

4-1-2009

Teachers' Expectations of Middle School Students

Melissa Harris
Trinity College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Harris, Melissa, "Teachers' Expectations of Middle School Students". Senior Theses, Trinity College, Hartford, CT 2009.
Trinity College Digital Repository, <http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/theses/229>

Running Head: TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Teachers' Expectations of Middle School Students

Melissa Harris

Trinity College

Ed 400 Senior Project

Spring 2009

Introduction

Most schools in America possess similar commonalities such as classrooms, students, and teachers. Although schools may appear to operate in similar manners on the surface, they instead operate differently due to factors such as teacher qualification, level of monetary funds and resources, and the school's location. Whenever politicians speak about fixing the educational system in America, it often is geared towards the urban schools, as they are the ones that are failing. These urban schools often have a lack of resources, which in turn has an affect the students' academic achievement negatively (Holzer & Ludwig, 2003). Because these factors play such a vital role in the effectiveness of a school, it is no surprise that schools that have access to monetary funds and resources may be more successful than schools that do not have these. The demographics of the urban population plays a big role as minority students are more likely to live in urban environments and therefore more likely to attend schools in their neighborhoods (Crocket, 2003).

The factors discussed play a large role in the differences that exist between urban and suburban schools. These differences, consequently, result in the academic achievement gaps that exists between Nonwhite and White students. However, there is another variable that exists that does play a role in the academic achievement gap between Nonwhite and White students: the teacher. According to Hochschild (2003) students who live in urban poor districts have less effective teachers. A teacher being less effective can mean a variety of things including not being as qualified as other teachers or even teachers who display racial bias. Therefore, it is very possible that these teachers could display racist attitudes, consciously or unconsciously, in terms of

classroom practices and instruction towards the students who attend this school (Farkas, 2003).

As a result, in this present study, the focus is on the role of the teacher, because it is a vital variable in understanding the academic achievement gap. Because teachers' expectations and perceptions of students can account for students' academic successes and/or failures, the goal of this research was to determine whether teachers' expectations play such a role at the school in which the study was conducted. In order to understand the role of teachers' expectations in the this achievement gap, it is important to understand the influence that negative stereotypes that Farkas (2003) suggests, could play.

Negative Stereotypes

There are small achievement differences between Black and White students as they enter the schooling system, but by the sixth year of schooling, considerable differences between Black and White students exist (Osborne, 2007). Because these differences are small during the first six years, variables such as lack of resources, and the teacher, may have had an effect on students in middle school. The academic differences include Blacks earning lower grades in schools, performing lower on standardized tests, and graduating from college with lower grade point averages than White students (Osborne, 2007). One disturbing finding by Farkas (2003), which may attribute to the academic achievement gap, is that in each year of schooling, Black students learn less than White students. The fact that Black students are not learning as much as White students does not suggest that Black students are incapable of learning,

but rather there are other influences that inhibit their ability to consume the knowledge taught. Although racist attitudes may not be apparent, it is clear that teachers' perceptions and subsequently expectations of their students play an important role in students' academic successes and/or failures.

Stereotype threat and stigmatization are important phenomena in relation to a student's learning experience. According to Zirkel (2005), stigmatized students perform poorly academically as compared to the non-stigmatized students. For example, Osborne (2001) found that anxiety could help explain 38.8-41.4% of the racial gap in achievement tests among high school seniors, meaning that less than 50% of the gaps can be attributed to stereotype threat. Due to negative stereotypes, people of a particular group experience higher anxiety on tasks when stereotype threat is present as compared to those who are not subjected to negative stereotypes (Osborne, 2007). This anxiety is a result of an individual fearing that they are viewed in terms of the negative stereotype and trying to prove against this negative stereotype so that he/she is not confirming the negative stereotype (Osborne, 2007). As a result, it is important to look at whether teachers' expectations are shaped by negative stereotypes, which in turn may inhibit learning and contribute to the academic achievement gap.

Teachers' Expectations

Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) conducted a study where they found that teachers' positive expectations of students led to academic performance gains whereas negative expectations led to academic difficulty. More specifically, Tyler and Boelter (2008) conducted a similar study and found that Black middle school students' perceptions of the

teacher expectations were correlated with their academic performance. In other words, if the teacher had positive perceptions of the student, then that student demonstrated higher academic performance. In terms of actual teachers' expectations based on race, Strayhorn (2008) found that teachers in fact had lower expectations for Black males as compared to White males and Black females. In fact, in a study conducted by Strayhorn (2008), this researcher found that 20% of Black students felt put down in class by teachers as compared to 4% of White males and 4.8% of Black females feeling the same way. With sentiments like these, it is no surprise that these students did not perform as well academically as compared to their White and female peers (Strayhorn, 2008). Because a lot of research has focused on the negative aspects that teachers' expectations have on students, it is clear that the role of the teacher is vital in terms of a students' academic successes. In one particular study, Morris (2005) found that in a predominately minority school, the teachers had higher expectations for the White students, which may be attributable to the overrepresentation of White students in higher track courses. As a result, it is apparent that teachers' perceptions and expectations play a vital role in a student's academic experiences and successes.

For the present study, the focus is on the role of teachers' expectations. From past research discussed (Farkas, 2003; Osborne, 2007; Strayhorn, 2008; & Tyler & Boelter, 2008), it is possible that the race of the student plays a role in teachers' expectations. Thus the research question is: **At Thurwood* Magnet Middle School, how do teacher expectations of their students differ based on the race of the students?** Throughout this study, it was hypothesized that teachers' expectations would vary based on the race

*To keep confidentiality, the name of the school has been changed.

of the student, more specifically the teachers possessing lower expectations for the Black male student as compared to the other students.

Methods

School Selection

Thurwood Magnet Middle School (TMMS) is an interdistrict middle school comprised of 600 students. This magnet school brings together students from 23 districts that surround the urban city it is located in. This school is racially diverse and the demographics are as follows: Hispanic 37%, Black 34%, White 26%, and Asian 2% (Great Schools, 2008). It is clear that this school is racially diverse, and due to this, this school was chosen for the present study.

Participants

In order to recruit participants, a mathematics teacher at this school was contacted. A visit to the school then took place, where teachers were asked in person if they would be willing to participate in this study. The teachers that were asked taught academic subjects such as social studies, math, and English excluding music, art, and gym. The reason for this is because this research was geared toward expectations of a student's academic ability, thus teachers who taught classically academic subjects would give more reliable responses. After asking 32 teachers in person, the measure was sent electronically via Survey Monkey, and thus the confidentiality of the respondents was assured.

Out of the 32 teachers asked, 23 teachers responded to the follow up e-mail. Of these 23 teachers, only 19 completed the entire measure. Of these participants, 79% were female (n=15), and 79% (n=15) classified themselves as White. 63% (n=12) of the teachers have taught for less than 10 years and the majority of the teachers (n=15, 79%) have taught classrooms that have had at least 50% of Black and Hispanic students throughout their teaching careers. See Table 1 for the grade levels that the teachers teach.

Table 1. Grades Teachers Teach at TMMS.

Grades Taught	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
	53% (n=10)	26% (n=5)	47% (n=9)

*Note: some of these teachers teach a combination of grades as well, which is why the number does not add up to the number of participants

Measure

For the present study, an original measure was created. In this measure, there were 6 vignettes describing six different students. The characteristics that remained constant between the six students was that they all performed academically at an average level. Two of the students were Black, two were White, and two were Hispanic. Likewise, for each racial group, there was one female and one male, thus having a total of three females and three males. One variable (besides race and gender) was that the student either participated in class but did not complete his/her homework, or the student completed his/her homework but did not participate in class. Another important variable was whether the student lived in the urban city the school is located in, or a suburb that surrounds the city. Among these six vignettes, a distracter was also included which varied for each hypothetical student; see Table 2 for characteristics of students.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Six Hypothetical Students

Student	Shanice	John	Maria	Tyrone	Sally	Jose
Race	African-American	White	Mexican-American	African-American	White	Puerto-Rican American
Participates?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Homework?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Distracter	Tall	2 younger brothers	Favorite color purple	Eats sweet and sour candy	Ears Pierced	Favorite food broccoli
Urban City?	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Sports/Band	Sports	Sports	Sports	Band	Band	Band

There were eight questions that measured the expectations for each hypothetical student. Among these, four were considered short-term expectations and four were considered long-term expectations. The measure used a Likert scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). In this study, half of the questions were worded in a positive manner, while the other half were worded in a negative manner. Thus, 1 and 2 were not always indicators of a negative response, as 4 and 5 were not always indicators of a positive response. The measure is included in Appendix A.

Although the data presented does not answer the initial research question, it does answer subsets of the research question. Thus, the results are broken up into two main sections: teachers' characteristics and their relationship to their expectations of students and individual students. The means that will be discussed through the results section were translated so that all 1s are equated to a negative very unlikely and a 5 to a positive very likely response.

Results

All teachers generally have the same expectations for the students.

For the majority of the vignettes, the teachers generally migrated towards the same responses for each hypothetical student. Specifically, all of the teachers responded in the same manner for the likelihood of the students dropping out of high school (stating that this was somewhat unlikely). Also, the teachers all responded to the same way for whether the student would graduate a four-year college (somewhat likely) and perform at a proficient level on the Connecticut Mastery Test (somewhat likely). Because all of the teachers generally gravitated to one response, it shows that teachers may not have the bias that was previously expected. One plausible reason may be due to the fact that all of the hypothetical students performed at an average level academically. Because of this, they generally had the same expectations for all of these students.

Although the teachers responded similarly to most of the given questions, there were a few that had varied responses. For example, the question concerning the likelihood of a student failing to graduate from a four-year college had responses ranging from unsure to somewhat unlikely, and somewhat likely. While more variation was expected among the teachers' expectations, this was not the case. Because the average academic performance of the student was clearly indicated in the measure, it is no surprise that the teachers generally have the same expectations of the students. Because there was not a lot of variation, examining the responses individually was important.

While looking at teachers' responses individually, five out of the twenty-three teachers had higher expectations for White students as compared to Black and Hispanic

students. Although from this sample most teachers may not have displayed racial bias, it is very possible that these five teachers possess racial bias. Four of the teachers were White (one male, three female) and the fifth teacher was a female Hispanic. It is possible that the White teachers have the racial bias that some researchers (Morris, 2005; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; & Zirkel, 2005) suggest exists. In terms of the Hispanic female teacher, it is very possible that she is familiar with the experiences a minority would have in the educational system because she classified herself as Hispanic. With this, she may then exhibit racial bias in that she expects the White students to perform better in the educational system due to the educational system that exists in this country.

Teachers' Expectations Based on Teachers' Sex

5 out of 6 of the vignettes showed that female teachers had higher expectations than the male teachers. Of all of the hypothetical students, female teachers had the highest expectations for Tyrone, John, and Maria, respectively.

As one can see in the table below, Tyrone had a high mean of 3.60, while John and Maria followed with means of 3.43 and 3.41, respectively. Conversely, female teachers had the lowest expectations for Shanice and Jose. As noted in Table 3, Shanice had a mean of 3.13 and Jose had a mean of 2.99. Male teachers had higher expectations for Maria and John, respectively. Maria had a mean of 3.22 and John had a mean of 3.13. The male teachers had lower expectations for Shanice, Sally, Jose, and Tyrone. The means for these students are, 2.88, 3.08, 3.08, and 3.09, respectively; see Table 2.

There are vast discrepancies in how female and male teachers viewed certain students. For example, there is a statistical difference in the female and male teachers'

expectations of Tyrone, $t(16) = 2.68, p = .017$. There was also a 0.3 difference in female and male teachers expectations of John. The male and female teachers also differed by 0.26 in their expectations of Sally.

Table 3. Teachers' Expectations Averages in Relation to Sex of Teacher

Sex of Teacher	Shanice	Tyrone	Sally	John	Maria	Jose
Female	3.13	3.60	3.34	3.43	3.41	2.99
Male	2.88	3.09	3.08	3.13	3.22	3.08

It is important to note that the sample size for females and males is key because there were more female teachers (n =15) than male teachers (n=4). Despite these differences, it is clear that the expectations of the students differ slightly between female and male teachers. Interestingly, the female teachers have higher expectations for the students, which may suggest the possibility that they have more positive views of students and consequently higher expectations. Because there is no past research that would suggest why female teachers would have higher expectations overall for the students, it is difficult to draw appropriate conclusions as to why this was the case in this study. It could very well be due to stereotypical caregiver tendencies of females. This suggests then that the female teachers may be more caring and supportive to their actual students, which was demonstrated into this study.

Teachers' Expectations Based on Teachers' Race

One may believe that there would be a relationship between the expectations dependent on the race of the teacher and the race of the student. Here, there are two racial categories of the teachers, White and Nonwhite. The teachers themselves selected

which racial category best described them: White, Black, or Hispanic. After compiling the data, it was necessary to put the Nonwhites together because of the low frequency of Nonwhites. Consequently, Nonwhite is equated to Black or Hispanic as indicated by the teacher.

4 out of 6 of the vignettes showed that White teachers had higher expectations for all of the hypothetical students. White teachers had the highest expectations for Tyrone and Maria, 3.49 and 3.46 respectively. The White teachers had lower expectations for Jose and Shanice, 3.08 and 3.13 respectively. Nonwhite teachers had higher expectations for Sally and Tyrone, 3.79 and 3.45, respectively. The Nonwhite teachers had lower expectations for Maria and Jose, 2.92 and 2.46, respectively. Interestingly, there were a couple of students who the White and Nonwhite teachers had similar expectations for: Shanice and Tyrone. As noted in Table 4, there is a 0.1 difference between White and Nonwhite teachers' expectations for Shanice, and a 0.4 difference between White and Nonwhite teachers' expectations for Tyrone. Another interesting difference between White and Nonwhite teachers' expectations applies to Sally, Jose, and Maria. In terms of the differences between the Nonwhite and White teachers' expectations, there was a 0.60 difference for Sally, a 0.67 difference for Jose, and a 0.54 difference for Maria. Although there was not a statistically significant difference between the Nonwhite and White teachers' expectations for Sally, there is a statistical significance in the expectations for Jose, $t(14) = 2.18, p = 0.047$. There was also a statistically significant difference in the expectations for Maria between White and Nonwhite teachers $t(14) = 2.14, p = 0.05$.

Table 4. Teachers' Expectations Averages in Relation to Race of Teacher

Race of Teacher	Shanice	Tyrone	Sally	John	Maria	Jose
White	3.08	3.49	3.19	3.39	3.46	3.13
Non-White	3.09	3.45	3.79	3.25	2.92	2.46

These particular means are interesting due to more variations in the expectations among the White and Nonwhite teachers. White teachers generally had higher expectations for the Nonwhite students. This could be due to these teachers trying to mask any racial bias or simply the possibility that the teachers do not have racial bias. Looking individually at the hypothetical student Sally in Table 4, there is a large difference between the expectations of the White teachers as compared to the Nonwhite teachers. This may be due to the belief that White females are more conscious of their schoolwork and thus would be expected to perform academically well. Another interesting finding is that teachers of both racial categories generally had the same expectations for the Black hypothetical students, but noticeable differences between the White and especially, the Hispanic students. Here, there is a discrepancy because one would expect for the differences to be similar between both the Black and Hispanic hypothetical students. The demographics of the area that surrounds the school may have had an influence on the teachers' responses. Thus, it is very possible that the Nonwhite teachers have been members of the educational system and thus know what to expect, as they were students at one point, more specifically with the Hispanic hypothetical students.

Teacher's Expectations based on Total Years Teaching

4 out of 6 of the vignettes showed that teachers who have been teaching less than ten years generally had higher expectations for the hypothetical students. There are not as noticeable differences between the two groups of teachers as others, but it is clear that there must be some correlation between the number of years teachers have been teaching and their expectations of students. There was a significantly statistical difference between teachers' expectations who have been teaching for less than ten years and those who have been teaching for more than ten years for Shanice, $t(14) = 2.16, p = .048$.

Table 5. Teachers' Expectations Averages in Relation to Years of Experience

# Years Teaching	Shanice	Tyrone	Sally	John	Maria	Jose
1-9	3.23	3.50	3.28	3.42	3.31	3.08
10 +	2.79	3.48	3.31	3.27	3.44	2.80

The total number of years that teachers have been teaching has not proven to be of any significance (except for in the case of Shanice), but it also important to consider the sample size. There were more teachers who have been teaching for less than 10 years (n=12) as compared to teachers who have been teaching for over 10 years. Looking at Table 5, it is clear that the means do not vary considerably between the hypothetical students and the teachers who have been teaching for less than 10 years. Interestingly there is more variety among the teachers who have been teaching for at least ten years and their responses for the hypothetical student. This finding may suggest that teachers with less experience may be naïve and thus have higher expectations for students in general, which may explain why there was less variation. Conversely, this is also suggesting that teachers who have had more experience may have more realistic expectations due to more experience.

Long-Term and Short-Term Expectations

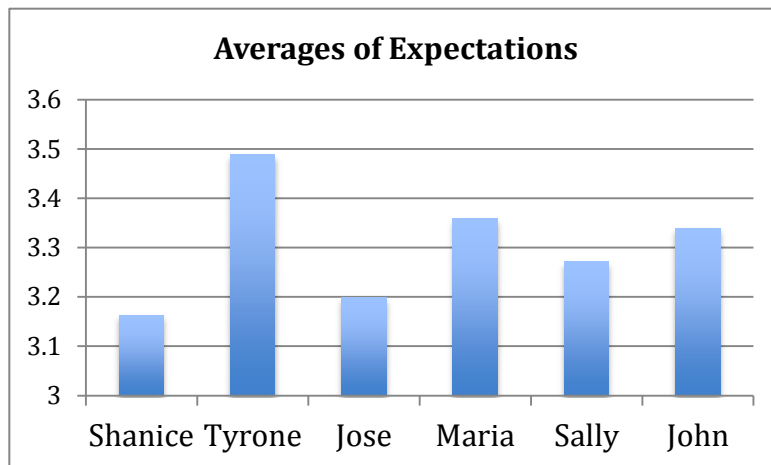
All of the teachers had higher long-term expectations for the hypothetical students as compared to short-term expectations, $t(10) = 5.64, p = .001$. The mean for long-term expectations was 3.76 while the mean for short-term expectations for 2.82. Within the hypothetical students, there were significant differences in teachers' long-term and short-term expectations for all of the students: Tyrone $t(19) = 4.61, p = .001$; Shanice $t(20) = 6.12, p = .001$; Sally $t(16) = 4.12, p = .001$; John $t(20) = 5.15; p = .001$; Maria $t(17) = 4.61, p = .001$; and Jose $t(15) = 7.72, p = .001$.

From these results, it is clear that teachers had higher long-term expectations as compared to short-term expectations for the hypothetical students. It is possible the teachers believed in the possibility for improvement in terms of the students' academic abilities. This may be because the school that these teachers teach in is selective in that an application process is required for admission. Also, because the school is selective, the teachers may believe that in order for a student to be accepted, he or she is intelligent to some degree and thus would succeed after middle school. Another plausible reason as to why teachers have higher long-term expectations is because the teachers may believe that a student's successes would be better determined in high school as compared to middle school. The problem with this is that these teachers may not fully be aware of the importance of middle school in a student's academic career. It is likely, and is often the case, that a student who performs poorly or on an average level in middle school would not gain access into higher-tracked classes, which then influences possibility for college acceptance. All in all, it is likely that the teachers are putting the successes of the students into the hands of the high school teachers.

Examining Individual Students

Although significant distinctions based on race were not present in the results as hypothesized, there were a few significant differences in the teachers' expectations of three particular students: Shanice, Tyrone, and Jose. Shanice and Tyrone are African American, and Jose is Puerto Rican American. Shanice and Jose participated in class and Tyrone completed his homework. Looking at Figure 1 below, it is clear that Tyrone had the highest mean for expectations among all of the students, while Shanice and Jose had the lowest averages in terms of expectations among the students.

Figure 1. Averages of Expectations of all hypothetical students



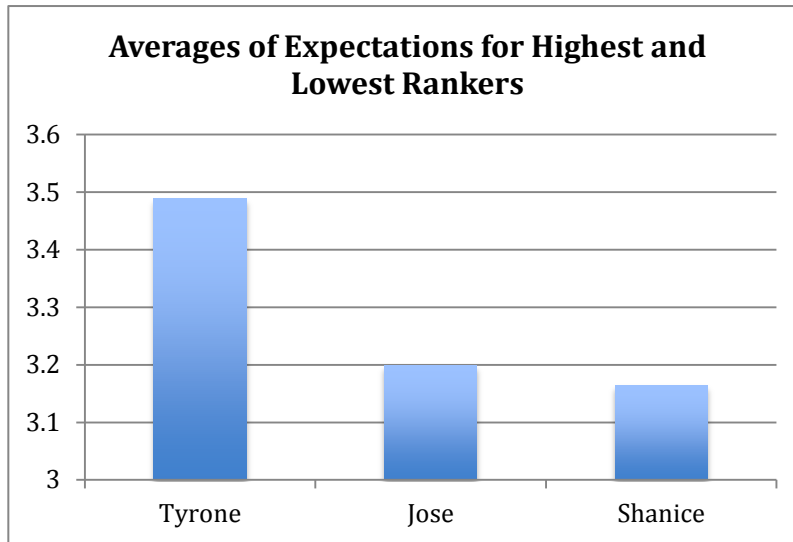
Because of these vast differences, it is important to examine how the teachers characteristically differed in regards to their expectations for those three students (see Table 6).

Table 6. Highest and Lowest Expectations among Teachers based on Teacher characteristics

Female <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Tyrone • Lowest: Jose 	Male <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Maria • Lowest: Shanice
White <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Tyrone • Lowest: Shanice 	Nonwhite <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Sally • Lowest: Jose
1-9 Years Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Tyrone • Lowest: Jose 	10+ Years Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest: Tyrone • Lowest: Jose, Shanice

From Table 6, it is clear that Tyrone had the highest expectations across female, White, and both categories for years of experience and Shanice and Jose consistently have the lowest expectations among the teachers. There was a significant difference in the expectations for Tyrone and Jose, and Tyrone and Shanice, $t(17) = 3.04, p = .007$, where the teachers had higher expectations for Tyrone as compared to Jose and Shanice.

Figure 2. Teacher Expectation Averages for Tyrone, Shanice, and Jose



As is depicted in Figure 2, it is clear that there are significant differences in how the teachers viewed these three students. According to Strayhorn (2008), teachers have lower expectations for Black males as compared to White males and Black females. However, it is clear that these teachers had different expectations as Tyrone fared well among the teachers while Shanice did not. Thus, contrary to the research available, the teachers had higher expectations for Tyrone as compared to Jose and Shanice.

It is likely that because that this measure was administered electronically around the same time that Barack Obama was inaugurated as 44th President of the United States of America. With this, there has been a lot of positive media surrounding successful Black men, which could, and may have, had an influence in how the teachers responded. Another implication in terms of Jose is that there was negative press surrounding the mayor of a Connecticut large urban city, Eddie A. Perez, who was accused of taking a bribe for remodeling his home. With this negative press, it is very possible that this had an influence as to how the teachers responded to Jose.

Discussion

Through the interesting findings presented in this study, one appropriate conclusion to draw is that the teachers' expectations at TMMS did not vary as widely as expected, but instead differed based on different characteristics of the students. It is likely that the majority of the teachers did not possess racial bias in their responses to the students, but instead focused solely on the strengths and the weaknesses of the students individually. However, there were five teachers who demonstrated some form of racial bias that past researchers (Morris, 2005; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; & Zirkel, 2005) suggest

exists among teachers. Three out of the five teachers who demonstrated racial bias had lower expectations for Tyrone as compared to the other Nonwhite students. Two of these teachers actually had the lowest means out of all of the teachers for Tyrone, which would then suggest that the teachers, despite Obama's inauguration, actually have racial bias against Black male students. It is important for the educational system to require training for teachers to help eliminate racial bias because this bias can have a strong influence on a student's academic successes and/or failures.

From this study, it was clear that White teachers had higher expectations for Nonwhite students. One possible conclusion is that the White teachers wanted to mask racial bias so that they did not appear "racist". If this is the case, then it is important to figure out a way to measure racial bias so that a teacher's true perceptions are evident throughout a measure. This is important because if a teacher possesses racial bias, then this teacher could very well be another ineffective teacher in urban schools (Hochschild, 2003). Another possible conclusion as to why White teachers had higher expectations for Nonwhite students is that they actually do not possess racial bias, but instead focus on the individual student's strengths and weaknesses. Whatever the case may be, it is important to ensure that all teachers, especially ones who teach a high percentage of Nonwhite students, eliminate racial bias.

The differences between Tyrone, and Jose were especially interesting because, contrary to past research, Tyrone fared well among the teachers. This is important because if Obama's recent inauguration played a role in the teachers' expectations, then it is clear that media played a rather large role. Many of the negative stereotypical images that are exhibited through media may play a large role in how a teacher views a particular

student, especially minority males. The media often depicts Black men in a negative light, and thus with Obama's recent inauguration, the teachers may not have had the usual negative stereotypical images in their minds, but instead one of successful Black men. Conversely, there has been negative press about a Hispanic Connecticut politician, Eddie A. Perez, in terms of taking bribes. Because this occurred in late January and this was around the same time as Obama's inauguration, this negative image of Hispanic male may have also had an influence on the teachers' responses for Jose. Because the media may have had an influence on the teachers' responses for Tyrone and Jose, it is important to consider how the outside influences may play a role in teachers' expectations and thus the student's academic career.

Another important conclusion that is worth mentioning is the possibility that teachers may have had experiences with students with the same names that were used in this measure. Thus, this could have influenced their responses, especially if the teacher had a very positive or very negative experience with an actual student with the same name as the hypothetical student. For example, if the teachers generally had good experiences with an actual student named Maria, this may have influenced their responses as they were answering the questions. This is important to note because if a teacher had a bad experience with someone named Shanice, the teacher may then unfairly have lower expectations and/or treat all students with the same name negatively.

Limitations

Although there were significant and interesting findings, this study would benefit from having a larger sample size. It is important to keep in mind that there are not a large

number of teachers in a middle school, but a more balanced sample size, including more males and Nonwhites, would have made the results even more interesting. There is also a possibility that the negatively worded questions and positively worded questions should have just been uniform, in one-way or another. Although, the measure was designed to capture the teacher's perceptions and thus expectations of the students, these positively worded and negatively worded questions may have been confusing. The measure was original, which means that it may not have captured teachers' perceptions and thus expectations of the students. In other words, if there were a validated and reliable measure available, that is not time consuming, the measure may have properly captured the attitudes that teachers have towards their students.

This study calls for more research. One reason is because measuring racial attitudes is a difficult task. It is hard to try to mask the intention of the research, while not creating multiple confounds, thus, it is important that a way of measuring racial attitudes is possible. This is especially because the academic achievement gap is so wide between White and Nonwhite students, which may imply that there may be some racial bias as past research has suggested. One particular follow-up study that would be very interesting is looking at the expectations of teachers who work primarily in suburban schools. With similar vignettes, this study may capture different attitudes of teachers who teach in urban and suburban environments. This study should definitely be replicated because teacher's expectations are very important in how students perform. Another interesting follow up study, would be to test teachers' expectations specifically of Black males to see if there is a difference in how teachers' view Black males since Barack Obama is the first Black president of the country. Although this study in

particular does not measure the relationship between expectations and academic performance, it is important to take this into consideration as previous research has suggested that there is indeed a relationship between the two variables.

References

- Bailey, T. R., Jenkins, D., & Leinbach, D. T. (2005). What we know about community college low-income and minority student outcomes. New York, N.Y.: Community College Research Center, Columbia University.
- Cook, B. J. & Cordova, D. I. (2006). Minorities in Higher Education. Twenty-second annual status report. American Council on Education. Washington, D.C.
- Crockett, D. (2003) Critical issues children face in the 2000s. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 18, 446-453.
- Farkas, G. (2003). Racial disparities and discrimination in education: What do we know, how do we know it, and what do we need to know? *Teachers College Record*, 105, 1119-1146. Retrieved from PsycInfo on March 5, 2008.
- Great Schools (2008). Hartford Magnet Middle School. Retrieved February 22, 2009 from <http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/ct/other/1512#students>
- Thurwood Magnet Middle School (2008). General Information. Retrieved February 22, 2009 from <http://www.hmms.crec.org/general.htm>
- Hochschild, J. L. (2003). Social class in public schools. *Journal of Social Issues*, 59, 821-840.
- Holzer, H. J., & Ludwig, J. (2003). Measuring discrimination in education: Are methodologies from labor and markets useful? *Teachers College Record*, 105, 1147-1178.
- Morris, E. W. (2005). From 'Middle Class' to 'Trailer Trash': Teachers' perceptions of White students in a predominately minority school. *Sociology of Education*, 78, 99-121.
- Morris, E. W. (2005). From 'Middle Class' to 'Trailer Trash': Teachers' perceptions of White students in a predominately minority school. *Sociology of Education*, 78, 99-121.
- Osborne, J. W. (2001). Testing stereotype threat: Does anxiety explain race and sex differences in achievement? *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 26, 291-310.
- Osborne, J. W. (2007). Linking stereotype threat and anxiety. *Educational Psychology*, 27, 135-154.

- Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupil's intellectual development*. New York: Holt, Rinehard, & Winston.
- Strayhorn, T. L. (2008). Teacher expectations and urban Black males' success in school: Implications for academic leaders. *Academic Leadership*
http://www.academicleadership.org/emprical_research/Teacher_Expectations_and_Urban_Black_Males_Success_in_School_Implications_for_Academic_Leaders.shtml
- Steele, C. M. (1997). A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual identity and performance. *American Psychologist*, 52, 613-629.
- Tyler, K. & Boelter, C. M. (2008). Linking middle school students' perceptions of teachers' expectations to academic engagement and efficacy. *The Negro Educational Review*, 59, 27-44.
- Zirkel, S. (2005). Ongoing issues of racial and ethnic stigma in education 50 years after Brown v. Board. *Urban Review*, 37, 107-126.

APPENDIX A: MEASURE USED IN STUDY

***Note: For the following measure, the name of the school district was used on the survey, but to maintain confidentiality Thurwood is used here.**

Please read the following scenario.

Shanice is in your second period class. Performing at an average academic level, she participates in class but does not complete her homework. She is on a sports team, and is tall for her age. Shanice is African-American and lives in Thurwood.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for Shanice to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Shanice to make honor roll this quarter?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Shanice to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Shanice to require outside help for all subjects?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Shanice to graduate from high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Shanice to successfully complete a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
------------------	----------------------	--------	--------------------	----------------

How likely is it for Shanice to drop out of high school?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Shanice to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

John is in your fourth period class. He is an average student who completes his homework but does not participate in class. He is on a sports team, and has two younger brothers. John is White and lives in Thurwood.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for John to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for John to make honor roll this quarter?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for John to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for John to require outside help for all subjects?

1 Very	2 Somewhat	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat	5 Very
-----------	---------------	-------------	---------------	-----------

Unlikely Unlikely Likely Likely

How likely is it for John to graduate from high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for John to successfully complete a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for John to drop out of high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for John to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

Maria is in your last period class. She is an average student who completes her homework but does not participate in class. Her favorite color is purple, and she plays on a sports team. Maria is Mexican-American and lives in a suburb.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for Maria to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Maria to make honor roll this quarter?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely
---------------	-------------------	--------	-----------------	-------------

How likely is it for Maria to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

How likely is it for Maria to require outside help for all subjects?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

How likely is it for Maria to graduate from high school?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

How likely is it for Maria to successfully complete a four-year college?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

How likely is it for Maria to drop out of high school?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

How likely is it for Maria to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
--------------------	------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------

Tyrone is in your first period class. He completes his homework but does not participate in class. He performs academically at an average level, is in the band, and loves sweet and sour candy. Tyrone is African American and lives in a suburb.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for Tyrone to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to make honor roll this quarter?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to require outside help for all subjects?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to graduate from high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to successfully complete a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Tyrone to drop out of high school?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Tyrone to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

Sally is in your fifth period class. She is an average student who participates in class but does not complete her homework. She is in the band and has her ears pierced. Sally is White and lives in a suburb.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for Sally to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Sally to make honor roll this quarter?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Sally to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Sally to require outside help for all subjects?

1 Very Unlikely	2 Somewhat Unlikely	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat Likely	5 Very Likely
-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------------------	---------------------

How likely is it for Sally to graduate from high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Sally to successfully complete a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Sally to drop out of high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Sally to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

Jose is in your third period class. Performing at an average academic level, he participates in class but does not complete his homework. He is in the band and his favorite food is broccoli. Jose is Puerto Rican-American and lives in Thurwood.

Please answer the following questions based on the scale provided.

How likely is it for Jose to fall in advanced (level 5) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to make honor roll this quarter?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to fall in proficient (level 3) on all sections of the CMT?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to require outside help for all subjects?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to graduate from high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to successfully complete a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to drop out of high school?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely

How likely is it for Jose to fail to graduate from a four-year college?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely