving boy.

African American preservice teachers who operate at a predominantly white institution (PWI) often times feel the need to affirm their cultural heritage while conforming to the norms of educational institutions, which historically have been unfavorable environments for African Americans to learn in (Liston & Zeichner, 1990). However, within this study, African American preservice teachers did not indicate that their cultural background played any role whatsoever in
their perceived interactions with the African American students. Instead, these specific teachers sought by and large to quickly reestablish control of the situation though discussion but to also retain distance from the situation where they felt appropriate.

This study also presents evidence that racialized views are culturally framed and that preservice teachers may not be aware of these views. If preservice teachers are made aware that these biases exist and that they are under constant exposure to them, the hope is that this could educate the teacher and reduce poor academic outcomes for minority students. Inadvertent racist beliefs can be altered if teaching programs address these beliefs. Future studies must address how preservice teachers’ interpretations of mild events change if the antagonist is female, and how changes in education programs about diversity may alter racialized beliefs.

Limitations

This study, though innovative in its approach to understanding how preservice teachers understand what they have seen and how they respond to it, experienced several limitations which will inform future variations of this project. A primary limitation for the study was the construction of the videos themselves. While they depicted four behaviors that are somewhat mild in intent and severity of harm, any attempt to replicate this study should have videos that show the European American and African American boys performing the same actions, not just different ones. This would help to further select race as the part of the video that is important, not just the mild action. By doing this, perhaps even more differences or similarities between how participants viewed the boys would be noted. Obtaining videotapes of the exact same behaviors, with actors who are exactly the same size, follow exactly the same script with the same intonations of words, and are of the same length and intensity would be a challenge, although
useful. As a between-subjects design, this would, of course, require doubling the number of participants as well. The results of this study were analyzed through the use of contingency tables, but there was a violation of the assumption of independence for the chi squares gathered. The same participants produced more than one observation for each of the vignettes that they viewed. For this perhaps another test of the data such as Cochran’s Q or McNemar’s Q test could have better represented these data (Cochran, 1950; Yarnold, 2015).

These results are based on a study of preservice teachers at one university in the South. While this allowed me to begin cursory work in this area, any future study should include preservice teachers across several universities and ideally several geographic areas in the United States. A larger study would presumably allow for greater generalizability across campuses and classrooms as well as a more in depth analytic approach. Another limitation is that I should have asked even more in depth questions about respondents’ experiences in their current training program and their own personal exposure to different cultures and cultural beliefs. While I do have basic demographic information about the participants, a useful tool may have been asking them about their own experiences in school. Such questions would have focused on their classroom or school make up, if they themselves received severe disciplinary strategies in school and to what extent, and also what their experiences or exposure to racism has been in their lives or during their program of study. This may have helped to add even greater clarity and understanding to the decisions that they made and how they responded to the mild vignettes. Additional questions about the perceived role of participants’ own cultural background in their decision making process of how to respond to the misbehaviors would have provided further context with which to place their answers. As mentioned above, it is unclear to what extent preservice teacher believe their own cultural bias or background impacted how they viewed the
vignettes; this information is uniquely important especially in understanding how African American preservice teachers responded to African American boys, given the lack of research in this area in both the psychological and educational literatures. As a corollary to this limitation, another restriction for this study, is that when participants answered questions about what they say, and what they would do, the computer program forced them to have at least three sentences before they were allowed to move to the next screen. Most preservice teachers, \(N=95\) kept their answers only to the three required sentences which meant that the coding team had to extract as much information as possible from only such a limited amount of words. The tendency and risk for such a small amount of dialogue on the part of the participant is that coders may “over code” or find themselves reaching for information that simply isn’t there or is imagined to be there despite the paucity of words printed by the actual participants.

A final limitation is that the “comment during the presentation” vignette seemed to register different to the participants throughout the study. From the outset, this vignette was qualitatively different in that participants were forced to hear the actual dialogue of what was happening. Also, the “verbally aggressive” nature of the vignette came across more as “playful banter” or “light teasing” to the participants. So while I looked to see how the race of the misbehaving boy may have affected how participants responded, I may have attributed what participants said to the race of the boy instead of to preservice teachers viewing two friends having simple conversation in the classroom. Because this vignette presented so differently from the rest, further study needs to be undertaken to understand how verbal aggression may be viewed by preservice teachers and if other vignettes where the aggressor is an African American male would yield similar results.
As discussed in the introduction of this study, African American girls have experienced many of the same disparities in classroom discipline as African American boys have. This study however only had participants look at participants who viewed African American and European American misbehaving boys in the vignettes. A first future study would have to replicate the current study looking at only girls, then a follow up study should look at both boys and girls who are European American and African American. I would additionally be interested in the use of biracial students in the vignettes (mixed with both African American and European American parentage) in order to see how preservice teachers view those students in light of their mixed ancestry and the misbehaviors depicted on the screen. African American girls’ experiences in the classroom have only recently begun to be studied and a future study within this domain may help to illuminate what messages preservice teachers are gaining about African American girls in their educational programs.

Future studies might include Asian and Hispanic boys in order to widen the scope of the understanding of the findings. Asian Americans have traditionally been labeled as a “model minority” which in and of itself can cause poor outcomes long term (Atkin, Yoo, Jager, & Yeh, 2018). It would be unique to understand how racialized views of Asian students contributes to them being perceived as more favorable and under which vignettes they would receive the harsher penalties. There is little research on Hispanic students and a future study would be able to lay the foundation for studying this growing ethnic group.

Another direction for study in a future iteration of this research would be to ask further probing questions to participants about each vignette. Specifically, the Artwork vignette seems to have elicited a large number of responses indicating that the misbehavior was accidental in nature, yet in context the entire class had worked on individual art projects and the antagonist
trashed the work regardless (assuming he too had most likely worked on an art piece himself off panel). While the participants made more excuses for the antagonist in this vignette as compared to the other boys, future research should strive to understand if participants would make just as many excuses for the misbehavior if the antagonist were African American, Asian or Hispanic as it is unclear if the antagonist in this vignette was excused solely due to race or if some other interaction may have caused this to appear to be less harmful than the other vignettes. Should also mention the limitation of having only 1 AA male teacher. Future studies would also increase the threshold of sentences written from participants to advance to the next screen from three sentences to six, with the expectation that doubling the sentence count would allow for greater explication on the part of the participants for what they viewed and greater detail on what they would do about it.

Conclusion

Teachers’ views and beliefs about students matter as they can impact the trajectory that students have throughout school and beyond. Teachers’ beliefs can determine how much time is missed from school, as well as how children perceive themselves in educational settings. This study begins the discussion on how preservice teachers may be arriving into their programs of study with certain beliefs, and that part of the responsibility of the training programs that they are is to alert the teacher of these beliefs so they may become aware of any differential treatment they could possibly be giving children based on race. It is important for these discussions to be ongoing throughout the training program for the teacher’s own growth, as well as the protection of minority students whose dynamic behavior may be mistaken for misbehavior.


APPENDICES
Appendix A

Visual Depictions of Video Vignettes

“Ruined Homework” – In this moderate vignette, the African American boy steps on the homework of the European American boy, leaving behind a muddy footprint on their way to class to turn in the assignment.

“Gameboy taken” – In this moderate vignette, a European American boy takes a Gameboy that another boy has laid on a window sill.
“Presentation Comment” – in this ambiguous vignette, the African American boy makes a statement that the other child’s presentation stunk.

“Trashed artwork” – while a child puts away the markers they used to create artwork, a European American boy comes along and throws the artwork in the garbage can.
Appendix B

Participant Demographics Sheet

Instructions: Please answer the following few questions about yourself.

1. Which of the following best describes your racial background? Please Circle:
   African American     Asian American     Latino/Hispanic     European American     Native American     Middle Eastern     Indian (or from the Indian subcontinent)     Pacific Islander     Other/Multiracial __________

2. What is your age in years?

3. What is your gender? Female     Male

4. What is your current college classification? Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

5. What is your major?

6. Which is the closest description of the formal experience you have had in the classroom serving children?
   (a) no formal experience in the classroom
   (b) one week in the classroom
   (c) one month in the classroom
   (d) one semester in the classroom
   (e) one year in the classroom
   (f) more than one year in a classroom

7. What grades will you be licensed to teach? Please Circle: Early Childhood
   Elementary     Middle Grades
   Secondary     Other

8. What subject do you plan to teach? _______________

9. Have you taken an Implicit Association Task in EDU 304 or at another time? yes     no
   If YES, please type in which one or ones you responded to. _______________________

Thank you!
Appendix C

I. Brief Introduction

Welcome to coding! We appreciate and thank you for taking the time to add substantively to research. Today you are tasked with reading a series of statements that reflect views of preservice teachers (PST). Please read the manual carefully, being sure to note areas of confusion that you may have before you start the actual study.

This manual is key to ensure that your coding choices and responses are accurate, justified and reliable. As such, please spend a few minutes before each coding session to reread the manual to be sure you understand what you are tasked with and how important it is. This time to read is included in the total time it should take you to finish this activity. We value your time in doing this task and as such, need to maximize your ability to do it correctly with minimal mistakes and frustrations as a result of the study.

**Remember: Before you start each coding session, spend a few minutes reviewing and reflecting on this manual. This is important and required!**

Attributions: Locus of Control.

People often view others as being responsible for their own actions and the negative outcomes or consequences resulting from those actions (Weiner, 1995). In fact, there are three kinds of attributions about others’ actions, and today we are interested in the first kind of attribution preservice teachers (PSTs) make about children’s ambiguous actions called, “Locus of Control”.

**Locus of Control** – This attribution centers on what type of factors are responsible for an action taking place: either internal factors or external factors. Internal factors are those factors that are internal to the person or responses based on the person’s traits. External factors are those factors that happen due to events outside of the person or due to environmental issues beyond the person’s control. The following are examples of this attribution.

a. Taking a test at school.
   i. Internal: Carmen passes a test at school: did she pass because she studied very hard, and is very smart? Conversely, if Carmen fails an exam at school is it due to her not studying and that she is not as capable as the other students?
   ii. External: Carmen passes a test at school; did she pass because the teacher wasn’t grading carefully or gave the wrong test or accidentally highlighted the answers on the test? If Carmen fails, did Carmen fail because a substitute graded the paper, or someone distracted Carmen?

b. Employment
   i. Internal: Jennie gets a promotion at work. Did she get the promotion because of how hard and diligent a worker she is?
   ii. External: Jennie gets a promotion at work because the person in the position turned in their resignation.

Attribution theory as a theoretical framework can be tested with a coding scheme which measures teachers’ attributions.
Vignettes.
In this study, preservice teachers viewed four peer interactions in school settings that could be interpreted as insensitive or accidental teasing but could also be interpreted as having more hostile intent. Really, how the vignette comes across is left up to the preservice teacher, and is in fact what we are primarily interested in understanding. We want to know how the teacher interpreted what she or he viewed on the screen, and that is your central role in this study; to help us make that determination.

Here are brief descriptions of the four vignettes that preservice teachers viewed. Do not worry that you did not see these vignettes yourself; all you need for this study is to know what the vignettes actually were.

In these vignettes: a boy (often times referred to as “antagonist” in this manual) performs one of these actions directed towards another boy (often times referred to as “victim” in this manual):

1) As students are walking into a school, a boy bends over to tie his shoes. As he does so, he lays his homework on the ground beside him. Suddenly, another boy comes up from behind him and steps on the homework that is on the ground with muddy shoes. As he does so, he looks at the boy then laughs and turns and walks away.

2) A boy takes another student’s handheld gaming device, in this case a Gameboy during a break between class activities. He smiles as he walks away.

3) A boy makes a negative comment to another student after his presentation is finished, and as the boy passes his seat on the way to sit down. The antagonist boy (the one listening to the presentation) says to him, “you were right… that stunk”.

4) A boy disposes of another student’s artwork during clean up time by sliding it into the garbage as he is clearing off all the desks.

Please note also that the preservice teachers were asked to write their responses to the following question for each of these vignettes:

1) Please write down as much as possible about what you just saw.

II. WHAT IS CODING?

Coding is an analytical process that categorizes qualitative data (e.g., responses to questions on student behavior) so that they can be quantified for statistical evaluation. In the current study, trained coders (in this case, you!) will collect specific information and code some of that information based on existing understanding of the material. While much emphasis in research is placed on quantitative understandings of data, qualitative data is also useful as it gives a useful narrative behind why participants are answering the ways that they do. This information can then supplement quantitative results for a more complete and holistic understanding of the material. In other words, the unique information that you gather from these data helps us to have a clear
understanding of what preservice teachers are telling us and how they go about interpreting what they see in the classroom.

**III. SPECIFIC CODING STEPS**

You will need to do some prep work before beginning to code in order to adequately prepare for this coding activity. You will need to find a private space, one where you can be unbothered for some length of time. It is necessary that you take a break from social media, phone notifications, email, and any distractions etc. Due to the level of processing that this takes, you will need to be in a place that allows you to focus and have sustained attention. Think about your environment and where you focus best at. Think about what needs to happen to help you maintain focus and attention for the duration of your coding. If you need sunlight, food, etc, take a break, attend to that need then return to the coding process after you’ve reread this coding manual.

One of the most important steps with this work is achieving reliability between coders. We need to make sure that the responses you give are reliable across people, and reliable across vignettes. In other words, given the rules that we have on coding, we need to make sure everyone is coding the same way, and that they are coding the same way for every preservice teacher response and for every vignette. Achieving agreement between two coders is not always such an easy process, and here is how we work toward that goal.

**Coding Steps**

After you have read this entire coding manual, you will then be ready to begin working together with Calvin on practicing. Since we are not meeting face to face, it will be important that we email consistently to ensure a smooth process.

An anonymous email will be set up to assist you in communication with Calvin and allow you to maintain your anonymity. The email you will use is codingstudy2018@gmail.com. The password for this account is SimsPhd2018. You will be identified as either “Coder 1”, “Coder 2”, “Coder 3”, “Coder 4” and so on. You will already have a folder set up on the Google Drive of this account and you will insert your coding forms into this folder as you finish each section. When you email or need to communicate, you can then in the subject line list your coding number and the subject matter (e.g. “Coder 3: 20 Additional Codes completed”). If you email this account, please also CC Calvin’s regular email address at cmsgims@ncsu.edu to be sure that I get the message.

You will code 10 responses from each of the 4 vignettes (for 40 responses total). You will then email these responses to the anonymous email set up for you. Calvin will look over your responses then send notes back to you with recommendations for more accurate coding and to assess how the process is for you. Afterwards, you will code 20 more responses from each of the 4 vignettes (for 80 more responses, 120 responses total). You will send these back and Calvin will repeat the process as before. Afterwards when Calvin responds, you will complete the rest of
the coding responses. This process should result in a high level of reliability throughout all samples.

There are a total of 122 participants who each responded to all 4 vignettes in this study.

Problems to understand and to avoid
There are a few problems which can plague the success of coding data. A main problem that we find in this coding is the problem of “overcoding”, in other words looking for or extracting information from the narratives that is not there. Often times our brains want to fill in details that aren’t given to us in a narrative. It is just fine for you to say that no attributions have been made (see below for more information). A second problem we find is inattentive coding. The longer you’ve been staring at a data set trying to make sense of the responses, especially with a data set this large, then the greater the opportunity that you begin coding in an inattentive manner. Finally, the last problem that many coders must deal with is that of “observer drift”. Over time, the tendency can be to drift away from the established rules of coding, so your answers become less reliable over time, as the rules you applied for the first few participants look different, sometimes in nuanced ways to the rules you’ve established to the last few participants. Being mindful, attentive, asking questions and being sure to take plenty of time to think about your responses can minimize these problems for you.

IV. CODING RULES & DIRECTIONS
Types of Codes
When you read each participant response, you will have several codes to choose from in your assessment of each answer. Remember, the central question you are trying to answer is “Did the Preservice teacher make an attribution? If so, what type of attribution was it?” You will chose from the following types of attributions:

1) Internal – the response indicates that the preservice teacher attributes the action of the Target Child to internal causes.
2) External – the response indicates that the preservice teacher attributes the action of the Target Child to external causes.
3) No Attribution Made (NA) – the preservice teacher made no attribution at all in the response. Sometimes the PST will simply recount verbatim what they saw on the video. In this case, no attribution was made.
4) No Attribution + VB - Responses that reflect it is the victim’s own fault that the incident happened
5) No Attribution + Context – Responses that place special emphasis on the environment in which the activity took place. While no attribution to either victim or antagonist is stated, the response focuses on how the environment may have led to the situation happening.
6) Non Codable – these are usually very off topic, or nonsensical responses the preservice teacher gave. (e.g. “aliens made him do it”, “I don’t know what’s going on”, “participant draws a picture where an answer should be”, etc.
The following details should help you as you code responses Here are the details.

To Determine if an attribution took place, or if the Preservice teacher reports only what was viewed.

a. Example of No Attribution Made:
   i. As one boy was walking, another boy stepped on his homework!
   ii. In the video a student was playing an electronic game. When it was time for class, the student set the game aside and went to grab his materials. When he returned for the game another student took it and smiled.
   iii. After he played the game, the other boy took it away.
   iv. Students were presenting a project. After one student finished, his teacher congratulated him and told the class “that’s what all the projects should look like”. When he returned to his seat a second student told him it stunk.
   v. It looks like to me one boy was cleaning up the room and threw away the artwork of another student when he went to put his markers away.

b. Example of Internal Attribution:
   i. He stepped on the paper because he hated the boy and he is a bully.
   ii. He’s clearly a thief and that’s why he took the other boy’s Gameboy!
   iii. He’s a mean boy and so rude! That’s why he thinks the assignment sucks.
   iv. He doesn’t care about the class at all and that is why he threw the paper in the garbage.

c. Example of External Attribution:
   i. It was raining outside and he slipped, so that’s why he stepped on the homework
   ii. The teacher made him take the video game, he didn’t want to.
   iii. Probably before class someone bullied him into making that awful comment at the other student.
   iv. The paper was placed with all the other trash, how is he supposed to know the difference?
   v. The classroom was really chaotic so anything could have been taken as trash.

Additional guidelines that follow from above
Think about mocking / teasing behavior mentioned in the vignette. Pay attention to the level of mocking mentioned by the preservice teacher. Also pay attention to laughing in the vignette. Laughing or smiling is a behavior that the preservice teacher saw, but it doesn’t tell us why the antagonist did this.

d. Example of Internal Attribution
   i. After he stepped on the homework, he taunted the victim by calling him a name and pointing.
   ii. He was bullying the boy who was presenting
iii. Any response indicating mocking / teasing should be considered internal attribution

iv.

e. Example of No Attribution Made:
i. The boy went into the other’s backpack to take the game. As he did, he was smiling. (This just tells us what happened, but it doesn’t tell us how smiling demonstrates the motivation behind it)

2. If preservice teachers describe theft of property pay special attention. Theft in and of itself is an attribution, so determine if internal or external.
   a. Example of Internal Attribution – He stole the video game player back as he is a thief.
   b. Example of External Attribution – He stole the video game as it was the only way to get it back from his friend who kept it too long.

3. Understand the use of Labeling. Saying the child did a rude action is different from saying the child is rude. Pay special attention to the nuance of language here.
   a. “The child made a rude statement while the other child was presenting.” This might be an example of No Attribution Made. The preservice teacher here is simply retelling what he or she saw.
   b. “The child is rude and that’s why he interrupted the other child.” This would be a more internal statement.

4. Victim Blaming – By its very definition, victim blaming can’t be an internal attribution. (It’s blaming the victim for the outcome, not the antagonist who is the one whose actions we are evaluating the preservice teachers’ responses to).
   a. Example of External Attribution – “Well the boy placed the paper on the ground and it was a huge temptation to the other boy to step on it.” “He shouldn’t have brought the video game player to school in the first place, of course it was going to be hard to resist stealing giving how expensive it is. What was he thinking?!”
   b. Example of No Attribution (VB) – “Well this kid had the smart idea to bend over in everyone’s way as they were walking and when he did so, the other boy smudged his muddy shoe all over his homework. Way to go putting your homework on the ground, buddy.” “Well he left his artwork right in the same piles as the trash so what did he expect to happen? I don’t understand why he just didn’t take the art with him when he left or tell the boy not to trash it.

5. Accidents vs Carelessness
   a. Accidents: “The work was with the other papers so he didn’t know it wasn’t trash”, “the room was messy, and he couldn’t tell what to trash and what not to”, “I don’t think he meant any harm by it”, “I think this is an accident”. These are all examples of External Attributions.
   b. Carelessness: “He wasn’t paying attention.” “He’s lazy”, “He’s lackadaisical and has no real motivation of even being there.” These would all be Internal attribution.
6. Medical statements
   a. “This student has ADHD”, “The student is learning disabled”. These represent internal attributions.

7. Any statements that Preservice teachers give stating that the antagonist planned the action before hand is an internal attribution. “They discussed it before class.” “They planned for this to happen”.

8. Statements reflecting intentionality reflect internal as well. “He did it on purpose”, “He did it intentionally”.

9. Reminder: When the PST will simply recounts what they saw on the video, without an internal or external attribution you have the No Attribution code. If nothing is stated about why the student did the action, this is the code of choice!

Additional Notes: Please include any thoughts, concerns, brainstorm, ideas, curiosities that you have as you go through these codes so that we may better understand the process from your standpoint.

   As you have no doubt determined by this point, this process can take a while! It is important that you remain consistent with your work but that you give yourself time to rest adequately between coding sessions.

Email me, Calvin Sims, at any time at both the coding email (codingstudy2018@gmail.com) and (cmsims@ncsu.edu) when you have questions, or concerns or frustrations or ideas on this process. I am here to assist you as you assist us in learning more about these data.