

INFLUENCE OF RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS ON  
PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Courtney Crutchfield entitled "Influence of Racial Characteristics on Perceptions of Behavior." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters Degree, with a major in Clinical Psychology.



Dr. Rhonda Bryant, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and  
recommend its acceptance: .



Acceptance for the Council:



Dean of Graduate Studies

INFLUENCE OF RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS ON  
PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR

A Thesis Presented for the Master of Arts Degree

Austin Peay State University

Courtney Crutchfield

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## Abstract

One purpose of the present study was to determine if an individual would receive Clinically Significant ratings on the *Behavior Assessment System for Children - Teacher Rating Form (BASC-TRS)* based on a description of external behaviors. This study also hypothesized individuals would be rated more severe when a race characteristic was provided. The researcher collected data from four psychology classes at a local university. Seventy-two (36 in the race characteristic group and 36 in the non-race characteristic group) male and female pre-service educational student volunteers were recruited for participation in the research project. Participants received an informed consent, a demographic form, either a non-race descriptive paragraph or a race descriptive paragraph, and a *BASC-TRS*. A one-sample t-test was calculated to determine if a Clinically Significant behavior rating score was received for the within group sample, and a paired t-test was calculated to determine if a significant difference existed between the behavior ratings of persons reading a non-race specific and a race specific descriptive. The results of this research project show that regardless of race, an individual would receive similar behavior ratings and behavior ratings consistent in severity across groups.

## Influence of Racial Characteristics on Perceptions of Behavior

The most frequent reason teachers refer students for psychoeducational assessment is often due to a display of inappropriate behavior in the classroom. Factors in the literature have been found to be related to such referrals include race, gender, height, and weight. To facilitate the understanding of terms used in this study, the terms include the following: Race or ethnicity refers to “a common sense of bonding among members of a group that contributes to a sense of belonging” (Sue & Sue, 1999, p. 107). Race also refers to a division of the human population distinguished by physical characteristics transmitted by genes. Internalizing factors comprise “problems within the self,” for example when a child does not speak in class or does not participate in class activities (Khampaus & Frick, 2002, p.13). Externalizing factors are defined as “conflict with the environment” (Khampaus & Frick, 2002, p.13). An example of externalizing factors include speaking out of turn, not remaining seated, and being intentionally disruptive. Psychoeducational assessment involves formal and informal tests, observations, and interviews to distinguish whether a child should be admitted to advanced or remedial education classes (Sattler, 2001). Finally, Special Education refers to remedial classes designed to work at a slower pace to provide students with the one on one interaction needed to complete class objectives.

Teachers often considered academic-related problems as the primary reason for a referral, although, as stated above, misbehavior seems to be the most influential factor in actual referrals. In a study by Hutton (1985), misbehavior as a result of poor peer relationships comprised the number one referral reason across gender. It appears that teachers are more likely to refer a student with externalizing problems than internalizing

ones because externalizing problems prove more difficult to control in classroom settings and are more visible. According to Lloyd, Kauffman, Landrum, & Roe (1991), referrals for externalizing problems were more likely to come from administrators than from parents or teachers. The reason for the large number of administrative referrals is most likely due to the role of an administrator as the ultimate school disciplinarian. The fact that externalizing behaviors are more often the basis of a referral compared to internalizing behaviors demonstrates that administrators and teachers are more aware of externalizing overt behavior problems. Good and Brophy's study (as cited in Abidin & Robinson, 2002) stated that teachers do not treat students in their classes the same, and that teachers base their actions on their perceptions of individual students. They also found that although teachers tend to provide positive reinforcement to students from middle-class backgrounds, they tend to overlook and misunderstand children from lower class families. Accordingly, it seems very important to distinguish between the teacher's perception of behavior disruptions and the observable quality of a student's behavior.

This literature review will cover research in five areas: (1) empirical studies of factors in special education referrals, (2) empirical studies of variables influencing teachers' decisions to refer children, (3) empirical studies of ethnic representation in special education, (4) empirical studies of emotional support services for training teachers, and (5) empirical studies of characteristics of children referred to a school psychologist.

### *Empirical Studies of Factors in Special Education Referrals*

Referrals provide a rich source of information about students who are possibly disruptive in classroom settings. Lloyd et al. (1991) examined 382 forms used by two

school systems to determine factors that influence special education referrals. The researchers were able to identify five main factors in special education referrals. Those five factors were general academic problems, reading problems, attention problems, writing problems, and arithmetic problems.

In a study by McIntyre (1990), referrals were found to be discrepant based on gender. Sixty-nine percent of the referrals were for boys compared to 31% for girls. Additionally, girls were referred more often for internalizing behavior and boys were referred more often for externalizing behavior. Another reason teachers may refer students was based on the students' gender. Male students were clearly referred more often than female students (Harvey, 1991). In referrals, boys outnumber girls by a ratio of more than 2:1. Moreover, boys were most often referred for behavior problems.

McIntyre (1990) found teacher standards and gender to be factors in special education referrals. In considering making a referral, a teacher may compare a student's aggressive behavior with the teacher's standards of appropriate, normal behavior. When the behavior reaches a certain level of discrepancy, a decision to refer occurs (McIntyre, 1990). According to Frazier & DeBlasse (as cited in Reilly, T., 1991), certain behaviors that might be considered normal in a minority subculture may be viewed as aberrant when contrasted with the Caucasian middle class. Therefore, the student's culture becomes an important aspect in referral decisions since the description of normality can be bound in culture. The teacher may be unaware of the values of the students' culture, and therefore, may view their behavior as inappropriate in the classroom, although it may be appropriate in their culture. The lack of awareness of cultural differences provides

one plausible explanation of why teachers more frequently referred students for special education services of different ethnic backgrounds from their own.

Sonuga-Barke, Minocha, Taylor, and Sandberg (as cited in Chang, D. & Stanley, S., 2003) found that teachers do tend to apply different standards for interpreting behavior in racially diverse groups of children. Patton (1998) also found that many researchers and “knowledge producers” in special education generally explain and interpret the behavior of African Americans based upon their “outsider” beliefs and assumptions about the origins and meanings of behavior and the values placed on that behavior and the behaving person. Underneath the processes of observing, identifying, and interpreting worth and behavior that one might say are deviant or different is the “knowledge producer” and his or her culturally bound frame of reference.

Research by Tobias, Cole, Zibrin, & Bodlakova (1982) provide further evidence that teachers referred students from ethnic backgrounds different from their own for specialized educational services. In addition, minority youngsters may be referred more frequently for specialized services because their behavior is at variance with school standards. This is due in part because the school environment typically involves a teacher-centered leadership model, which reinforces quiet, independent seat-work; whereas the minority students’ home and community environment is fast paced and involves more hands on stimulation. According to Grossman (1991), educators tend to use different classroom management techniques with African American and Caucasian students. Although this study did not indicate the ethnicity of the teachers included as participants, in general, teachers of classes with high percentages of African American students are more likely to be authoritarian and less likely to use an open classroom

approach. Based on Clark's study (as cited in Chang, D. & Stanley, S., 2003) of urban classrooms, researchers have generally found that teachers tend to rate African American students less favorably on such measures as personality and behavior, motivation to learn, and classroom performance, hold lower academic expectations for African American students, and treat African American students less favorably than Caucasian students in the classroom. Teachers spend more time on the lookout for possible misbehavior by African American students, especially males. And when students misbehave, educators are especially prone to criticize the behavior of African American males and to use more punishments with them.

#### *Empirical Studies of the Variables Influencing Teachers' Decisions to Refer Children*

Recent research has indicated variables that influence teachers' decisions to refer children for psychological assessment services. Several studies have cited reasons given by teachers who refer children. For example, Andrews, Wisniewski, and Mulick (1997) utilized two separate samples to determine eligibility for developmental special education services and for severe behavior special education services. Results found that boys were more likely to be referred for the severe behavior special education services than girls. African Americans were referred at a proportionally higher rate than Caucasian children for possible developmental special education. Valles (1998) agreed that children and youth from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds appear to be at greater risk for identification placement. Children from different cultures than their teachers could have difficulties relating to one another. Research has shown that African American children are exposed to high-energy, fast-paced home environments, and therefore, may have more difficulty functioning in a slower environment. African American children

also perform better when they have a support system. African American students' chances of school achievement increase when they, like their non-African American schoolmates, experience education with teachers who understand their sociocultural knowledge and take into account cultural factors when designing, implementing, and evaluating instruction (Boykin & Bailey as cited in Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, & Bridgest, 2003). Such teachers maintain high standards and expectations for students' social, behavioral, and academic competence, and they create caring and supportive learning environments that promote students' cultural identities and encourage high academic performance.

Present studies have demonstrated that children are being referred to special education classes for things apart from their behavior in class. For example, Hutton (1985) examined 181 referrals given by teachers to school psychologists. Hutton found the most frequent referral reason to be poor peer relationships. Height and weight are also variables that contribute to the reason why teachers may refer students. Teachers may have a certain expectation as to what a child should look like at a particular age or grade level. Students were referred at disproportionately higher rates as their height and weight increased relative to what might be considered average for their age and gender (Andrews et al., 1997). Though current literature demonstrates children are referred to special education for variables other than race, minority children are still being referred at an alarming rate.

### *Empirical Studies of Ethnic Representation in Special Education*

Previous research has demonstrated that race is not an issue when it comes to referral decisions; however, there is an overrepresentation of minorities in special

education. For example, Oswald, Coutinho, Best, and Singh (1999) found that African American students were 2.4 times more likely to be identified as Mildly Mentally Retarded and 1.5 times more likely to be identified as Seriously Emotionally Disturbed. Oswald et al. suggested that ethnicity and social class are characteristics that frequently create negative expectations, which in turn lead to differential treatment of students from low-SES and minority groups. The researchers found as poverty increased, more African American students were identified as Mildly Mentally Retarded. Students identified as Seriously Emotionally Disturbed were identified less often when poverty increased.

According to Losen and Orfield (2002), in 1998 approximately 1.5 million minority children were identified as having Mental Retardation, Emotional Disturbance, or a Specific Learning Disability. The U.S. Department of Education data from 2000-2001 show that in at least thirteen states more than 2.75% of all African Americans enrolled were labeled Mentally Retarded, which is consistent with the previous research. MacMillan and Reschly (1998) also studied the overrepresentation of minority children, and found that African Americans are placed in special education classes more often than any other ethnic group, and boys, regardless of race, are referred more often than African Americans as a group for special education classes. As stated above, an overwhelming number of special education students are poor, male, and ethnic minorities; educators are primarily middle class, female, and Caucasian. When the cultural backgrounds of students and teachers are incongruent, it may result in interpersonal misunderstandings, which may have consequences for special education placement (Artiles, A., Harry, B., Reschly, D. & Chinn, P., 2002). These results demonstrate that there is a gap between

referrals and ethnic groups. A support system for the teachers would enable them to bridge this gap.

### *Empirical Studies of Emotional Support Services for Training Teachers*

There are teachers who believe with the implementation of empathy, students' school performance and interaction will improve (McAllister & Irvine, 2002). If teachers started employing empathy and became more culturally aware, it could possibly begin a more open and positive relationship between teacher and student. It has been found that students, especially students of color, who have caring relationships with their teachers, tend to be more motivated and perform better academically than those who do not have caring relationships. Caution needs to be taken when emphasizing the importance of empathy, because empathy is a necessary, but not a sufficient requirement for becoming a culturally responsive teacher, or even an effective teacher with diverse populations. McAllister and Irvine utilized a culturally diverse training program to train teachers. After the training, teachers focused on the importance of patience in their interactions with students. The program also allowed them to cast aside stereotypes and assumptions they held about their students. Teachers reported gaining greater cross-cultural sensitivity and a sense of empathy from their interaction with parents and other members of these cultural communities. Cultural sensitivity is an awareness of general problems and how cultural differences influence students' preferred learning styles, how they may cause students to behave in ways that are acceptable in their cultures but not in school, and how these differences may lead students to react in unanticipated ways to behavior management techniques (Grossman, 1991).

Franklin (1992) agreed that placing a teacher in the student's environment helps to cultivate the teacher and fosters a better understanding of that student's culture. Many African American children are exposed to high-energy, fast-paced home environments where there is simultaneous variable stimulation. Hence, low-energy, monolithic environments are less stimulating. Many African American students prefer a faster pace, with techniques that incorporate body movement. Franklin hypothesized that connecting culturally with African American students' home and community, coupled with the use of affective methods of interaction, will produce more productive students.

Sawka, McCurdy, and Mannella (2002) developed a Strengthening Emotional Support Services (SESS) program, which is a combined active training and consultation project designed to build capacity for serving students with behavior disorders in special education classrooms. Sixty-four teachers participated in the study. The project dealt with the implementation of effective behavior management and instructional strategies. SESS training resulted in increased staff knowledge of effective behavior management and instructional strategies to mastery levels. Teacher participation in the project was associated with increased levels of student academic engagement and decreased disruptive behavior in self-contained special education classrooms.

#### *Empirical Studies of Characteristics of Children Referred to School Psychologists*

Numerous studies have examined the characteristics of children referred to school psychologists. Harvey's (1991) study compared 114 children of average intelligence who had been referred for psychological services because of school difficulties to 120 children chosen at random who had not been referred for psychological services. Research found boys were referred 4 times more frequently than girls. According to Podell and Soodak

(1993), teachers' willingness to work with more difficult students may depend on their beliefs in their ability to effect change. Meijer and Foster (as cited in Soodak, L. & Podell, D., 1993) found that teachers who had greater confidence in their own teaching ability were less likely to refer students than were teachers who had lower efficacy. Teachers who believe that their teaching cannot influence student outcomes may decide to refer a difficult-to-teach student to special education.

Despite an increased emphasis on multiculturalism, school districts still place a high number of minority groups in special education classes. Lanier and Wittmer's study (as cited in Abidin & Robinson, 2002) found that teachers more frequently referred black males to educable mentally retarded classes, even though students of both races had comparable IQ and achievement scores. The purpose of this study is to determine if a student's behavior is being rated significantly more severe based on race. This study will seek to confirm the following hypotheses:

- an individual described as being non-participatory/disruptive will be rated as Clinically Significant on the Externalizing Problems Composite, both in the race and non-race specific conditions; and
- an individual described with racial characteristics will be rated as having more significant behavior problems compared to the average ratings of the non-descriptive person.

## Methods

### *Participants*

Seventy-two (36 in the race characteristic group and 36 in the non-race characteristic group) male and female pre-service educational student volunteers from fall

session upper division psychology classes at Austin Peay State University were recruited for participation in the research project. Fifty females and 16 males participated in the research. Of the 72 student volunteers, 50 reported their race as Caucasian, 16 reported being African American, four reported being Other, and two reported being Hispanic American. Participants ranged in age from 18 through 40 years and older with the majority (55.5%) being in the 18 to 24-age range. The sample consisted of 36 psychology majors and 36 education majors. The researcher entered four psychology classes at the end of the lectures, explained the project to the students, and told them that anyone who did not wish to take part in the study was free to leave. Participants could have earned extra credit points for taking part in the research, as determined by their professor.

### *Materials*

Participants received an informed consent (see Appendix A), which had the procedures of the research outlined and the potential benefits and risks described. They also received a demographic form (see Appendix B) that requested their age, race, major, and gender. The participants then received a descriptive paragraph of an individual and a *Behavioral Assessment Scale for Children- Teacher Rating Form* (Reynolds, C. R. & Kamphaus, R. W., 1992). Both of the paragraphs were identical except one of the paragraphs contained a statement describing racial characteristics. The paragraphs contained information regarding school level, individual's behavior in class (quiet, loud, talkative, participatory), and appearance (see Appendixes C and D).

## Measures

The *Behavior Assessment System for Children, Teacher Rating Scale* (BASC-TRS; Reynolds, C. R. & Kamphaus, R. W., 1992) was distributed to the participants. The BASC-TRS is composed of four composite factors: Externalizing Problems Composite, Internalizing Problems Composite, School Problems Composite, and Adaptive Skills Composite. For this research project, the Externalizing Problems Composite was the area of emphasis. The Externalizing Problems Composite is composed of three areas which are defined as follows; “Hyperactivity - the tendency to be overly active, rush through work or activities, and act without thinking; Aggression - the tendency to be nervous, fearful, or worried about real or imagined problems; and Conduct Problems - the tendency to engage in antisocial and rule-breaking behavior, including destroying property” (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992, p.48). Data collections for the norming sample for the BASC - TRS began in the late fall of 1988 and continued through the spring of 1991. Additional normative data was collected for the TRS in the winter of 1997 through the spring of 1998. The representation of the general norm samples by race/ethnicity, gender, and age level were representative of the U. S. Census data.

The BASC - TRS consists of 138 items describing problematic behaviors and emotions that the teacher rates on a 4-point scale of frequency, ranging from “never” to “almost always.” The BASC-TRS has high and consistent reliability. Internal consistency shows the degree to which the items of a scale are measuring the same domain of behavior. The internal consistencies of the scales are high, averaging about .80 for all three levels (i.e. preschool, child, and adolescent). Test-retest reliability reflects the consistency of ratings by the same teacher over a brief time interval. The

test-retest reliability is quite high as well, with median values of .89 for preschool, .91 for child, and .82 adolescent. Interrater reliability describes the level of agreement among independent teacher ratings of the same child. The BASC-TRS has an interrater reliability of .83. The validity of the BASC-TRS sets out to measure what it is created to measure. The BASC-TRS had a construct validity of .80 or higher when compared with instruments such as, the *Revised Behavior Problem Checklist* (as cited in Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992, p. 120), *Conners' Teacher Rating Scales* (as cited in Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992, p. 120), and the *Behavior Rating Profile* (as cited in Reynolds & Kamphaus, 1992, p. 122). With children who were previously diagnosed with Depression, Autism, and/or Conduct Disorder, the BASC-TRS was able to identify those children successfully.

### *Procedure*

This research project was conducted in room 206 and room 302 of the Clement building and in the Clement Auditorium at Austin Peay State University. The examiner came into the classroom during the last twenty minutes of class and explained the research protocol. Each participant was given an informed consent document (see Appendix A) that explained the purpose of the study and was asked to read it. It explained that by completing the documents given to them, they demonstrated willingness to participate. The informed consent also listed the examiner and supervisor's name, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses if the participant had any concerns during or after the research was completed. The participants were given a demographic sheet (see Appendix B) that requested their sex, race, age and major. The participants were informed that they could withdraw participation during any time of the research without

penalty. At random, half of the participants received the paragraph of an individual with race characteristics (dark complexion), and the other half received the paragraph without race characteristics. The participants were then given the descriptive paragraph and were asked to read it thoroughly. After reading the paragraph, the participants were then given the *Behavior Assessment System for Children-Teacher Report Scale* (Reynolds, C. R. & Kamphaus, R. W., 1992) requiring them to answer questions regarding problematic behaviors and emotions in the classroom setting. Participants were told they should not fill in any identifying information on this survey. For the assessment instrument, the participants circled the number rating that applied for each question. The demographic form and the *Behavioral Assessment System for Children-Teacher Report Scale (BASC-TRS)* had no identifying information on it. Both forms that each participant completed had corresponding numbers at the top in order to compare the results with the demographic information. This allowed the examiner to exclude the Teacher Report Form for participants who had a major besides Psychology and Education. Upon completion of the last form, the participants placed their forms in a manila folder at the front of the class and were given a disclosure document (see Appendix E), asking the participants to not discuss the study with other students and to provide contact numbers for questions that may arise. Participants were also given an extra credit slip to show participation if that specific teacher was offering extra credit. Participants were informed that if they would like to know the results of the research, they could call the examiner or faculty supervisor. Participants received the number to the Institutional Review Board and the Counseling and Testing Center if they had further questions. The completion of the survey took no more than twenty to twenty-five minutes. Ratings on the questions

were averaged and compared for the two groups to determine if there was a significant difference between referrals based on race characteristics and non-race characteristics.

### *Design*

This is a between-subjects design with one independent variable having two levels (descriptive race characteristics and non-race characteristics). Participants were randomly assigned to the two groups (group 1 consisted of the individuals that read the paragraph that had no race characteristics and group 2 consisted of the individuals that read the paragraph that had race characteristics). Each participant answered questions based on the paragraph they read. Each question required the participant to rate the individual on a 4-point frequency scale for the BASC - TRS. This raw data was then calculated and a T-score was obtained for each individual BASC – TRS survey using the Externalizing Composite score. A one-sample t-test was used for the within-subject design to determine if the individual described in the paragraph received a Clinically Significant score for behavior ratings regardless of whether or not the race characteristics were given. The T-score was inputted into SYSTAT and the mean rating and the standard deviation for the two groups was calculated. A paired t-test was then used to determine if there is a significant difference between the control group (group 1 - non-race characteristics) and the experimental group (group 2 - race characteristics). A probability correction was also used, the Dunn-Sidak.

### *Results*

The means and standard deviations were calculated for the race characteristic group and the non-race characteristic group. These calculations are represented below in Table 1.

Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations For Overall Ratings of a Race Characteristic Group and a Non Race Characteristic Group*

Group	Mean T – Score	Standard Deviation	Sample Size
1	81.78	13.22	36
2	79.28	16.59	36

A one-sample t-test was calculated to determine if a Clinically Significant behavior rating score was received for the within group sample. Results supported the first hypothesis, indicating that regardless of race characteristics, the participant is still likely to score the described individual as At-Risk or Clinically Significant,  $t(72) = 2.979$ ,  $p \leq .05$ . A paired t-test was also calculated to determine if a significant difference existed between the behavior ratings of a non-race characteristic person and a race characteristic person. Results did not support the second hypothesis, indicating that participants who were given a race characteristic did not score individuals differently from those participants who were not given race characteristics,  $t(36) = -0.696$ ,  $p \geq .05$ .

### Discussion

The results of this project show that regardless of race, participants will rate the behavior of an individual described as non-participatory as At-Risk or Clinically Significant, supporting the initial research hypothesis. There was a statistically significant finding for both an individual with a race characteristic given and for an individual without a race characteristic given. This statistically significant finding indicates that individuals do not rate an individual's behavior based solely on race. However, it is

important to note that the individual that was described was a male, whereas the majority of the participants were females. Previous stated research has shown that teachers are more likely to rate individuals of the opposite gender more severely than they do individuals of their own gender. The results of this project also show that participants who were given a race characteristic did not score individuals differently from those participants who were not given a race characteristic, which failed to support the second hypothesis.

These results have important implications for individuals' perceptions of behavior. As discussed in the previously cited literature, there is an overrepresentation of minorities in special education. This research project has demonstrated that individuals being described as disruptive received a score that was representative of their behavior, and that regardless of race, the overall score showed no difference. This is important to note because some special education referrals use behavior rating scores as a determining factor, and therefore, this study can help demonstrate that children are being rated based on behavior and not race.

Despite these valuable implications, the research study does have limitations. For example, Caucasian females are over represented in the sample. Therefore, the results may not generalize to the population as a whole. Also, some of the female participants stated they had a child that was representative of the one described in the paragraph, and therefore, the participants' answers may have been skewed, which could misrepresent the data collected. Therefore, in future research, it would be valuable to determine the participants' awareness of special education referral factors, and it would be interesting to

determine if individuals would rate a non-participatory/disruptive individual differently if the gender were not specified.

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APPENDIXES

# APPENDIX A

## Consent to Participate in a Research Study Austin Peay State University

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form is intended to provide you with information about this study. You may ask the researchers listed below about this study or you may call the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, Box 4517, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN 37044, (931) 221-7881 with questions about the rights of research participants.

### 1. TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY

Influence of Racial Characteristics on Behavior Ratings

### 2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

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### 3. THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study is to determine the severity with which a student's behavior is rated based on race and non-race characteristics. The research project is being completed to fulfill degree requirements for the Clinical Psychology degree. The data and results obtained in this study may be published or presented.

### 4. PROCEDURES FOR THIS RESEARCH

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire, a Behavioral Assessment Scale for Children- Teacher Rating Form (BASC-TRS), and read a paragraph about a student. The demographic questionnaire will request information about your age, gender, race, and academic major. The demographic information will be used to describe the participants. The participants will be given a paragraph to read and will then be asked to complete the BASC. Participants will be told to leave blank all questions pertaining to identifying information located at the top of the survey. The BASC will ask you to evaluate problematic behaviors and emotions in a classroom setting. Participation will take approximately 20-25 minutes. All collected data will remain confidential and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Faculty Supervisor's office in the Psychology Department. If the collected data is published or presented, it will be done in a way that does not reveal the identity of participants. If you choose to not participate in this study, you may keep this document or return it to the Principal Investigator.

### 5. POTENTIAL RISKS OR BENEFITS TO YOU

The risks for this study are minimal. You may experience some level of emotional discomfort because you are judging others. However, you may feel a sense of pride for helping the Principal Investigator complete her research project and for contributing to the field of education and research. Contact information for the Principal Investigator and the Faculty Supervisor, is provided below should any potential complications arise.

### 6. INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I have read the above and understand what the study is about, why it is being done, and any benefits or risks involved.

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of rights.

I agree to participate in this study and understand that by agreeing to participate I have not given up any of my human rights.

I understand that by signing below I am agreeing to participate.

I understand that I may choose to withdraw from this study at any time up until the time I turn in my survey without penalty or loss of rights.

**I understand that I will receive a copy of this form.**

If I have questions about this study I may call Courtney Crutchfield (graduate student, Psychology Department) at (931)-221-6362 or Dr. Rhonda Bryant (faculty supervisor, Psychology Department) at (931)-221-6395.

# Appendix B

## Demographic Questionnaire

Please mark the box that best applies.

**AGE:**      18-24              25-31              32-39              40-above

**GENDER:**    male              female

**RACE:**      African American      Caucasian American      Native American  
Hispanic American      Other

**MAJOR:**    Psychology      Education      Other

## Appendix C

### Example of Non-Descriptive Paragraph

Daniel is 12 years old and is in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He is of average height and weight and manifests no physical problems. Daniel has a lot of potential, but his behavior in class has me concerned. He is loud, talkative, and easily distracted. He is aggressive, and sometimes he strikes the other children. Daniel has been failing most tests due to his lack of concentration during class. He does not complete homework and often goes to sleep during class. His birth was a normal one, and although he was a bit slow in learning to walk and talk, the delay was not marked.

## Appendix D

### Example of Descriptive Paragraph

Daniel is 12 years old and is in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He is of average height and weight and manifests no physical problems. Daniel is of dark complexion and wears second-hand clothes. Daniel has a lot of potential, but his behavior in class has me concerned. He is loud, talkative, and easily distracted. He is aggressive, and sometimes he strikes the other children. Daniel has been failing most tests due to his lack of concentration during class. He does not complete homework and often goes to sleep during class. His birth was a normal one, and although he was a bit slow in learning to walk and talk, the delay was not marked.

# Appendix E

## Disclosure Statement

The purpose of this study was to see if students were viewed differently based on race characteristics. Previous research has shown that there is an influx of minorities in special education. This research will be linked with previous research to determine if minorities are still being viewed differently. Any participant who experiences any discomfort or concerns about the study or the nature of their responses to the questionnaire should contact the researcher, Courtney Crutchfield at [crutchfc@bellsouth.net](mailto:crutchfc@bellsouth.net) or at (931)-221-6362 or Dr. Rhonda Bryant at [bryantr@apsu.edu](mailto:bryantr@apsu.edu) or (931)-221-6395. Also, participants should be aware that students of Austin Peay are eligible for free counseling services from the Counseling and Testing Center located in the Ellington Building, room 202. The counseling center can be contacted by phone at (931)-221-6162 from 8am-4: 30 pm and at (931)-221-4848 at all other times.

Knowing the purpose of the study, participants uncomfortable with taking part in the research may withdraw their consent to participate, and their information will not be used in the results of the study. Withdrawing from the study will result in no penalty to the participant. There will be a number on the informed consent that will correspond with the number on the teacher rating form. If you wish to withdraw your participation, you will need to contact the researcher, Courtney Crutchfield, and give the number that appears at the top of your informed consent. The participant will still not be identifiable as the number on the informed consent in no way matches demographic information given previously.