USING TEACHER VOICES TO RESTORE DISCIPLINE: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY

by

ASHLEE PERRY

(Under the Direction of Natoya Haskins)

ABSTRACT

Racial disparities in school discipline lead to students of color being suspended and expelled from school at significantly higher rates in comparison to White students (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Restorative practices are a nontraditional approach to discipline that many schools and districts use to address this dilemma (Fronius, Persson, Guckenburg, & Petrosino, 2016). However, there is little research available to guide the training and support teachers receive to ensure effective implementation (Mayworm, Sharkey, Hunnicut, & Schiedel, 2016). As a result, this study uses constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), as well as the theoretical framework of social learning and social cognitive theories (Bandura, 1986; Rotter, 1966) to create a theory that describes and explains the factors teachers feel are necessary to implement restorative practices with confidence and success.

Charmaz's (2014) data collection and analysis process of 12 individual interviews and one focus group interview reveal six categories that affect teachers' capacity to implement restorative practices with confidence and success. These categories, which are *School Structure, Trainings, Professional Development/Consultation, Internal Awareness, Additional Trainings*, and *Relationship/Rapport Building,* make up the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices.* This model serves as visual representation of these six categories as well as the process

participants feel are essential to implement school-based restorative practices. Additionally, the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* offers insight to what stakeholders in education can to do to support teachers' efforts to implement restorative practices with confidence and effectiveness.

INDEX WORDS: Racial Disproportionality, Restorative Justice, Restorative Practices, Black, Hispanic, Latino, Teacher Efficacy, Constructivist Grounded Theory, Teacher, Factor

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my son, Jerimyha Michael Rodgers-Perry. Even though I did not birth you, you have given me so much life! Thank you for loving me unconditionally even though you have come second to work, school, and my leadership endeavors so many times. Thank you for challenging me to be a better mother and counselor. You constantly force me to reflect on whether my actions towards you align with the way I encourage other parent(s)/guardian(s) to be with their children. I promise I will always work to be a better mother to you and a positive role model for you. I will also do everything in my power to provide a life that allows you have to access to everything you want and deserve. The world may tell you that your life does not matter as a Black male, but I will always show you that the world is privileged to have Black males like you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"You can't save them all." I cringe every time I hear any stakeholder in education utter such a wretched statement. I have often had to catch myself before blurting out exactly what I am thinking. Which children do you suppose we save? If the child or children we "can't save" were your son, daughter, or someone close to you, would you feel the same way? If every school gives up on just a "few" students, how many thousands of children across this nation would that be? What do these children look like, and where do all the children who "can't be saved" end up? Whether or not we care to admit it, stakeholders in education know the answer to these questions. But for those advocates of education who truly do not know, and even for those of us who choose to ignore the sad reality, statistics show that most of these youth—who are African American, Latino, Hispanic, and Native American/Alaska Indian—end up dropping out of school, running the streets with other "thugs" or "misfits," spending their lives in and out of jail or prison or dead. Unfortunately, schools play a significant role in perpetuating these trajectories.

Introduction

For more than 40 years, scholars have documented the excessive use of office discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions with students of color—particularly African American males (Skibba, Trachok, Chung, Baker, & Hughes, 2012). Although the literature is less consistent concerning Latinos and American Indians, some studies demonstrate that students within these ethnic groups are also subjected to the harsher consequences for disciplinary infractions (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). This phenomenon, which is known as racial disproportionality in discipline, racial disproportionality, racial disparities in school discipline,

the racial discipline gap, or simply disproportionality in discipline, leads to students of color being suspended and expelled from school two to three times more often than their White counterparts (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2014c). In some schools, the suspension and expulsion rate can be as high as four to five times more for African American students (Mullet, 2014).

The excessive use of the aforementioned discipline practices puts students who identify with these ethnic groups at risk for a number of negative outcomes (Skibba, Shure, & Williams, 2011). For example, when students are removed from the classroom repeatedly, they miss the opportunity to access instruction, which directly impacts their ability to be academically successful (Fabelo, Thompson, Plotkin, Carmichael, Marchbanks, & Booth, 2011; Hunizec, 2017). In addition to academic underperformance, school suspensions correlate with grade retention and are a moderate to strong predictor of students dropping out of school or graduating later than expected (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Recent researchers (Fabelo et al., 2011) indicate that 31% of the students who are suspended or expelled repeat their grade at least once. About 10% of the students who are suspended between grades 7 and 12 dropped out, and almost 59% of these students who received disciplinary action 11 or more times do not graduate from high school on time.

The link between exclusionary discipline practices and the juvenile justice system is perhaps the most devastating impact of racial disproportionality. When students are funneled out of school and into the criminal justice system, this is known as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP). This phenomenon, which is a national trend, impacts students of color at a significantly higher rate than White students (Houchins & Shippen, 2016; McNeal, 2016). Specifically,

African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans account for more than two-thirds of youth who are incarcerated but only one-third of the general population (Armour & Hammond, 2009). Moreover, the U.S. Department of Education (2014b) found that Black students accounted for 31% of the school arrests even though they only represented 16% of the entire student population. Although the percentage of arrests was lower for Hispanics, a disparity still existed between these students and their White peers.

It is critical for schools to identify effective ways to address the issue of racial disproportionality (Skibba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). In his call-to-action speech, Arne Duncan, a former U.S Secretary of Education, urged schools across the nation to develop a plan to address this dilemma (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). He challenged teachers, administrators, and district leaders to implement prevention and supportive programs, to include restorative practices that would not only promote positive school climate but also eliminate disciplinary practices that exclude youth of color from their education (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a).

Restorative Justice Origins

Restorative justice (RJ) is an innovative approach that many school districts in the United States are implementing to address the issue of racial disproportionality (Fronius, Persson, Guckenburg, Hurley, & Petrosino, 2016). The concept of RJ originated in the criminal justice system in the late 1900s. Canada was the first country to document its use of RJ in 1975, however Australia is credited with pioneering RJ in the school setting (Blood, 2005). Although there is not one set definition for restorative justice, it is broadly conceptualized as a philosophy, a process, and a set of practices that focus on restoring relationships between victim(s) and offender(s) though dialogue (Zehr, 1990). The philosophy of restorative justice compels individuals to understand crime as harm done not only to the person/people involved but also to

the community (Zehr, 1990). The process of restorative justice allows any stakeholder who has been negatively impacted by harm to participate in a conference to discuss the wrongdoing, who was impacted and how, and the steps that need to be taken to repair harm (Kline, 2016). Mediations, community conferencing, community service, peer juries, circle process, and re-entry meetings are some of the many practices used in school settings to facilitate the RJ process among students, teachers, and other stakeholders (Advancement Project, 2014). Further, such practices are often employed in lieu of exclusionary discipline practices such as timeout, detention, In School Suspension (ISS), and Out of School Suspension (OSS) (Fronius et al., 2016).

Restorative Justice Tenets

Although schools may use different strategies and practices to maximize their use of school-based restorative justice, Amstutz and Mulet (2005) identified five common themes that should be apparent in any restorative justice approach. These themes include: (a) focus on harm and consequent needs (victims, offenders, and communities), (b) addressing obligations as a result of the harm done, (c) use of inclusive, collaborative processes, (d) opportunities for individuals who are impacted, both directly and indirectly, by a situation to be involved in the restorative process (victims, offenders, families, and community members), and (e) using the restorative justice process to right any wrongdoing.

Restorative Justice in Schools

School districts in several states, including California, Colorado, and Illinois, have adopted a variety of restorative justice approaches and programs. These programs range from teachers and students participating in informal restorative conversations to formal restorative conferencing that involves students, staff, community members, and family (Fronius et al., 2015). School districts in these states have also produced compelling evidence to demonstrate

how such methods have been used to effectively address disproportionate discipline practices (Fronius et al., 2015; Hurley, Guckenburg, Persson, Fronius, & Petrosino, 2015). Although empirical researchers illustrate the viability and efficacy of restorative justice in schools, qualitative researchers also illuminate the experiences of students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. Consequently, it is important to consider the merit of this nontraditional approach to discipline based on qualitative research (Burssens & Vettenburg, 2006; DeWitt & DeWitt, 2012; Grossi & dos Santos, 2012; Hantzopoulous, 2013; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Reimer, 2011; Shaw, 2007; Standing, Fearon & Dee, 2012; Stinchcomb, Bazemore, & Riestenberg, 2006; Wearmouth & Berryman, 2012; Wearmouth, Mckinney, & Glynn, 2007a; Wearmouth, Mckinney, & Glynn, 2007b).

Based on the current literature available, little is known about teachers' qualitative experience and how they make meaning and use restorative justice in their classrooms. Because school based restorative justice cannot be implemented successfully without teachers, it is critical for more studies to include teachers as research participants. It is equally as important for future research to use qualitative research designs that move beyond teachers' experiences with and perspectives of restorative justice. Instead, research scholars should focus on creating a theoretical framework to describe the skills and factors with which teachers need to be competent during the execution of restorative justice. Grounded theory, which is used to generate or discover theory, will be the research method used for this study and will address the aforementioned concerns (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Teacher Efficacy

Employing restorative justice as an alternative approach to discipline is a huge undertaking for stakeholders in the teaching profession. Teachers are expected to use the tenets of restorative justice to shift their mindset regarding the way they perceive and discipline

students. Educators are also responsible for facilitating many of the restorative justice strategies mentioned earlier in this chapter, such as class meetings, conferences, mediations, etc. (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005). Furthermore, teachers must balance the need to use restorative justice to improve classroom culture with their duty to teach mandated standards and content (Armour, 2017). Although is it is imperative for teachers to learn the skills associated with restorative justice, their confidence and comfortability with this approach will play a major role in how well these strategies are applied in the classroom setting.

Teachers' level of comfort or confidence with executing classroom practices, especially something new, closely aligns to teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy or teacher efficacy is defined as "a teacher's judgement of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Hoy, 2000, p. 6). This construct, which is derived from social cognitive theory, is a strong predictor of many factors that impact student success (Bandura, 1986). These factors include but are not limited to student motivation, student achievement, students' level of self-efficacy, and their attitudes about learning. Similarly, teacher self-efficacy has a profound impact on teachers' attitudes toward innovative practices and change (Hoy, 2000; Protheroe, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). With restorative justice being relatively new in the U.S. educational system and with teacher self-efficacy being such a strong predictor of teaching practices and student outcomes, it is imperative that research be conducted to gain teachers' perspective on what factors will help them to implement restorative practices with confidence and success.

Statement of the Problem

Racial disproportionality is a phenomenon that leads to students of color, especially African American and Latino students, being suspended and expelled from school at significantly higher rates in comparison to their White peers (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010).

Restorative justice is gaining popularity among schools across the United States as a viable solution to this dilemma, however this approach to discipline must be implemented with fidelity in schools before research can be conducted to establish its merit. Currently, the literature provides little guidance on the training and support teachers should receive to ensure consistency with implementation (Mayworm, Sharkey, Hunnicut, & Scheidel, 2016). It is also unknown what factors are used or considered to guide or inform the implementation process. These issues demonstrate a need for qualitative researchers to explore such issues using the expertise of teachers. More specifically, a qualitative design should be used to create a theory that will explain what factors teachers feel are necessary to execute restorative practices in the classroom with confidence and fidelity. No studies, to date, have used grounded theory research and teachers as research participants to develop such a theory.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use constructivist grounded theory to create a theory that explains and describes the factors that make teachers feel most confident and successful in implementing restorative practices. Seven teachers from at an urban school district in the northeastern region of Georgia along with five teachers in Washington, DC, and Connecticut school districts participated in an interview using a semi-structured interview format to gather the data used to create this new theory. These participants also had the opportunity to participate in a focus group session. The findings of this qualitative study answered the following questions:

1. What factors do teachers feel are necessary to implement restorative practices effectively?
2. What factors make teachers feel confident in their ability to implement restorative practices effectively?

Significance of Study

The majority of qualitative designs used to explore restorative justice are case studies; therefore, this grounded theory study will help to add more variety to the qualitative methodologies currently available in the literature. This study will also be the first attempt in research to develop a theory that will explain what factors teachers feel help them to execute school-based restorative justice successfully. This theory will inform the professional development opportunities teachers receive regarding restorative justice. More specifically, instead of only focusing on the skills and content related to restorative justice training, this theory will help trainers, administrators, and district leaders consider the underlying factors that will influence successful implementation. Similarly, this study will empower teachers to evaluate and to reflect on their level of readiness to use restorative justice with fidelity. Finally, this theory will inform a future assessment I will create to assess teacher efficacy in relation to school-based restorative justice.

Definition of Terms

Administrators: Professionals who have the credentials to serve as a principal and/or an assistant principal in the P-12 educational setting.

African American or Black: "a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

American Indian or Alaska Native: "a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Code of Conduct: an extensive document that outlines behavior that is accepted or prohibited in the school, as well as any school related setting (Georgia Department of Education,

2018). Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) receive a copy of the code of conduct at the beginning of each school year.

Discipline policies: procedures that outline the consequences/punishments students receive in response to misbehavior (Georgia Department of Education, 2016.

Exclusionary discipline practices: the consequences students receive for disciplinary infractions. Such practices remove students from the classroom during instructional time.

- **Time Out:** Students are removed from the classroom for a certain amount of time. Students can be placed in another teacher's classroom or in a designated location at school as a consequence for misbehaving.
- **In-School Suspension (ISS):** Students serve a certain amount of time/days in a designated location as a consequence for a disciplinary infraction. ISS is usually a consequence given by an administrator after receiving a referral for a student.
- **Out of School Suspension (OSS):** The consequence students for a more severe behavior (i.e., fighting). OSS is a consequence given by an administrator and must be documented on an office discipline referral.
- **Expulsion.** The consequence students receive for behaviors that are deemed highly severe. These behaviors are outlined in a school's Code of Conduct. When students are expelled from school, they do not have access to education at their designated school and could possibly have the option to attend an alternative setting in the district.

Hispanic or Latino: "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Office Discipline Referral (ODR): the official form that teachers, support staff, and administrators use to document a student's misbehavior and consequence. ODRs, which are also known as discipline referrals, referrals, or write ups, are also sent to parent(s)/guardians as a communication tool between schools and home.

Professional school counselor: a certified/licensed educator who is trained in school counseling and is able to address students' academic, personal/social, and career development needs (American School Counselor Association, 2018). (

Racial Disproportionality: a documented issue in P-12 education since 1975 where students of color are punished more frequently and more severely in comparison to their White peers for disciplinary infractions. This dilemma causes students of color to be excluded from their education (Children's Defense Fund, 1975).

Restorative justice: a broad term that focuses on "peaceful and non-punitive approaches for addressing harm, responding to violations of legal and human rights, and problem solving" (Fronius et al., 2016, p. 1).

Restorative practices: the strategies used to achieve RJ. These strategies include but are not limited to: mediations, community conferences, community service, peer juries, circle process, and re-entry meetings (Advancement Project, 2014; Amstutz & Mullet, 2005).

School-to-prison pipeline: A national trend that funnels students out of school and into the criminal justice system (Mallet, 2016).

Teacher: An individual who is certified in one or more subject area and is hired to teach in a public or private school. For the sake of this study, *teacher* refers to those who serve in the P-12 public school setting. *Teacher* is also referred to as K-12 educator.

Teacher self-efficacy: "a teacher's judgement of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Hoy, 2000, p. 6). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher efficacy are interchangeable.

Support staff: professionals in the P-12 school setting who support students and teachers. These individuals include: paraprofessionals, school social workers, school psychologists, behavior specialists, etc.

Self-efficacy: "refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments" (Bandura, 1977).

White: "a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017).

Zero tolerance policies: "the application of predetermined consequences, most often severe and punitive in nature, that are intended to be applied regardless of the gravity of behavior, mitigating circumstances, or situational context" (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008, p. 852).

Delimitations

P-12 public school teachers in the United States will be the only stakeholders who are asked to participate in this study even though paraprofessionals, school counselors, administrators, etc. play a major role in the successful implementation of restorative practices. Because teachers are the professionals expected to implement restorative practices in their classroom environment, it is critical to sample this population. Even though restorative justice originated outside of the United States, P-12 teachers in other countries will be not allowed to participate in this initial study. Additionally, P-12 educators who teach in private or online

settings will not be included in the sample population. The perspectives of these professionals are beyond the scope of this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Restorative justice is gaining traction in K-12 education as a potential solution to the issue of racial disproportionality (Fronius et al., 2016; Hurley et al., 2015). However, to truly evaluate the merit of this nontraditional approach to discipline, teacher voices have to be regarded as a vital component of the research process. As a result, the purpose of this study will be to use teachers' perspectives to construct a theory that will explain and describe the factors these professionals feel are necessary to implement restorative justice with confidence and success.

In this chapter, I will provide a historical context for racial disproportionality and will connect this perspective to the educational experiences of students of color. Next, I will review evidence-based programs that are currently used to address student behavior and will discuss their merit with regard to disproportionality. After describing these programs, I will explain the evolution of restorative justice and will analyze studies that have used this approach in schools. I will also elaborate on teachers' role in implementing restorative justice and other programs that could potentially close the discipline gap between students of color and their White peers. This literature review will conclude with a rationale for using teacher efficacy as the theoretical foundation of this dissertation study.

Racial Disproportionality

Racial disproportionality is a phenomenon that causes students of color to receive more severe consequences for behavior issues in comparison to White students (Gregory et al., 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The more serious punishments or harsher consequences

that African American, Latinos, Hispanics, and American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/ANI) experience at school are formally knowns as exclusionary discipline practices (Vincent, Sprague, & Tobin, 2012). Such consequences include: corporal punishment, time-outs, detention, In-School Suspension (ISS), Out of School Suspension (OSS), and expulsion. The excessive use of one or more these practices heavily influences the discipline gap that exists between Whites and the racially/ethnically diverse groups mentioned above (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Historical Context of Racial Disproportionality

***Brown v. Board of Education*.** In 1954, the Supreme Court heard the landmark court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* and as a result of these arguments abolished racial segregation of American public schools. This historic decision meant that African American students would be legally allowed to attend schools with White students. Supporters of *Brown v. Board* also believed that Black children would finally have access to schools with better resources, more rigorous courses, and exposure to experiences that would help them to fare better in pursuit of their postsecondary goals (Patterson, 2002).

Unfortunately, the notion of integration was much easier said than done. School systems, especially those in the South, could hide behind de facto segregation practices to continue segregation. For example, policies such as zoning, creating school bus routes, drawing school district lines, etc., continued to separate Black and White students within the same school district (Patterson, 2002). It was not until Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 that school districts began to truly enforce integration because failure to do so would result in the loss of federal funding (Bell, 2005; Patterson, 2002), and in 1970, courts began ordering enforceable school desegregation mandates. Shortly thereafter, the Children's Defense Fund (1975) produced a report illustrating the excessive use of suspension with African American students.

The Children's Defense Fund. The Children's Defense Fund (1975) analyzed suspension and expulsion data provided by the Office of Civil Rights. This data included the discipline trends of over 24 million children across 2,862 school districts in the District of Columbia. This report also featured surveys from over 6,500 families in this region, and more than 300 interviews with educators, administrators, and school leaders. The study concluded that suspensions were used excessively with African American students.

The Children's Defense Fund (1975), as well as Larkin (1979), posit desegregation and forced integration as the onset of racial disproportionality. White teachers did not desire to teach Black students, and they did not receive any training to learn how to effectively serve these students. This resentment and lack of cultural competence made it much easier for White teachers to perceive Black students as aggressive, disrespectful, violent, and defiant (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). Moreover, ethnic and cultural differences between teacher-student and student-student relationships led to increased conflict in newly integrated schools. In response to these conflicts, African American students were suspended while their White peers received minimal to no punishment at all (Larkin, 1979). Thorton and Trent(1998) found that even though the use of suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment proved to be ineffective discipline practices for African American students, schools increased their use of such practices.

Zero Tolerance Policies

Although the excessive use of suspensions with African Americans might have been an unintended result of *Brown*, there is a direct correlation between zero tolerance policies and racial disproportionality (APA ZTF, 2008). Zero tolerance policies are defined as "a school or district policy that mandate predetermined consequence/s or punishment for specific offenses (U.S. Department of Education, 1998, p. 18). Castillo (2014) asserts that such policies undermine the authority of school administrators and impose fixed penalties for certain violations without

considering the extenuating circumstances or factors that may have led to the incident. The excessive use of zero tolerance policies has led to many student arrests and referrals to the criminal justice system, and Black and Latinos suffer the most. In 1986, the criminal justice system created what was known as the zero-tolerance program to address the rise in drug and weapon related crimes (Hoffman, 2014; Vidal-Castro, 2016). Likewise, policymakers began to apply zero tolerance policies in education as a solution to what many perceived to be an upsurge of violence in schools (Hoffman, 2014; Vidal-Castro, 2016, 2014). The media helped fuel these perceptions by focusing attention on youth gangs, gang membership, and gang violence. Black and Latino youth were featured in many of these broadcasts and were presented as "relentlessly violent super predators" (Triplett, Allen, & Lewis, 2014). These stereotypes of Black and Brown in the media continued to fuel the negative perceptions of these students in the school setting. Consequently, school districts in California, New York, and Kentucky were the first to implement these "one-strike-you-are-out" mandates and required students be expelled for drugs, fighting, or gang-related activities (Hoffman, 2014; Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014; Vidal-Castro, 2014).

Guns-Free School Act of 1994. Schools' enforcement of zero tolerance policies increased even more after President Clinton signed the *Guns-Free School Act of 1994* into law (Hoffman, 2014; Kaufman, Chen, Choy, Ruddy, Miller, Fleury, Chandler, Rand, Klaus, & Planty, 2000). This national policy required students to be expelled for a year if they were caught with a firearm on school property and to be referred to the criminal or juvenile justice system. As more school systems implemented this order, amendments to the *Guns Free School Act of 1994* allowed school leaders to consider more than guns as weapons. State governments and local school districts also expanded their zero tolerance policies to include drugs, alcohol, fighting,

threats, and even cursing (Hoffman, 2014). By the end of the 1990s, over 90% of public schools in America had zero tolerance policies for firearms and other weapons, 88% for drugs, 87% for alcohol, 79% for tobacco, and 79% for violence (Kaufman et al., 2000).

School Safety. With the perceived increase in school violence and a series of school shootings from 1990–1999, such as the massacre at Columbine High School in Colorado, school leaders really believed this policy would help schools be much safer and less susceptible to violence. Research suggests, however, that enforcement of zero tolerance policies does the exact opposite (Hoffman, 2014; Triplett, Allen, & Lewis, 2014). Skiba and Rausch (2006) found that zero tolerance policies and a "get-tough mentality" regarding school discipline correlated with worse school culture, lower academic achievement, higher student dropout rates, and an overdependence on suspension and expulsion as the primary method to preserve school safety and climate. The American Psychological Association (2006) conducted a ten-year study on zero tolerance policies and found similar results. Instead of promoting a school environment where students feel safe and secure, zero tolerance policies create a culture of fear where students constantly worry about being suspended or arrested.

Even though schools are not safer as a result of zero tolerance mandates, school districts continue enforce such policies as a viable solution to address student discipline. As a matter of fact, many school districts have expanded their definition of zero tolerance to include minor infractions such as school uniform violations, disrespect, and profanity (Sallo, 2011). As one might expect, the expansion of zero tolerance policies has doubled the number of suspensions and expulsions since the 1970s, and students of color are impacted disproportionately at a national level (Kang-Brown, Trone, Fratello, Daftary-Kapur, 2013; Sallo, 2011; Skibba et al., 2002). Black students in middle school are suspended almost four times more than White

students, and Latino students are suspended or expelled twice as often in comparison to their White peers (Kang-Brown, 2013; Losen & Martinez, 2013). The disparate use of exclusionary discipline practices is just as alarming based on gender. Males are twice as likely to receive disciplinary consequences in comparison to females. For example, nearly one-third of Black males across the nation were suspended at least once in middle school for the 2009–2010 school year (Kang-Brown, 2013).

Some would argue that students of color are disciplined more harshly because their behavior is worse; however, student self-reporting data and existing disciplinary records do not support the notion of racial differences in student behavior (Gregory et al., 2010; Skiba et al., 2002; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Wehlage and Rutter (1986) studied predictors of school punishment over a three-year period for 7^{th}, 9^{th}, and 11^{th} graders. Black students who participated in this study did not consistently self-report more misconduct in comparison to White students. Similarly, a national representative sample showed small discrepancies in self-reported unsafe behavior across racial groups even though referral data alluded to the disparities among these same groups. For example, there was no reported differences of weapon possession among Black, White, and AI/ANI youth (Dinkes, Cataldi, & Lin-Kelly, 2007), and Bauer, Guerino, Nolle, Tang, & Chandler (2008) found no statistically significant differences among White, Black, and Latino students who had been victimized by violence or theft. Specifically, 4.7% of Whites, 3.8% of Blacks, and 3.9% of Latinos reported being victimized within in the past six months of school.

The use of self-report data has been substantiated by studies using school discipline referral data (Gregory et al., 2010). These studies found no significant differences in rates of misbehavior according to race (McFaden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992; Shaw & Braden, 1990;

Skiba et al., 2002). In fact, in some settings, White students exhibited more disruptive behaviors such as defiance, fighting, bullying (McFaden et al., 1992) and were more likely to be referred for severe violations in comparison to Black students (Shaw & Braden, 1990). Skiba et al. (2002) reviewed discipline referral data for 19 middle schools in an urban school district to evaluate the hypothesis of behavior differences based on race and found no evidence that Black or White students were referred more serious offenses. This research team did find, however, that White students were referred for more objective reasons (smoking, vandalism, cursing) while Black students were written up for more subjective offenses (disrespect, threat, excessive noise).

Impact of Racial Disproportionality

Missed Instructional Time

Exclusionary discipline practices and the excessive use of zero tolerance policies put students who identify as Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian, and Alaska Native at risk for several negative outcomes (Skibba, Shure, & Williams, 2011). For example, when students are removed from the classroom repeatedly, they miss the opportunity to access instruction, which directly impacts their ability to be academically successful (Fabelo et al., 2011; Hunizec, 2017). Gregory, Skibba, and Noguera (2010) even suggest that exclusionary discipline practices contribute to the well-documented achievement gap. To demonstrate this point, Arcia (2006) studied two comparable cohorts for two years. These groups of students were similar in terms of gender, race, grade level, family level of poverty, and limited English proficiency. Students in one cohort had been suspended at least once while students in the second cohort had no suspensions. After one year of data collection, the students who had been suspended were three grade levels behind their counterparts. These same students were almost five years behind in their reading levels at the end of Year Two.

Instead of focusing solely on the long-term implications for missed instructional time, the state of Washington calculated the total number of school days missed due to suspensions or expulsions. Students in 183 districts across the state missed a total of 71,357 school days for the 2009–2010 school year due to either form of exclusion (Dhami & Fairbanks, 2016). Unsurprisingly, national data is even more disturbing. Of the 49 million students enrolled in schools for the 2011–2012 school year, 3.5 million students spent one or more days in ISS, 1.9 million were suspended for one day, 1.55 million had multiple suspensions, and 130,000 were expelled (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). In addition to missed class time, most districts do not have a formal process for ensuring student work completion and submission during suspensions or expulsions (Dhami & Fairbanks, 2016). Of the 183 Washington school districts that suspended or expelled students, only 7% reported providing educational services for students once they were excluded (Dhami & Fairbanks, 2016).

Grade Retention and Dropout

In addition to missed instructional time and academic deficits, school suspensions correlate with grade retention and are a moderate to strong predictor of students dropping out of school or graduating later than expected (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Recent researchers indicate that 31% of the students who are suspended or expelled repeat at least one grade. About 10% of the students who are suspended between grades 7 and 12 dropped out, and almost 59% of these students who received disciplinary action 11 or more times do not graduate from high school on time (Fabelo et al., 2011).

The probability of dropping out increases as students enter high school. Balfanz and Boccanfuso (2007) found that the dropout risk went from 16 to 32% for 9th graders with one suspension and increased to 42% if they were suspended twice. In Washington, 44,655 students

were suspended or expelled during the 2014–2015 school year, and 16,771 of the students surveyed said they dropped out of school due to suspensions or expulsions (Dhami & Fairbanks, 2016). National graduation rates allude to the impact of exclusionary disciplinary practices. For the 2014–2015 school year, the national graduation rate for White students was 88%, however it was 72% for AI/ANI, 75% for Black, and 78% for Hispanic and Latino students (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). The significant gaps between White students and students of color also affirm the pervasiveness of racial disproportionality.

School-to-Prison Pipeline (STTP)

Perhaps the most detrimental impact of racial disproportionality is the correlation between exclusionary discipline practices and the juvenile justice system. Simply put, the more often students are suspended or expelled from school, the more free time they have to engage in risky behaviors in their communities, which increases their likelihood of becoming court-involved youth (Mallet, 2016). This phenomenon, which is known as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP), is a national trend and impacts students of color more often than White students (Houchins & Shippen, 2016; McNeal, 2016). Nationally, Black students comprised about 16% of the student population for the 2011–2012 school year, but they represented 27% of the students who were referred to law enforcement and 31% of those who were arrested at school (Redfield & Nance, 2016). A Hispanic or Latino student in Philadelphia schools is 1.6 times more likely to be taken into police custody in comparison to a White student; and in Hartford, Connecticut, the arrest rate for Hispanic and Latino students is six times higher than the rate for their White counterparts (Sallo, 2011). Native youth are 1.5 times more likely to be incarcerated and referred to the adult criminal system in comparison to White youth (Rolnick & Arya, 2008).).

Even with the substantial amount of data to demonstrate the damaging effects of racial disproportionality and the ineffectiveness of zero tolerance policies for both schools and the

students impacted, many still support the incarceration of our most vulnerable youth. Therefore, it is imperative for supporters to consider the repercussion of such a belief. Federal, state, and local governments are spending close to $75 billion each year to fund correctional facilities (Houchins & Shippen, 2016;tt). More specifically, the average cost of incarcerating *one* youth is about $241 per day and over $87,000 per year. With recidivism rates ranging between 50% and 80%, a significant number of these youth are more likely to be incarcerated repeatedly than they are to graduate from high school (Ameen & Lee, 2012). How much are we, as well as these youth, really benefitting from this trajectory?

Evidence-Based Solutions to Potentially Address Racial Disproportionality

Schools and districts are charged with the responsibility of finding effective ways to address the prevalence of racial disproportionality (Skibba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). Many scholars recommend the use of evidenced-based approaches, programs, or interventions that provide tiered levels of support for students (National Association of School Psychologists, 2013; U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is one example of a multi-tiered system of support that has proven to positively impact behavior, increase the amount of time students spend in the classroom, and promote better educational outcomes for every student in a school setting (National Association of School Psychologists, 2013). Although not multileveled, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is another evidence-based program many schools use to address improve student discipline and to help youth develop both the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills they need to be successful (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004).

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a research-based system that helps schools plan, implement, assess, and evaluate their approach to student behavior and discipline

(Sugai & Horner, 1999). More specifically, the U.S. Department of Special Education, in collaboration with the University of Oregon, developed a model that challenged educators to explicitly teach and model how students were expected to behave, to provide more intensive services for students who needed them, and to consistently use data to inform any decisions made regarding disciplinary practices. This framework also emphasizes the use of data to determine what professional development opportunities teachers needed to help them be more effective with behavior and discipline (Sugai & Horner, 1999). Even though PBIS was initially developed to meet the behavioral needs of students served through special education, many schools across the nation have adopted this approach to promote a positive climate and to address the disciplinary concerns of *all* students (Cregor, 2008).

The PBIS framework provides three levels of support for students (Sugai & Horner, 1999). The first tier, also known as the universal or primary prevention level of intervention, focuses on ensuring that students understand schoolwide and classroom expectations and have the opportunity practice these expectations throughout the school day. When teachers provide high level of instruction for every student, establish clear and consistent routines and procedures in the classroom, teach and model behavioral expectations, and recognize students for positive behavior, research contends that at least 80% of students in a school setting will be successful with this first level of support (Sugai & Horner, 1999; Cregor, 2008)

Tiers Two and Three of PBIS focus on students who need more support in addition to the primary level of intervention they receive each day in the classroom (Sugai & Horner, 1999). The secondary level provides specialized group support for 10–15% of the student population who struggle with at-risk behaviors. A counseling group that focuses on social skills is an example of a Tier Two service students may receive based on the behavior(s) they exhibit. The

ultimate goal of Tier Two PBIS is to provide students with the necessary skills to prevent behaviors from worsening (Sugai & Horner, 1999). Teachers also help students at this level to apply what they learn in the group setting to classroom situations. Students who do not make progress with the secondary level of intervention proceed to Tier Three, which is the most intensive level of intervention before students are referred to testing for special education (Sugai & Horner, 1999; Cregor, 2008). The goal of the tertiary level of support is to provide students with individualized support in an effort to reduce the frequency and severity of their behavior(s). Examples of Tier Three supports include referrals to counseling mental health agencies for individual counseling, Check-In/Check Out (CICO), and individualized classroom management systems (Cregor, 2008). When schools implement PBIS with fidelity, the school should never have more than 5% of their population in Tier Three. The success of PBIS in any school setting is contingent on how well the primary level of intervention is executed (Sugai & Horner, 1999).

Schools and districts that employ the PBIS framework often experience overall reductions in discipline referrals, improvements in school climate, high teacher morale, and improved academic success among students. However, studies that have evaluated the impact of PBIS on racial disproportionality have found that even with the overall improvements mentioned, students of color, specifically Black youth, are still suspended and expelled significantly more than their White peers (Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012). These studies support the literature, which suggests that there is little research available to demonstrate the effectiveness of PBIS in closing the discipline gap between students of color and their White counterparts (Bal, Thorius, & Kozleski, 2012; Kaufman, Jaser, Vaughan, Reynolds, Di Donato, Bernard, Hernandez-Brereton, 2010; Skiba, Horner, Chung,

Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Swain-Bradway, Loman, & Vincent, 2014; Vincent, Sprague, & Gau, 2012; Vincent, Swain-Bradway, Tobin, & May, 2011).

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is another universal approach schools use in an effort to address discipline issues. SEL focuses on helping youth develop individual qualities and strengths related to their social emotional, cognitive, and moral development as well as their mental health (Berkowitz & Schwartz, 2006) et al., 2006; Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004). SEL also helps students learn to form better connections with others by developing their abilities to be self- and socially aware, to self-regulate, and to make good decisions (Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004). Like PBIS, SEL also focuses on prevention, however the evolution of SEL is extremely diverse (Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001; Weissberg, Caplan, & Harwood, 1991; Zins & Elias, 2006). More specifically, research focusing on resilience (Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001; Zins & Elias, 2006), youth development (Catalano et al., 2004; Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004), positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), and competent individuals as well as adaptive responses to demands in the environment (Waters & Sroufe, 1983) have influenced the development of SEL.

Many schools and districts that use PBIS frameworks also incorporate SEL as a part of their primary level of intervention and supports. When SEL programs are implemented in schools, they often include packaged curriculum lessons for teachers to use or lessons that can be easily integrated into an existing curriculum. Similar to PBIS, SEL programs emphasize the importance of allowing students to practice and apply what they learn as they work to develop their social, emotional, and moral competencies. Service learning, class meetings, and cooperative learning activities are also used to help foster these skills. Further, SEL approaches

frequently include a home-school competent to help reinforce the skills students learn in school. Other unique characteristics of SEL programs include a focus on student responsibility and supportive student-teacher relationships. These features, unlike the use of rewards and punishment in PBIS to prevent and correct behavior problems, help students develop the self-discipline they need to experience long-term success both academically and behaviorally (Bear, Cavalier, & Manning, 2005; Brophy, 1996).

Comprehensive literature reviews demonstrate the effectiveness of SEL programs when used as a whole-school approach. More specifically, these reviews show the positive impact SEL programs have on promoting mental health and preventing school violence, aggressive behaviors, and conduct problems (Hahn, Fuqua-Whitley, Wethington, Lowy, Crosby, & Fullilove, 2007; Lösel & Beelmann, 2003; Wilson, Gottfredson, & Najaka, 2001; Wilson & Lipsey, 2007; Wilson, Lipsey, & Derzon, 2003). Rigorous experimental studies of SEL programs such as PATHS (Providing Alternative Thinking Strategies), Second Step, Steps to Respect, and Caring School Communities also indicate significant improvements in student school behavior, decreases in aggressive and disruptive behavior (Greenberg, Skidmore & Rhodes, 2004), reductions in antisocial behavior, and improvements in socially competent behavior (Battistich, 2003; Frey, Nolen, Van Schoiack-Edstrom, & Hirschstein, 2005) as well as fewer incidents of bullying and conflict (Frey et al., 2005). Although such findings help improve school discipline for the overall school populations, the aforementioned studies do not speak to the issue of racial disproportionality.

Critique of PBIS and SEL Frameworks. Even with the implementation of PBIS and SEL, which are two credible approaches used to improve school discipline, students of color continue to experience disparate discipline practices in school. Many scholars believe that the

lack of focus on culture is the underlying reason for this unfortunately reality (Bal, Thorius, & Kozleski, 2012; Monroe, 2005 Rudd, 2014; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). For example, PBIS "promotes a set of principles and implementation strategies assumed culturally neutral and is intended to achieve a contextual fit in any given school depending on the situations in which teaching/learning and student behaviors take place" (Bal et al., 2012, p. 5). Instead of being "culturally neutral" when implementing PBIS, this research team asserts that schools must develop a PBIS framework that is also culturally responsive (Bal et al., 2012). Many schools support this notion with data to illustrate reductions or eliminations of racial disproportionality after integrating culturally responsive practices within their PBIS framework (Eber, Upreti, & Rose, 2010; Jones, Carvaca, Cizek, Horner, & Vincent, 2006; Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin, & Swain-Bradway, 2011; Wang, McCart, & Turnbull, 2007).

An abundance of research supports the notion that teachers' lack of cultural competence and responsiveness has a significant impact on the way they discipline students (Bal et al., 2012; Monroe, 2008; Rudd, 2014; Skiba, Michael,Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Although this issue could be the sole reason PBIS and SEL approaches do not effectively address racial disproportionality, teacher voices are not represented in the research to confirm or deny this notion. Because these professionals are the main stakeholder in schools responsible for implementing PBIS and/or SEL programs with fidelity, it would make sense for future research to gauge teachers' perspectives of what is needed to ensure these programs address the needs of students of color.

Restorative Justice

PBIS and SEL are optimal programs to help improve student behavior overall, however many schools use restorative justice as an innovative approach to address the issue of racial disproportionality (Fronius et al., 2016; Hurley et al., 2015). Restorative justice is rooted in the values and practices of many indigenous groups, such as the First Nations people of Canada and

the United States and the Maori of New Zealand (Zehr, 2005). Moreover, the standard of indigenous justice is grounded in a holistic philosophy and the worldview of aboriginal inhabitants of North America (Melton, 1995). This philosophy and worldview encompass routines, traditions, customary laws, and practices that are passed down by tribal elders through oral teachings. The circle of justice is an integral component of this holistic paradigm (Melton, 1995).

The circle of justice connects every person who is involved in a conflict on a continuum, with everyone focused on the same center. The center, which is the focal point of the circle, symbolizes the underlying problem that must be resolved to bring back peace and harmony for individuals directly involved in the conflict and the community (Melton, 1995). The continuum signifies the entire process: sharing of problems, dialogue and solutions, making amends, and restoring connections with others. The strategies used among indigenous people are rooted in restorative and reparative justice, the value of healing, and the importance of living in harmony with nature and other human beings (Melton, 1995).

Restorative Principles

Restorative principles refer to the healing process that occurs when personal or collective relationships have been damaged (Melton, 1995). Although the ultimate goal of restorative principles is to help both the victim and offender to return to a healthy physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual state, the victim's healing and restoration are the focal point of this process. Consequently, the offender must be deliberate in his or actions to regain the victim's as well as the community's dignity and trust (Melton, 1995). These purposeful acts, which are also known as reparative principles, may include making amends through an apology, asking for forgiveness, monetary compensation, or engaging in behaviors that demonstrate a genuine effort to make things right. The community aspect of reparative principles may involve intervention by family

elders or tribal leaders, however offenders remain an important part of the community as they learn to define boundaries, to demonstrate appropriate behavior, and the consequences of misconduct (Melton, 1995).

Evolution of Restorative Justice

Criminal Justice System. The concept of restorative justice emerged into the criminal justice system in the 1970s (Barnes, 2013). The purpose of its integration was to encourage government officials to address criminal behavior by balancing the needs of the community, the victim(s), and the offender(s) (Barnes, 2013; Van Wormer & Walker, 2013). Using a restorative lens would challenge lawyers, judges, police officers, and other law enforcement personnel to move away from the retributive philosophy of crime that emphasizes punishment and proof of wrongdoing above accountability for offenders and reparation for victims (Zehr, 2005). Aboriginal leaders believed this paradigm shift would also address the disparity of incarceration rates between Whites and indigenous groups or non-White citizens in their communities (Barnes, 2013). The indigenous people of Canada, the United States, and New Zealand were among the first to advocate for restorative justice to be used within their country's criminal justice system (Barnes, 2013;Zehr, 2005).

K-16 Education. By the end of 1995, Aboriginals in Australia accounted for almost 2% of this country's general population but 19% of those in prison (Barnes, 2013). The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Griffith University in Queensland designed a restorative justice program to address 367 crimes related to sexual offenses. From 1995 to 2001, 227 were managed by the courts, 119 by restorative conferences, and 41 by formal cautions (Gavrielides, 2013). A few of the reported benefits of the restorative process included victims feeling empowered instead of victimized and offenders having a safe space to admit their wrongdoing (Barnes, 2013).

Australia is also credited as the first country to integrate restorative justice into K-12 schools (Barnes, 2013; Fronius et al., 2016). Terry O'Connell, an Australian police sergeant, played a significant role in integrating the Family Conference Group (FCG) concept into Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, schools (Barnes, 2013). Even though the FCG process was created by the Maori of New Zealand, O'Connell adapted it into a community policing model. He created a script for police officers to use when leading the meetings and revised the script to reflect the feedback of facilitators and participants. O'Connell's script made it easier to facilitate conferences; it provided a format for training sessions and helped ensure implementation fidelity (Barnes, 2013). Furthermore, the "Wagga'" model also allowed victims, their family, and supporters to take a more active role in the process. As this Wagga framework became more popular with positive feedback from youth offenders and their families, K-12 school leaders in Australia began using this model to address incidents of misconduct in schools (Wachtel, 1997).

Presently, the FCG model continues to create stronger connections among students, their families, the school, and the community (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001; O'Connor & Peterson, 2014). Research also demonstrates this model's effectiveness in helping significantly reduce suspension and expulsion rates for students of color (McMorris, Beckman, Shea, Baumgartner, & Eggert, 2013; O'Connor & Peterson, 2014; Wearmouth, Mckinney, & Glynn, 2007). For example, Minneapolis Public Schools facilitated FCG with 83 students who were recommended for expulsion over a two-year period. Of the 83 students who participated in the FCG process, 55% were African American, 15% were Multiracial, and 12% were American Indian/Alaska Native. Pre- and post-survey data revealed significant improvements in several domains including: increased parent and student involvement in school, improved attendance, and decreases in fighting. Students who participated in FCG also experienced statistically significant

gains in the students' academic performance and credit accumulation (McMorris et al., 2013). Similarly, Wearmouth et al. (2007) used two case studies to describe the behavioral improvements two Maori boys made in school after participating in FCG.

Teachers are an integral part of the FCG process; however, the literature does not discuss their perspective of the FCG process, and it is unclear whether or not teachers receive training to learn how to function as effective members of a FCG team. Interestingly enough, research does highlight the importance of training social workers and school administrators to participate in this process (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001; O'Connor & Peterson, 2014). Social workers are often trained to facilitate the FCG process and to help families understand its purpose, and school administrators receive training to learn how to appropriately refer students for FCG (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001; O'Connor & Peterson, 2014). Because FCG is often used as a Tier Three intervention for students with challenging behaviors, it is highly likely that teachers have witnessed such behaviors in the classroom. Therefore, teachers not only need to be trained as vital members of the FCG process but researchers should also explore their perspectives of what is needed to help students be successful in the classroom after they have participated in FCG.

Reports/Program Evaluations. Similar to the FCG model in Australia, several school districts in the United States, including California, Colorado, Illinois, and Minnesota, have implemented various restorative justice approaches and programs. These programs range from teachers and students participating in informal restorative discussions to formal restorative meetings that include students, staff, community members, and family (Allard, 2015; Oakland Unified School District, 2014; Rowe, 2015). School districts in these states have also produced compelling evidence using pre- and posttest measures to illustrate how the above mentioned

restorative practices have successfully addressed racial disproportionality (Allard, 2015; OUSD, 2014; Rowe, 2015).

The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) in California has implemented restorative practices in over 24% of its schools. A recent report of the OUSD showed a 40% decline in the suspension rate for African American students for disruption/defiance. The report also found less of a Black/White discipline gap in schools that implemented RJ in comparison to those that did not (OUSD, 2014). Similarly, Denver's school district began using a district-wide restorative approach in 2006, and the discipline gap among Black, White, and Latino students narrowed after six years of implementation (Rowe, 2015). More specifically, suspension rates for Black students decreased from 17.7% to 10.4%, and the gap between Black and White students narrowed from 11.7% to 8.1% (Rowe, 2015). Similarly, in Illinois, the Peoria Public School system witnessed a 35% decrease in discipline referrals overall and a 43% reduction in referrals specifically for African American students (Allard, 2015; Armour, 2017; Rowe, 2015). These trends show the positive correlation between RJ and equitable discipline practices for students of color (Armour, 2017).

Quantitative Studies. Even though the schools and districts mentioned previously illustrate the positive impact of restorative practices, these evaluation reports are not empirical. Schools in Pennsylvania and Hong Kong quantitatively explored the impact of restorative practices on student behavior (Mirsky, 2007; Mirsky & Watchel, 2007; Wong, Cheng, Ngan, & Ma, 2011). Although the sample sizes of these studies were considerably smaller in comparison to the aforementioned studies, pre- and posttest data (Mirsky & Watchel, 2007), as well as an experimental design (Wong et al., 2011), illustrate the positive effect of restorative practices on student behavior and school discipline practices.

Mirsky (2007) implemented a Safer Saner School initiative in three Pennsylvania schools. Through this initiative, teachers and staff members were trained to facilitate restorative practices, such as circles and group meetings with students. A four-year analysis of this program showed significant reductions in office referrals, detention, disruptive behaviors, and fighting. Similarly, Mirsky and Watchel (2007) used restorative practices to teach students (919 youth) who attended school in alternative settings conflict resolution skills, decision-making skills, personal responsibility, and empathy. Pre- and posttest scales showed a two-thirds decrease in recidivism rates for youth who participated for six months. Wong et al. (2011) examined the effectiveness of a Restorative Whole-school Approach in addressing the issue of bullying in four Hong Kong schools. Comparison of an intervention group, a partial intervention group, and a control group over a two-year period yielded statistically significant reductions in bullying, increased levels of empathy, and higher self-esteem for students who fully participated in the intervention group.

Although the studies featuring schools in Pennsylvania and Hong Kong highlight the positive impact of school-based restorative justice, none of them evaluated its effect on racial disproportionality (Mayworm et al., 2016). Because restorative justice is believed to be the potential resolution to this dilemma (Fronius et al., 2016; Hurley et al., 2015), scholars must intentionally confirm or deny this notion in their research. Another concern with all of the quantitative studies discussed in this section is the lack of focus on teacher perspectives. More specifically, Mirsky (2007) use survey data to evaluate teacher perceptions of facilitating restorative practices and its impact on student behavior, however this study did not allow teachers to reflect on the factors that help them to implement restorative practices with fidelity.

Qualitative Studies. Although quantitative researchers rely heavily on discipline data, other school records, and survey data to substantiate the practicality and value of school based restorative justice, qualitative scholars explore the perspectives and experiences of various stakeholders in schools to establish its credibility (Burssens & Vettenburg, 2006; DeWitt & DeWitt, 2012; Grossi & dos Santos, 2012; Hantzopoulous, 2013; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Reimer, 2011; Shaw, 2007; Standing, Fearon & Dee, 2012; Wearmouth & Berryman, 2012). These studies also use a range of data collection methods, including observations, focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires, to establish patterns and themes that thoroughly describe the impact of restorative practices in ways that numbers cannot. Consequently, it is imperative to review qualitative research to further establish restorative justice's merit as a nontraditional approach to discipline.

In addition to using a variety of research designs and data collection methods, qualitative researchers explored an assortment of restorative practices in their studies. For example, two research teams used case studies to explore the impact of restorative circles in schools. Burssens and Vettenburg (2006) used a restorative group conferencing method in Belgium to address the needs of 20 victims who were hurt or harmed by the actions of nine offenders. Parents and supporters of both the victims and offenders also participated in the group conferencing process. After 11 conference observations and 62 participant interviews, every offender and offender supporter felt positively about confronting offenders regarding their actions, and the offenders reported not feeling shamed for their actions. Grossi and dos Santos's (2012) study featured a much larger sample size, which included 113 elementary students, 45 high school students, and 242 teachers in Brazilian public schools. This research team employed restorative circles to address bullying and conflict. Ninety-five percent of teachers believed discussions about conflict

were important and reported positive feelings regarding the use of restorative justice to facilitate these conversations. Students, similarly, reported feeling respected, heard, and calm as a result of participating in this restorative process. The overall climate of these schools improved as a result of implementing restorative circles.

Some qualitative researchers used a variety of restorative process within their individual studies to address school issues. For example, Shaw (2007) explored the impact of restorative practices that were used in 18 primary and secondary schools in Australia. These restorative practices included informal mini-conferencing, classroom meetings, formal community conference, relationship management, and social skill building. Teacher surveys and interviews revealed improvements with behavior management and supporting students' emotional needs as a result of using restorative processes. Even though Wearmouth and Berryman (2012) only focused on two case studies involving three Maori youth, an eight-week social skills classroom curriculum helped the student in case one improve his peer interactions and use of appropriate language. Similarly, the Maori brothers in the second case experienced a reduction in anti-social behavior, better school connectedness, and improved communication between home and school.

Just as some qualitative researchers implemented a number of restorative practices in their studies, other scholars chose to explore only one process throughout their research. Hantzopoulous (2013) conducted a two-year ethnographic case study to explore the impact of the Fairness Committee RJ Model in a small New York public school. This model allowed members of the school community, such as teachers, students, and office staff, to use dialogue and consensus to determine appropriate consequences for student infractions. Findings from participation observations, interviews with current and former students, and a survey showed that most students felt that the Fairness Committee helped improve school culture and personal

growth and responsibility among students. In Chicago, DeWitt and DeWitt (2012) explored the impact of a restorative program that was used to address a hazing incident that happened in a high school. The offenders involved in the hazing incident attended a session with a highly regarding facilitator to discuss the incident and hazing in general. These students also created and delivered presentations to 430 junior high– and high school–aged students that focused on the dangers of hazing. Finally, the offenders had to complete 20 hours of community services as a way to give back to the community for the harm they caused. Even after seven years of adopting this restorative approach, few students reported being victims or participants of hazing.

Kaveney and Drewery (2011), along with Reimer (2011), used case studies to explore teachers' experiences and perception of using restorative practices in schools. Kaveney and Drewery interviewed nine New Zealand teachers who participated in professional development sessions for class meetings and implemented this process in their classrooms. Participants reported improvements in the learning environment, relationships with their students, and student behavior. Teachers also reported a stronger sense of well-being. Instead of focusing on the effectiveness of school-based restorative justice, Reimer (2011) used a case study to explore four teachers' and two administrators' feelings and perceptions of executing restorative practices in Ontario schools. This researcher found that participants only had a moderate level of confidence in their ability to initiate restorative practices. Participants also expressed the need for the local government and district school leaders to move away from a retributive way of thinking and to provide the necessary funding to sustain restorative programming in the schools.

One positive attribute of the aforementioned qualitative studies is that researchers collected various forms of data to support their findings. These forms of data included observations, interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. Another strength is that participants

viewed restorative practices positively; many studies reported improved relationships (student-to-student and teacher-to-student) and school climate/culture (Burssens & Vettenburg, 2006; Grossi & dos Santos, 2012; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Reimer, 2011; Shaw, 2007; Standing et al., 2012) as a result of participating in restorative processes.

One concern regarding the reviewed qualitative studies is the lack of focus on racial disproportionality. Grossi and dos Santos (2012) and Hantzopoulos (2013) mentioned the prevalence of racial disproportionality, however Wearmouth and Berryman (2012) was the only study of these nine qualitative investigations to discuss exclusionary discipline practices and their negative impact on Native youth. This research team also contends that restorative justice is a culturally responsive form of discipline for Maori youth. For qualitative studies to be highly regarded in empirical research, scholars must intentionally explore the impact of school-based restorative justice on racial disproportionality. Moreover, both quantitative and qualitative scholars need to explicitly study how the variable of race influences the effectiveness of restorative practices (Cavanaugh, Vigil, & Garcia, 2014; OUSD, 2014).

Another issue with the aforementioned qualitative studies is that Kaveney and Drewery (2011) is the only one to focus solely on teacher perspectives. The other studies, in addition to the program evaluations/reports and quantitative studies administrators described, include restorative practice experts, school counselors, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s) in their participant sample. Although the perceptions of these stakeholders are important, little information is available in the current literature about how teachers make meaning and use restorative practices in their classrooms. Because teachers play an integral role in the successful execution of restorative practices, it is essential for more scholars to focus on teachers as research participants. Moreover, scholars must facilitate qualitative research designs to create a

theoretical framework that describes the skills and factors teachers feel are necessary to be competent with restorative practice implementation. Grounded theory, which is used to generate or discover theory, is the methodology for this study and will address the aforementioned concerns (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Teachers' Roles in Implementing Programs to Address Disproportionality

Teachers play a significant role in ensuring that Black and Brown students have equitable access to a quality education (Weinstein et al., 2003In addition to teaching content and differentiating instruction in ways that are accessible to students of color, these professionals are also responsible for creating a classroom environment that is conducive to their learning (Weinstein et al., 2003). Further, teachers are often the first line of communication for referrals, including but not limited to special education (Shealeya, McHatton, & Wilson, 2010), gifted education (Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008), counseling (Shealeya et al., 2010), and discipline (Skiba et al., 2011). Teacher referrals for discipline issues also directly correlate with the amount of time African American, Hispanic, Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native students spend outside of the classroom serving consequences such as detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension (Gregory et al., 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2014a).

Whether intentional or unintentional, teachers contribute to the prevalence of racial disproportionality (Monroe, 2008; Rudd, 2014). Similarly, teachers' ability to execute programs significantly impacts the viability of such frameworks in addressing disproportionate practices in discipline. As a result, it is critical for researchers to use teacher perspectives to develop a theory that will explain and describe the factors these professionals feel are necessary to implement programs or frameworks with fidelity. Their insight is especially important to confirm the viability of restorative justice as a paradigm that can eliminate racial disproportionality.

Furthermore, teacher perspectives could also reveal how PBIS and SEL frameworks can be strengthened to address racial disproportionality.

Teacher Efficacy

Origin of Teacher Efficacy

I believe that the construct of teacher efficacy will help to explain many of the factors teachers need to implement restorative justice with success and confidence. It is important for me, as the researcher, to acknowledge this presumption because it could possibly influence the data collection and analysis processes through this dissertation study (Charmaz, 2014). Teacher efficacy, or teacher self-efficacy, refers to teachers' perception of their capabilities to achieve the desired outcomes in student achievement and engagement, even among students who are challenging and unmotivated (Hoy, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000).

RAND Studies. The concept of teacher efficacy emerged from a RAND study in 1976 (Armour, Conroy-Oseguera, Cox, King, McDonnel, Pascal, Pauly, & Zellman, 1976). The purpose of this study was to evaluate reading programs used with students of color in Los Angeles. Teacher participants were asked to share their feelings of classroom efficacy by responding to two statements on an assessment. These statements were: (a) "When it comes right down to it, a teacher can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depend on his or her home environment, and (b) If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult and unmotivated student" (p. 23). The RAND research team combined teacher responses into one measure of efficacy—the degree to which a teacher believed he or she could have an impact or effect on student learning. The results showed that the more efficacious teachers felt, the more Black, Hispanic, and Latino students advanced in reading achievement (Armour et al., 1976). A second RAND study found teacher efficacy to strongly correlate with the continuation of federally funded programs even after funding had been terminated (Berman,

McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977). Specifically, teacher efficacy had a significant impact on student performance, the number of program goals achieved, the amount of teacher change, and the sustained use of strategies and methods even after the program ended (Berman et al., 1977).

Theoretical Foundation of Teacher Efficacy

Even though the objective of this dissertation is to develop a theory, it is also important to explain the theoretical underpinnings of teacher efficacy because they will influence the creation of the interview protocol for this study. Rotter (1966) and Bandura (1977) are major contributors to the establishment of teacher efficacy.

Rotter's Social Learning Theory. RAND researchers used Rotter's (1966) social learning theory to develop the two questions teachers to which teachers responded regarding efficacy (Armour et al., 1976). Rotter's social learning theory focuses on rewards, reinforcement, behavior, and expectancy. More specifically, Rotter asserts that the expectancy or expected outcome of a behavior is what motivates a person to engage in a particular behavior. If a person believes he or she will experience a positive outcome, this expectancy increases the chances of him or her engaging in the behavior. If a positive outcome manifests, this reward reinforces the behavior and increases the likelihood of the behavior reoccurring. Conversely, if a person experiences negative outcomes when he or she engages in a particular behavior, then the probability of repeated behavior diminishes. Rotter's (1966) social learning theory also contends that environmental factors can have just as much impact on behavior as psychological factors.

Applying Rotter's social learning theory to teaching, Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) posit that educators who believe that environmental influences overpower their ability to influence students' learning ultimately demonstrate the belief that reinforcement of their teaching efforts is beyond their control. This is also known as the external locus of control

(Rotter, 1966; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Educators who are confident in their ability to teach difficult or unmotivated students demonstrate a belief that reinforcement of teaching practices is within their control. This perception is also known as the internal locus of control (Rotter, 1966; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). In the RAND study described previously, student achievement in reading was higher for teachers who had a stronger internal locus of control (Armour et al., 1976).

Even though both RAND studies drew attention to the construct of teacher efficacy, scholars attempted to develop more comprehensive measures to address concerns regarding the reliability of the two-item scale (Ashton, Olejnik, Crocker, & McAuliffe, 1982; Greenwood, Olejnik, & Parkay, 1990; Guskey, 1981; Rose & Medway, 1981; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Rose and Medway (1981) developed a 28-item questionnaire called the Teacher Locus of Control (TLC). Results of this study found the TLC to be a stronger predictor of teacher behaviors than the Internal-External (I-E) scale developed by Rotter (1966). Greenwood et al. (1990) further examined the TLC as well as both RAND studies. This group of scholars found that teachers who had higher efficacy scores on both measures (I can, teachers can) also had higher scores for internal locus of control for student success and student failure situations in comparison to teachers who scored lower on both (Tschannen-Moran, 1998). Guskey (1981) developed an instrument to measure Responsibility for Student Achievement (RSA). Scores on this 30-item instrument indicated the extent to which teachers owned student outcomes. These scores also produced two subscale scores: responsibility for student success (R+) and responsibility for student failure (R-) (Guskey, 1981; Tschannen-Moran, 1998). While both the TLC and RSA were being created, another research team also worked to improve the reliability of the RAND efficacy questions by creating The Webb Efficacy Scale (Ashton et al., 1982). The

purpose of this scale was to keep a narrow conceptualization of teacher efficacy but to also extend the measure of it. Teachers who scored higher on this scale had fewer negative interactions in with teaching practices.

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. While one strand of research on teacher efficacy continued to develop based on Rotter's theory, another grew out of Bandura's social cognitive theory and construct of self-efficacy. Social cognitive theory contends that behavior, cognitive and individual factors, and behavior impact one another through reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Based on this notion, self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in her or his ability to organize and execute actions that will lead to the achievement of goals. Bandura also presumes that every individual has a certain level of agency or self-direction and many factors, including environmental supports and barriers, can enhance or lessen a person's agency (1986, 1997).

Outcome expectancy, which is another expectation within social cognitive theory, focuses on the consequences of performing a task with the expected level of competence (Bandura, 1986). An example of an outcome expectancy question is, "If I accomplish the task at that level, what are the likely consequences?" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 210). Outcome expectancies, whether they are physical or social rewards, celebrations, punishments, criticisms, or self-reflections, can encourage or discourage behaviors (Bandura, 1986; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

Bandura (1977, 1997) identified four sources teachers can use to develop their self-efficacy. These sources include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Master experiences or enactive mastery experiences occur when individuals experience repeated success with a particular task. This

recurring success raises a person's level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Master experiences are the most powerful source of efficacy because they provide accurate and tangible evidence that a person has what it takes to be successful (Bandura, 1997; Hoy, 2000). Hoy (2000) and Protheroe (2008) contend that enactive mastery experiences during student teaching and the first year of teaching have a significant impact a teacher's level of efficacy throughout his or her career. However, more longitudinal research of early teaching years is needed to confirm this notion (Hoy, 2000).

Instead of performing a task, vicarious experiences help individuals improve their self-efficacy by observing someone else who models a particular task (Bandura, 1977, 1997). If the observer feels connected to the model, this enhances the observer's sense of efficacy. Further, when the model performs a task well, the observer feels he or she can also accomplish the task. Conversely, if the model performs the task poorly, this can have a negative impact on efficacy development (Bandura, 1997; Hoy, 2000). Peer observations, practicum and student teaching experiences with strong teachers as supervisors, and professional development opportunities include a range of vicarious processes that can help educators to enhance their efficacy.

Social persuasion is when other individuals express their faith and belief a person's ability to succeed (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Although social persuasion may not lead to a sustained increase in self-efficacy, it can boost a person's self-efficacy and encourage them to attempt new strategies or to try harder to achieve tasks (Hoy, 2000). Examples of social persuasion include "pep talks" teachers may receive from administrators or teacher leaders as well as the commendations and recommendations teachers receive after classroom observations (Hoy, 2000). Such forms of persuasion often counter the setbacks teachers experience and encourage them to persist through difficult situations. However, the impact of social persuasion on teacher

efficacy is contingent on the level of credibility, honesty, and expertise of the persuader (Hoy, 2000).

Although physiological and emotional states may not be as influential as other forms of sources of efficacy, emotional, physical, and mental health have a profound impact on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). In fact, people often assess their capabilities based on their physiological and emotional states. For example, a teacher's level of arousal, which is also known as anxiety, stress, or excitement, can either enhance or diminish mastery experiences. Additionally, when teachers feel tired, irritated, or overwhelmed, they often equate these negative feelings to their physical inability to persevere (Hoy, 2000). This form of self-doubt can have a negative impact on teachers' personal efficacy. Bandura (1997) posits that activities such as exercise, stress management, and finding ways to reduce the tendency of negative emotions are some ways to enhance the physiological and affective states of individuals. For teachers, maintaining a balanced physiological and affective state may include learning and practicing self-care and mindfulness strategies, setting boundaries for doing school work outside of school, seeking counseling services through Employee Assistance Programs, maximizing their planning periods at school, receiving professional development opportunities to improve classroom management and teaching practices, and getting additional support with challenging students. Administrators and support staff play a significant role in helping teachers maintain a healthy physiological and emotional state. A substantial amount of literature equates physically and emotionally healthy teachers to high teacher morale and ultimately high student achievement (Hoy, 2000).

Gibson and Dembo (1984) used the two items from the RAND studies and Bandura's construct of self-efficacy to develop a more comprehensive and reliable measure of teacher

efficacy. Personal teaching efficacy, which aligns with the concept of self-efficacy, and adgeneral teaching efficacy, which aligns with outcome expectancy, were the two factors that emerged from this 30-item measure. Even though some researchers confirmed the existence of these two factors (Anderson et al., 1998; Hoy & Woolfork, 1993), other scholars used factor analysis to determine that several items loaded both factors. Consequently, many scholars use a 16-item version that loads one factor above the other on specific items (Woolfork & Hoy, 1990). Even with its inconsistencies, Gibson and Dembo's (1984) instrument has largely contributed to the advancement of teacher efficacy literature in the areas of teacher behavior, professional commitment (Coladarci, 1992), science teaching (Riggs & Enochs, 1990), student outcomes (Moore & Esselman, 1992), classroom management (Emmer & Hickman, 1990; Dibapile, 2012), and special education (Coladarci & Breton, 1997).

In an effort to address the inconsistencies across the aforementioned instruments, Bandura (1997) also created a scale to measure teacher efficacy. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale acknowledged the reality that teacher efficacy may be different across tasks and subject matter. Consequently, Bandura's (1997) instrument consisted of 30 items with seven subscales. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale highlights the overall point of contention in teacher efficacy research. Single-item measures, such as the two questions from the RAND study (Armour et al., 1966), cannot adequately capture the complex dimensions of the teacher efficacy; however, if the scales are too specific, they lose their predictive power and generalizability outside of studies that are measuring those same skills (Tschannen-Moran, 1998).

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Students of Color/Disproportionality

As previously mentioned, teacher efficacy is a teacher’s view of his or her own abilities to achieve successful outcomes in student achievement and engagement even with the most difficult students (Hoy, 2000). This perception impacts teachers’ thoughts, emotions, efforts, and

their actions (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Paneque, 2004). Moreover, when teachers and students come from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, this factor has a profound impact on the way they perceive and interact with these students. Ultimately, race differentials can either strengthen or lessen a teacher's sense of efficacy (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Obidah & Teel, 2001; Paneque, 2004).

Lynch and Hanson (2004) introduced a cross-cultural framework that teachers can use to help mitigate the issue of race when interacting with students of color. First, teachers must be aware of their own personal beliefs and assumptions as well as the knowledge and skills he or she possesses to be an effective educator. Next, educators must work to understand the worldview of students. These stakeholders must also be reflective of how their personal assumptions and biases may lead to negative perceptions of ethnic minorities. Finally, teachers must be able use culturally responsive teaching, interventions, and techniques to help students of color be successful in the school setting.

It is evident from the prevalence of racial disproportionality that many teachers do not employ the cross-cultural framework when working with students of color (Lynch & Hanson, 2004). Research demonstrates that teachers, especially those who are White, use a deficit model of thinking and do not set high expectations for students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Skiba et al., 2011). As previously mentioned, an abundance of research supports the notion that teachers' negative perceptions of students of color and their lack of cultural competence have a significant impact on the way they discipline students (Bal et al., 2012; Monroe, 2008; Rudd, 2014; Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2000). Consequently, it will also be important to explore the variable of race with teachers who participate in this grounded theory study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Problem and Purpose

Restorative justice is an alternative approach to discipline that many schools in the United States have adopted to address racial disproportionality (Fronius et al., 2016). Although a number of qualitative studies have been conducted to acknowledge teachers' perceptions of restorative justice and its effectiveness (Grossi & dos Santos, 2012; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Reimer, 2011; Shaw, 2007; Standing, Fearon, & Dee, 2012; Stinchcomb, Bazemore, & Riestenberg, 2006), no studies, to date, have asked teachers to explore the factors to which they attribute to their confidence and success in executing restorative practices in the classroom. Further, no theory has been developed to explain these factors. As a result of these, the purpose of this study is to use constructivist grounded theory to develop a theoretical framework that explains and describes the factors teachers need to implement restorative practices effectively.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this grounded theory study:

1. What factors do teachers feel are necessary to implement restorative practices effectively?
2. What factors make teachers feel confident in their ability to implement restorative practices effectively?

Research Design and Approach

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research allows researchers to understand phenomena based on context (Hays & Singh, 2012). Researchers gain this understanding by observing and/or actively listening to individuals' experiences with phenomena and by analyzing these forms of data to determine what patterns or themes that exist (Hays & Singh 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Unlike quantitative research, which supports the notion of an objective truth, qualitative research posits that multiple truths exist and that participants collaborate with researchers to co-construct this knowledge (Havercamp & Young, 2007). Qualitative inquiry also challenges researchers to reflect on and to consider how their values and biases will impact their research. A major strength of qualitative research is regard for participants as experts. More specifically, participants describe their emotions, feelings, frames of reference, and experiences in their own words, and researchers use these narratives to understand and explain phenomena in ways that large, standardized data tests cannot. These findings are more thorough and comprehensive when compared to the results described in quantitative research (Yilmaz, 2013).

Grounded Theory

This dissertation study employs grounded theory as the method of qualitative inquiry. "Grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 1). Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss developed grounded theory in the early 1960s, however additional models, such as classic grounded theory (Glaser, 1978), Strauss and Corbin's (1990) qualitative data analysis, the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000), and the feminist grounded theory (Wuest, 1995), have emerged since its conception. These models have addressed the need for more rigorous data collection and analyses procedures (Strauss & Corbin,

1990) and the need for scholars to consider how their epistemological and ontological perspectives impact the way they interpret and perceive data (Charmaz, 2000; Wuest, 1995). Because the goal of this study is to develop a theory to explain the factors teachers need to implement restorative justice with confidence and success, grounded theory is the most appropriate design for qualitative study.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

Charmaz's (2000, 2006, 2014) model of constructivist grounded theory (CGT) will guide this dissertation study. CGT is rooted in the belief that concepts are constructed, not discovered as proposed by Glaser (Evans, 2013; Glaser, 2002). More specifically, when participants share their experiences in relation to phenomena, their implicit meanings and experiential views represent constructions of reality. These constructions of reality are shaped and reshaped through data analysis to highlight collective categories and concepts among participants (Evans, 2013). A unique characteristic of CGT is that researchers are an integral part of the data collection and analysis process. Instead of attempting to remain objective, researchers are challenged to acknowledge how their beliefs, biases, previous experiences, and reactions to the data collected influence the decisions they make regarding the emerging patterns and themes (Charmaz, 2014).

There are several reasons why CGT is the best approach for this study. First, CGT aligns perfectly with the paradigm of qualitative inquiry. Qualitative research is rooted in a constructivist paradigm and, as mentioned previously, it supports the notion that multiple truths exists and that researchers and participants work together to co-construct knowledge. While other forms of qualitative research such as phenomenologies, case studies, and ethnographies also fall under the constructivist paradigm, they do not use data to create a theory (Havercamp & Young, 2007). Moreover, grounded theory is the most appropriate form of inquiry to use when a phenomenon has never been explored (Hays & Singh, 2012). To date, no theories exist to explain

what factors teachers feel they need to implement restorative practices effectively and with confidence. As a result, this grounded theory used teachers' interviews and focus group data to create a theory that explains and describes these factors. It also challenged me to acknowledge how my experiences with restorative justice as an educator and how my reactions to the data collected influenced the theory that was created.

Subjectivity Statement: My Role in the Research

As a former classroom teacher, I must be honest and say that in moments of frustration, I tried to convince myself to believe that some students could not be helped. I had many days when the rapport I had with my students, my patience, and my passion for teaching were just not enough to sustain me when dealing with challenging students. The students who made teaching difficult were usually Black males—not every Black male I taught but a few of them, and although they were few in number, they had the power to totally change the positive culture of my classroom.

I spent the first couple of months of my first year of teaching frustrated and confused on certain days. I could not figure out what was going on with these Black males. They seemed to not care about school—no matter how fun and creative my lessons were. Instead of focusing on their academic progress, they were more concerned with looking "cool" and being the class clown. These students misbehaved incessantly and created situations in my classroom that compromised the safety of others. How was I supposed to address this behavior every day without losing my cool, help these students to close gaps in their learning, and meet the needs of the 25-plus other kids in my classroom? On some days, it felt easier just to get rid of them—for my sanity and out of respect for the other students who demonstrated their desire to learn. As a result, I would time them out to other classrooms or just send them to the office. That sense of power felt so good in the moment, but I would lose so much sleep at night from the guilt I felt.

The guilt came from the fact that I knew better. I earned my Professional Counseling degree before becoming a classroom teacher, so I knew there had to be underlying reasons as to why these Black boys behaved in such negative ways. Moreover, my experience of working in an alternative school had taught me that many Black males who are not successful in the traditional school setting end up dropping out altogether, being kicked out of school, and/or going to jail. I knew that if I did not find ways to connect with the Black males who challenged me, I would ultimately perpetuate the same processes I learned about in my Master's program.

About three months into my first year of teaching, I found myself spending more time with these challenging Black males. I played basketball and football with them during recess, I sat and ate with them during lunch so I could learn more about them on a personal level, and when they displayed negative behaviors in my classroom, I would use my planning time to have conversations with them in lieu of kicking them out of class. Our conversations would focus on the following questions: (a) What do you think happened in this situation? (b) Why did it happen or what triggers led to this behavior/these behaviors? (c) How do you think your behavior impacted everyone else in the class or in this situation? (d) What could I have done differently in the situation? (e) What could you have done differently in this situation? (f) What will we both do differently if this situation were to happen again?

These conversations did not magically fix all of the behavior issues I had to manage, but as I moved into my second semester as a novice teacher, I found myself having fewer of these conversations with my Black males because their efforts improved tremendously. Having this repeated dialogue helped me understand their frustrations and what they needed to be more successful in our classroom. These conversations also helped me realize that my insider status as a Black woman was not enough to connect with some of my Black students. I assumed that being

Black meant that I would automatically gain their respect and trust, however our conversations taught me that many people in their lives who looked like me—like us—had been the ones who hurt them. These Black males shared experiences of the hardships in their families and discussed being disappointed by one or both parents as well as other family members. These students also talked about their negative experiences with previous teachers, who they perceived not to care about them or to believe in them. School was not always a place where they felt connected, so their behaviors were often a way to rebel against a system they felt did not want them anyway.

I believe these meetings with my challenging students helped me just as much as it helped them. When their behaviors did not contribute to a positive classroom environment, I worked to figure out the underlying issue(s). I even found myself adapting some of my teaching practices to better accommodate their needs. I had no idea I was using somewhat of a restorative approach within my classroom management system at the time, but what I did know was that my efforts were working. The more I saw the positive results, the more confident I felt implementing nontraditional teaching and discipline strategies in my classroom. This renewed sense of power was one that helped me build better relationships with my Black males and to sleep well at night.

As a former classroom teacher, current professional school counselor, and someone who has knowledge of and experience with implementing restorative justice strategies in my work with students, I must acknowledge my insider status in relation to this study (Greene, 2014). Based on my experiences, one assumption I have is that teachers' level of confidence and personal perception of their competence plays a major role in the successful execution of restorative practices. I must also acknowledge my assumption or bias that teachers are the most qualified professionals to determine what factors are necessary to implement restorative justice with fidelity. This assumption is based on my lived experiences of being a classroom teacher.

Memo writing will be an integral part of this dissertation process because this method of reflection will help me ensure that my biases, assumptions, and experiences do not cause me to misinterpret participants' experiences throughout the data collection and analysis process.

Context of Study

Research demonstrates that racial disproportionality is far worse in schools and districts where children of color comprise majority of the student population (Kaufman et al., 2000; Welsh & Payne, 2010). As a result, I intentionally selected teachers who work in school districts that serve majority or significant populations of African American, Hispanic, and Latino to participate in this study. More specifically, the teachers for this study represent school districts located in Georgia, Washington, DC, and Connecticut.

The majority of the participant sample is representative of the Georgia school district. This district serves almost 13,700 students who come from diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and economic backgrounds. For example, African American students represent 49% of this district's population; Hispanic and Latino students make up 24%, White students account for 21%, and the remaining 6% is comprised of students who are Asian or multiracial. In addition to having students and families who were born in various countries outside of the United States, this district also acknowledges the 31 different native languages spoken among students. Further, many students and families in this school district account for the county's 37.8% poverty rate (Athens-Clarke County by the Numbers, 2017).

The students in this district are spread across 21 schools: 14 elementary, 4 middle, 4 high (one of which focuses on dual enrollment), and one school for alternative placement. Schools, and the district as a whole, have received many accolades for efforts over the years. For example, this district is a national and state leader in creating personalized digital learning systems. It also provides district-funded dual enrollment opportunities for students, and all middle schools and

the two traditional high schools were International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme World Schools up until the 2018–2019 school year.

Even with all its awards and recognitions, this district is still struggling to find effective interventions to address racial disproportionality. Based on 2016–2017 discipline data (2016–2017 District Data—Analysis of Behavioral Data, 2017), African American students received 80% of the office discipline referrals issued for the entire district, and Hispanic and Latino students accounted for 10% of the referrals. White students, contrarily, represented only 6% of the ODRs for the district. The suspension data is even more disheartening. African American students account for 5169 (83.2%) of the out-of-school suspension (OSS) days assigned to students in the district; Hispanic and Latino students received 500 days of OSS for the year, and White students received 247 days of OSS as a subgroup. Similarly, African American students served 3093 (79.3%) days of in-school suspension (ISS) for the 2016–2017 school year, Hispanic and Latino students served 408 days, and White students served a total of 199 days of ISS for the entire school year. The new superintendent communicated to all staff and personnel in October 2017 that finding effective ways to address racial disproportionality would become one of the district's top priorities.

Selection of Participants

I used purposeful sampling to recruit 12 teachers to participate in this study. Even though purposeful sampling is a nonrandom sampling technique, it is popular in qualitative research because it acknowledges the need for researchers to recruit participants who are willing to contribute and can dedicate the amount of time required to participate in a study (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). This sampling method also allowed me to intentionally choose participants who are knowledgeable and have some experience with restorative justice, which is the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2014). Purposeful sampling

aligns well with grounded theory because it encourages researchers to recruit participants who can communicate their experiences and perspectives in an articulate, expressive, and reflective way (Palinkas et al., 2015)

The twelve educators selected to participate in this study met the following criteria:

1. currently teach in a P-12 school that serves majority or a significant population of African American, Hispanic, and Latino students.
2. teach African American and/or Latino students.
3. have participated in one or more restorative justice training.
4. practice implementing restorative practices in the classroom.
5. be available to participate in a 45- to 60-minute individual interview and a 60- to 90-minute focus group interview .
6. be available to provide follow up information if necessary

Rationale for Selection Criteria

As mentioned in Chapter 2, much of the research that has been conducted to evaluate or to explore the effectiveness of restorative justice in schools has been done in public school settings. As a result, this study also includes teachers who work in a public school setting. Similarly, because research clearly demonstrates the impact of racial disproportionality on African American and Latino students, it was critical for teachers who participate in this study to have some experience teaching students who identify with one of these ethnic groups. Last, a characteristic of both grounded theory and purposeful sampling is that participants must have experienced the phenomenon of interest (Birks & Mills, 2015). Consequently, educators selected for this study must have participated in at least one restorative justice training and be actively working to implement the tenets and strategies in the classroom. In addition to participating in an

individual and focus group interviews, I requested that teacher participants also be available for follow up information if needed (Charmaz, 2014).

Selection Process

To identify teachers from schools in the Georgia school district, I contacted the executive director of a local organization who facilitates restorative justice training to schools in this district. I asked him to provide a list of schools for which he facilitated trainings from August 2015 to May 2017. Selecting schools that have received training within this period helped ensure that the teachers who volunteered to participate had some time to implement restorative justice training in their classrooms. Based on this list, I sent an introductory e-mail (Appendix A) to the building leaders of these schools and asked them to forward a recruitment letter to teachers on their staff (Appendix B). The letter outlined the scope of this study, the criteria for participating, and my contact information. When my initial request only yielded four participants, I asked principals and the executive director of this local organization to recommend teachers who might be willing to participate. I sent these teachers a personal e-mail and the recruitment letter (Appendix B).

When the Georgia school district did not yield the initial twelve participants I needed, I contacted another representative of this local organization. This person was a Restorative Practices (RP) Facilitator in Washington, DC, schools before relocating to Georgia. He put me in contact with DC teachers who fit the participant criteria, but he also put me in communication with another RP Coordinator. This connection helped me lock in teachers from Connecticut schools.

Once potential participants contacted me by e-mail or phone to express interest in participating, I e-mailed them a copy of the informed consent and asked them to share their availability for an individual interview. Once we solidified a date/time for the interview, I

worked with participants to designate a meeting place that was most comfortable for them. Some teachers preferred to meet at my school site and other preferred that I come to their school site for the interview. Although I conducted face-to-face interviews for all seven of the Georgia teachers, for others I had to use computer and phone software such as Skype and FaceTime, which allowed me to use audio and video calling. I also used the Voice Recorder application on my phone to record the interviews as a backup.

Before the interview started, I asked participants to respond to the demographic questions (Appendix B). I also reviewed the informed consent (Appendix C) and asked if they had any questions before signing it. I had Washington, DC, and Connecticut teachers e-mail me a signed copy of their informed consent. Last, I reiterated that participation in this study was voluntary and could be discontinued at any time. I also informed participants that they would receive a $25 incentive for participating in the interview process.

Additional Measures of Ethical Protection

"It is ethically imperative that practitioners who conduct research contribute to the knowledge base and improve clients' lives" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 67). As a result, I worked to maintain high ethical standards throughout this dissertation study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). One element of providing clear and explicit information regarding informed consent was making sure that participants understood the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Consequently, I explained the purpose of IRB, provided them with the IRB reference number for this study, and informed them of their right to speak with me and/or to contact the University of Georgia's IRB if they felt any of my research procedures were unethical.

Confidentiality is also a critical element of informed consent and relates to the participants' right to privacy throughout the research collaboration (Hays & Singh, 2012). During individual interviews, I assigned each participant a number to protect their privacy. I am

the only person who knows which teacher names correspond with the number. During focus groups, however, each teacher selected a pseudonym and used a nametag to identify her or himself. We set norms during our focus group session related to confidentiality. These norms were: (a) call each person by the name listed on her or his name tag, b) do not disclose to others who participated in the focus group, c) do not share the content of our focus group discussions with others, and d) refer to school names by letters (School A, School B).

In an effort to protect each participant's confidentiality, I will keep all transcribed interviews in a secure file cabinet for approximately one year from the date the University of Georgia accepts my dissertation. I also informed each participant that a person or company with no ties to this school district would transcribe their individual and focus group interviews. If any participants were uncomfortable with this, I was prepared to transcribe their individual interviews. Each participant also had the opportunity to review the transcription for her or his individual and focus group interviews and request any revisions.

Data Collection

An extensive number of grounded theory studies have relied on interviewing as its primary method for generating data (Birks & Mills, 2015). As a result, individual interviews as well as a focus group interview were the primary sources of data collection for this dissertation study. I facilitated individual interviews April through mid-May 2018. Each interview lasted 45–80 minutes. The same educators had the option to participate in the focus group interview late May 2018. Although the goal was to have at least six participants, only five teachers participated, and they all represented the Georgia school district. The focus group interview lasted 2.5 hours. We met in a location that was a public space but still allowed for privacy, comfortability, and easy access for participants. I used a digital recorder as well as the iMovie feature to record the focus group interview.

Birks and Mills (2015) along with Parry and Johnson (2015) recommend using an interview structured in grounded theory that helps the interview process flow naturally and allows me the flexibility to revise or add questions to the interview protocol based on the evolution of the study. As a result, I used a semi-structured interview format with a flexible interview guide for individual interviews (Charmaz, 2006; Johnson & Parry, 2015). This semi-structured protocol consisted of open-ended questions to encourage teachers to speak openly regarding their experiences of implementing restorative practices in the classroom (Appendix D). More specifically, this interview guide opened with a few questions to help ease participants into the phenomenon of interest. For example, I asked them: (a) what made you want to become a teacher? (b) What do you love most about teaching? (c) Tell me about the students you teach.

Next, the protocol consisted of questions that allowed teachers to share their experiences with restorative justice and practices training and implementation. Then, I posed questions to encourage participants to self-reflect on their strengths and areas of growth with using restorative practices as a nontraditional approach to discipline. Finally, I asked teachers to explore the factors they feel are needed to help them implement restorative practices effectively, or more effectively, and with confidence. Interview questions were grounded in restorative practices/strategies (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005), professional development and training for restorative justice and practices (Mayworm et al., 2016), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), and teacher efficacy (Hoy, 2000). The interview protocol included questions such as: In how many professional development or trainings for restorative justice have you participated? What restorative practices or strategies do you use in the classroom? How would you describe your level of confidence with implementing restorative practices in the classroom?

The focus group was as an extension of the individual interviews. In addition to being a valuable tool for developing categories in grounded theory, focus groups allow the opportunity for diverse perspectives and a range of experiences throughout the conversation (Birks & Mills, 2015; Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). This method of interviewing also allows participants to respond to and feed off the responses of others in the group (Birks & Mills, 2015). Another significant advantage of using a focus group for this grounded theory study was the chance to have participants expound on recurring categories that emerged in individual interviews.

I also used a semi-structured interview protocol with a flexible guide for focus group interviews (Appendix G). As mentioned previously, I revised the guide to include questions that would help add more data to the categories created from the individual interviews. The semi-structured format not only provides the structure needed to ensure the interview is well paced but it also allows the flexibility necessary for participants to feel comfortable fully sharing their experiences and perspectives (Birks & Mills, 2015).

It was critical for me to plan for the factors that could have a negative impact on the individual interviews and focus groups. Specifically, I piloted interview questions with a teacher to ensure the interview protocol questions lacked bias, were not redundant, and were easy to understand. This pilot interview also helped ensure the audio recorder I would use to record interviews worked well. Before the focus group session, I sent the revised interview protocol to participants to review and asked them to provide feedback regarding any revisions I should make to ensure the questions were not biased, redundant, and were easy to understand.

It was also important for me to consider how the group process would affect participants (Birks & Mills, 2015). Specifically, the group process can be intimidating to some individuals, so it was important to build rapport among the participants and myself (Birks & Mills, 2015). I used

my group counseling skills to facilitate a quick icebreaker and asked participants to help me create 3–5 group norms to which we would all adhere (Birks & Mills, 2015). The icebreaker questions were: what are your plans this summer? How will you practice self-care over the break? The main norm centered on confidentiality, which was mentioned earlier. I used my audio recorder for the icebreaker portion of the focus group session and played a segment of it back to ensure I could hear each person's voice well.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this dissertation study consisted of interview transcriptions, coding, constant comparative method, memo writing, and theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2014. The first step was to have all the interviews transcribed. Even though Charmaz (2000) recommended that researchers transcribe their own interviews in constructivist grounded theory research, I hired a transcription service to transcribe each interview with a 24- to 48-hour turnaround period. I did, however, take additional steps to connect with the data in meaningful ways. I facilitated the interviews, I wrote extensive memos after each interview (Birks & Mills, 2015), and I also reviewed each transcription using the recording to check for accuracy.

Memo Writing

Memo writing or memoing is a fundamental component of grounded theory research and is used in various ways throughout the entire research process. For example, researchers use memoing as a way to: 1) map out their research activities, 2) explore and question the interpretations they pull from data, 3) refer back to earlier stages once the analysis process becomes more complicated, and 4) communicate with other stakeholders who are vested in a research project (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2014). I used a journal to write memos between each interview as a way to document my "thoughts, feelings, insights, and ideas in relation to this research project" (Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 39). Using a journal, dating each memo, and

creating a brief title to describe each entry helped establish a timeline of my experiences connected to this study and determine how my interpretations evolved over time (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2014).

Coding

Once individual interviews had been transcribed, the coding process began. “Coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain these data. Through coding, you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means” (Charmaz, 2014, p.113). Because I am utilizing constructivist grounded theory, I used initial and focused coding to analyze both the individual interview and focus group data (Charmaz, 2014). Theoretical coding is the third and most advanced phase of coding in constructivist grounded theory, however the influence of prior knowledge in this stage of coding is a point of contention for grounded theorists (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978). Further, Charmaz (2014) asserts that most projects will suffice with only initial and focused coding. For these reasons, I did not use theoretical coding in this dissertation study.

Initial coding is the first step in grounded theory analysis. During this phase, I analyzed data word-by-word, line-by-line, segment-by-segment, and/or incident-by-incident until categories began to form (Charmaz, 2014). Line-by-line coding, which means to name each line of the written data, was the first type of coding used in this study (Charmaz, 2014). Line-by-line coding is a useful technique for early stages of analysis because it “ensures that our analysis is truly grounded and that higher level categories, and, later on, theoretical formation, actually emerge from the data, rather than being imposed on it (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2015).

To begin the initial coding process, I used comment tracking in Microsoft Word to code each line using a short phrase (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). I used the in vivo method to code each line using participants’ words to ensure that the code represented participants’ thoughts as

opposed to mine. I also used gerunds to describe each code as a way to help me identify actions and processes within the data (Charmaz, 2014). Overall, line-by-line coding helped me identify invisible patterns, acknowledge implicit concerns of participants, and remain open to exploring the theoretical possibilities I could detect in the data (Charmaz, 2014). The initial coding process resulted in 139 codes (Appendix E).

I also used incident-by-incident coding in this first state of analysis. This type of coding, which is very similar to line-by-line coding, is a comparative study of incidents. Charmaz (2014) explains that "here you compare incident with incident, then as your ideas take hold, compare incidents to your conceptualization of incidents coded earlier" (p. 128). For this study, this type of coding allowed me to compare and contrast participants' experiences with restorative justice training and with implementing restorative justice in their classrooms. I created a Google spreadsheet to assist with incident-by-incident coding. Specifically, I created a tab for each initial code and listed each participant's name in her or his own column. Then, I cut and copied incidents from each transcription onto the respective initial code tab and under the corresponding participant's name.

Personal reflection is also a critical element of initial coding. During this first stage of data analysis, I simultaneously used memo writing to question my motives and influences for selecting certain theoretical categories in an effort to guarantee that the analyses represented the data instead of my preconceived notions or prescribed codes. Charmaz (2014), Glaser (1978), and Glaser & Strauss (1967) offered questions I used to question the data:

1. What is the data a study of? (Glaser, 1978, p. 57; Glaser & Strauss, 1967)
2. What do the data suggest? Pronounce? Leave unsaid?
3. From whose point of view?

4. What theoretical category does this specific datum indicate? (Glaser, 1978)

The comparison process that takes place throughout initial coding and the rest of the data analysis process in grounded theory is known as the constant comparative method (Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2014). Constant comparison occurs when researchers compare incidents to other incidents in the data to generate initial codes. "Future incidents are then compared with existing codes, codes are compared with codes, groups of codes are collapsed into categories with which future codes are then compared, and categories are subsequently compared with categories" (Birks & Mills, 2015, p. 90). Constant comparison drives theoretical sampling as well as the ongoing collection and production of data. It also helps researchers develop categories that are rich in meaning and reflect a high level of conceptual abstraction (Birks & Mills, 2015).

As I constantly compared the incidents that appeared across interviews, I asked remaining participants if they had experiences or incidents similar to those expressed by teachers who had already participated in their individual interview. Once categories began to form and I knew I had established a strong sense of analytic direction through initial coding, I used focused coding to synthesize, analyze, and conceptualize larger chunks of data from individual interviews (Charmaz, 2014). This second stage of coding began by highlighting the codes that appeared most often among the initial codes as well as those that had the most significance in comparison to other codes. Specifically, after I had conducted all 12 individual interviews and analyzed the initial codes, I reviewed each of the 139 tabs that I created using Google spreadsheets. Each tab represented a different initial code. I reviewed each tab to determine what incidents had been cut and copied from the individual interview transcriptions. Then, I reviewed the individual interviews again to make sure I did not miss any important large chunks of data. If initial codes

had incidents or large chunks of data from at least eight participants, I highlighted these codes green (Appendix F). I also grouped these codes based on their similarities.

One advantage of focused coding is that it allowed me to analyze the data quickly without comprising the detail extracted from initial codes. Another benefit is that it helped condense and refine the coding I had already done by highlighting what was most significant in my emerging analysis. Finally, focused coding helped me produce codes that were more conceptual than those formed through initial coding and led me closer to theory development (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978).

Memo writing and constant comparisons were used simultaneously to organize the large number of conceptual codes that were generated as a result of focused coding. I used memo writing to define these codes, to explain their properties, to identify themes and patterns that exist among the codes, and to describe the circumstances that sustain or change the categories. These reflections also helped me form categories and subcategories. I then compared the data, the categories, and the subcategories in an effort to integrate categories. This process helped me identify gaps and insufficiencies in my data that required further data collection/generation (Birks & Mills, 2015).

I used theoretical sampling to address the deficiencies of the categories formed through initial coding. This strategy allowed me to "collect pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories in my emerging theory" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 192). Further, I used memo writing and constant comparisons to create the properties of my categories until no new properties manifested. "Thus, you saturate your categories with data and subsequently sort and/or diagram them to integrate your emerging theory" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 192).

I used focus group interview data to facilitate the theoretical sampling process. I revised my semi-structured interview protocol to reflect questions that would help me to learn more about my categories (Appendix G). Specifically, I took the focus codes that I organized according to their similarities and I aligned them with my research questions. During the focus group interview, I explicitly asked participants to expound on each of the focused codes in the relation to the research questions. Once I received the focus group transcription, I used incident-by-incident coding for the initial coding process. I added the incidents to the Google spreadsheet under each respective tab and within each corresponding participant's column, but I highlighted the incidents green to indicate that this data came from the focus group interview. Using a different color helped me identify when participants saturated a code.

Once I determined which codes had been saturated, I engaged in more memo writing to reflect my abstract concepts and to document the insights I had while enhancing my existing categories (Charmaz, 2014). I also referred back to the incidents in my Google spreadsheets to create category names for each of the groups of focused codes that remained after saturation (Appendix H). Memo writing was also a critical element in determining which groups of codes fit under subcategories (Appendix I) and creating the diagram that aligned with participants' descriptions of each category.

Trustworthiness

Even though the purpose of this study was to create a theory that explains the factors teachers feel they need to implement restorative justice with confidence and fidelity, an overarching goal is to produce research that research participants, teachers, stakeholders in education, and research scholars will use to improve educational practices (Hays & Singh, 2012). Consequently, it was important to use certain strategies to ensure my dissertation is credible and trustworthy.

Memos

As described in the data analysis section of this chapter, I used memos to explain and analyze codes and categories as they developed. I also used memos to record my thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the data collected (Hays & Singh, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Memoing helped improve the credibility of this study because it challenged me to address my biases, attitudes, and perceptions that could have a negative impact on the way I interpreted the data.

Bracketing

I also used bracketing throughout my dissertation process. Bracketing is a process where researchers work to set aside their preconceived notions, biases, assumptions, theories, and previous experiences to fully see and describe the phenomenon based on the experiences of participants (Gearing, 2004; Tufford & Newman, 2010). To achieve this goal, researchers must willingly engage in an honest, self-reflective process to determine how their perspectives influence the way data is collected and analyzed (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Within the grounded theory tradition, Creswell and Miller (2000) suggested that researchers begin "acknowledging their beliefs and biases early in the research process to allow readers to understand their positions, and then bracket or suspend those researcher biases as they study proceeds" (p. 127). Acknowledging research biases also means reflecting on the social, cultural, and historical forces that influence of interpretation (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Writing memos is also a form of bracketing (Cutcliffe, 2003; Tufford & Newman, 2010). As mentioned previously, I used memos before, during, and after the data collection and analysis process to examine my reactions, emotions, and interpretations of the data (Cutcliffe, 2003; Hays & Singh, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Another method of bracketing I have used was a reflexive journal to record my preconceptions throughout the research process (Tufford &

Newman, 2010). For example, before I began working on my subjectivity statement for this study, I used a journal to record the following: (a) my reasons for doing this research (b) parts of my identity that afford me privileges in life; (c) parts of my identity that can be attributed to the oppression, discrimination, and marginalization I experience daily; (d) what it means to be a researcher; (e) ways I can use my privilege as researcher to help others; (f) feelings I have about this research topic; and (g) ways I will deal with the negative emotions I feel in relation to this research (Hanson, 1994; Paterson & Groening, 1996).

Member Checking

Member checking is one of the key strategies qualitative researchers can use to establish trustworthiness (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This process allows participants the opportunity to give feedback regarding the data collected. Member checking also aligns well with constructivist grounded theory because research participants are regarded as equals. I gave research participants the opportunity to review transcript data and asked them to inform me of how well the data represents their experience. I also conducted a focus group to ensure that the generated theory fully represents the voices of the teachers who participated in this study (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Peer Debriefing

In addition to having participants to review the individual and focus group data, I also consulted with committee members to receive feedback about my research design as well as the process I used to develop codes, categories, and the final theory. Committee members also reviewed my coding process to ensure my initial and focus codes reflected participants' sentiments.

Audit Trail

It is critical to maintain an audit trail in qualitative research. “[A]n audit trail provides physical evidence of systematic data collection and analysis procedures” (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 214). I kept a binder in a locked file cabinet with the following contents: timeline of research activities, participants’ contact information, informed consent forms, recorded and transcribed interviews, interview protocols, memo journal, and every draft of my coding (Hays and Singh, 2012).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to use constructivist grounded theory to create a theory that explains and describes the factors that make teachers feel confident and successful with the execution of restorative practices. The questions guiding this research were: a) What factors do teachers feel are necessary to implement restorative practices effectively, and b) What factors make teachers feel confident in their ability to implement restorative practices effectively? I used a semi-structured interview protocol for both individual and focus group interviews. Further, Rotter's (1966) social learning theory and Bandura's (1977, 1986) social cognitive theory influenced the construction of the interview questions presented to participants. The purposes of this chapter are to: (a) present the teacher participant sample, (b) share the findings of this dissertation study, and (c) describe and illustrate the analysis process used to create the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*.

Participants

Table 1 will help readers understand the individual and collective demographics of teachers who participated in this study. Readers who are teachers might also appreciate that this participant sample represents teachers from different racial/ethnic backgrounds who teach a range of subjects and have varying levels of teaching experience. Twelve teachers participated in this study. More specifically, seven participants represent a school district in the northeastern region of Georgia. Four teachers work in schools across the District of Columbia, and one teacher serves in a Connecticut public school. Participants' teaching experience ranges from 4.5 to 25 years. Nine of the 12 teachers have more than 10 years of teaching experience excluding

the 2017–2018 school year. Five teachers teach high school, two teach elementary school, three teachers teach middle school, and two serve in both middle and high school settings.

Table 1. Participant Demographic Table

Name (pseudonym)	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	State/Location of School	Current Grade Level(s)	Current Subject Area(s)	Years of Teaching Experience
Thomas	White	Male	Georgia	12	British Literature & Composition	16
Tonya	African American	Female	Georgia	9-12	Music, Band, Piano	15
Rufus	White	Male	Georgia	11	English	17
Martha	White	Female	Georgia	P-5	Health & Physical Education	21
Victoria	Asian American	Female	Georgia	6-12	Orchestra	12
Alex	White	Male	Washington, DC	6-10	Engineering Design (6-8) Computer Programming (9-10)	8
Lila	White	Female	Georgia	10-12	AP World History (10) Advanced Economics (12) Peer Leadership (10-12)	4.5
Allie	White	Female	Georgia	9	Math	11
Jessica	White	Female	Washington DC	9-12	Physical Education, Yoga, & Restorative Practices	25
Tes	White	Female	Connecticut	5-8	Special Education English Language Arts & Math	21

Sofia	Hispanic (prefers human)	female	Washington, DC	Nontraditional school setting (16-24 year olds; ESL population)	*Teacher is bilingual (English & Spanish)	16
Brittany	White	Female	Washington DC	2-4	Special Education All subjects *Teacher is bilingual (English & Spanish)	7

Description of Categories

This dissertation study yielded six categories based on the analysis of 139 initial codes (Appendix H). I constructed these categories by using initial coding, focused coding, memoing, and constant comparative analysis to analyze the individual interviews and to create conceptual codes based on participant responses. Chapter 3 provides a more detailed explanation of the analysis process. Appendix F highlights the conceptual codes that remained after I analyzed all 12 individual interviews. I then constructed a focus group interview protocol (Appendix G) based on the remaining codes and used theoretical sampling to achieve saturation. The categories, as well as the focused codes that make up each of these categories, are listed below:

Category A: School Structure
Subcategory: Administrators
• Having buy in from building leaders
• Making time for teachers to utilize RP
• Hiring a RP/RJ Coordinator/Facilitator
Subcategory: Teachers' Role
• Using community-building circles consistently
• Teaching students to use RJ/RP

Category B: Training
Subcategory: Teach Restorative Justice • Origins & Tenets of RJ • Research to support its viability *Subcategory: Shift Teacher Mindset* • Recognize misbehavior as a symptom of unmet needs • Explore the purpose of discipline, punishment, & consequences • Explore notion of power • High expectations vs. adjusted expectations *Subcategory: Teach Restorative Practices* • Nonviolent communication (NVC) • Teach teachers to use restorative practices strategies (circles, informal conversations, conferencing, re-entry meetings, community building circles, etc.)

Category C: Professional Development/Consultation Opportunities
• Model appropriate ways to use restorative practices/observe restorative practices being done well • Allow teachers time to work/talk through scenarios • Allow teachers more opportunities to practice restorative practices • Have a RP practitioner or expert to co-facilitate circles • Collaborate with colleagues to reach challenging students

Category D: Personal Work/Internal Awareness

• Be self-reflective/Be honest with yourself
  ○ Acknowledge areas of privilege and impact
  ○ Recognize personal biases, assumptions, & values
  ○ Recognize oppression, marginalization, and discrimination
• Be willing to be vulnerable/human

Category E: Additional Trainings
• Culturally Responsive Training • Social Emotional Learning

Category F: Relationship/Rapport Building

• Build classroom communities
• Acknowledge disconnections
• Identify with students of color/form connections
• Build on student strengths
  ○ Recognize and celebrate student individuality
  ○ Recognize and celebrate student progress
• Empower students of color

Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* is a visual representation of the six categories that emerged as a result of the data analysis process described in Chapter 3 and mentioned in the previous section. I will use each of the next sections to describe the categories and to demonstrate how they connect to one another.

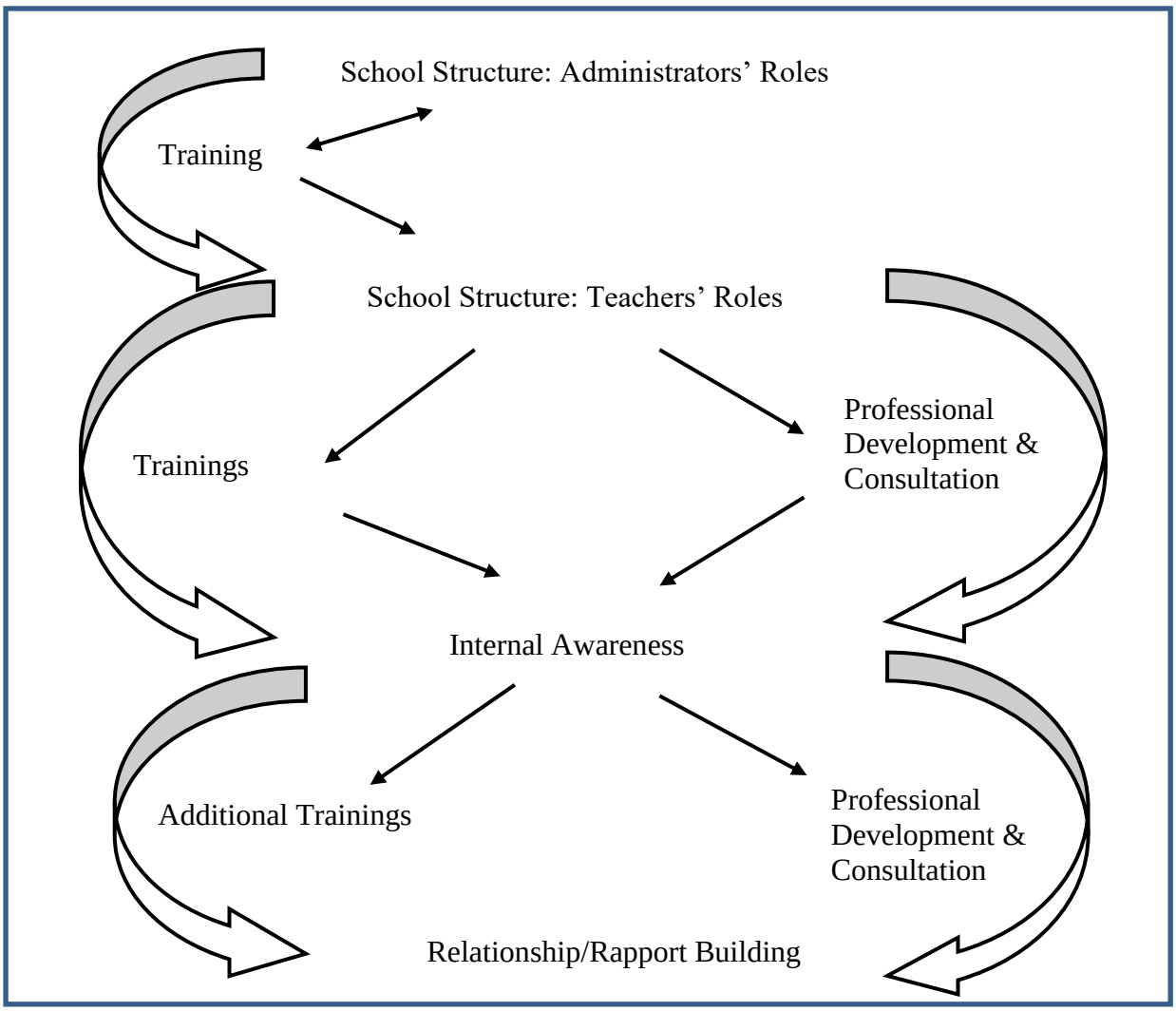

Figure 1. A visual representation of the six categories.

Category A: School Structure

The collective sample of teacher participants described *School Structure* as one of the three factors that would help them implement restorative practices effectively. Several participants also identified *School Structure* as the first factor that must be present for teachers to execute restorative practices effectively. The focused codes used to describe the *School Structure* category are: (a) having administrator buy-in, (b) hiring a Restorative Practices Coordinator, and (c) allotting time for restorative practices.

Connection to Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

Based on teacher responses, I defined *School Structure* as "the processes put in place to support the implementation of restorative practices in schools." Moreover, I depicted *School Structure* at the top of the *Perry Factor Model of Restorative Practices* to demonstrate the need for this category to serve as the foundational element of the factors teachers require to execute restorative practices effectively. The *School Structure* category is also broken down into two subcategories: (a) administrators' or building leaders' role and (b) teachers' role. The administrators' role is described here, however teachers' roles will be described in a later section to align with participants' descriptions of this subcategory.

Subcategory: Administrators' Role

Focused code: Administrator Buy-In. The first step in creating a school structure conducive to restorative practices is having building leaders who buy-in to this nontraditional approach to discipline. For example, Alex asserted,

> *You need some visionary leadership type people at school who would say yes, we know that is one way of doing it, but profoundly, we actually think we want to do it differently and we have reasons. And you need to be upfront about this; this is our thing; this is our school's thing that we are going to do. And you need to advertise that.*

Rufus described buy-in from administrators as a reflective practice that forces them to change their process for handling disciplinary issues. Rufus expressed,

> *We need all administrators to be a part of that [restorative process]. They [administrators] have to be restorative justice agents. They have to completely make the decision that our discipline process is going to be completely different than it was last year.*

Allie reiterated Rufus' sentiments in her explanation of buy-in from building leaders.

So I'm gonna say that structure needs to be there; accountability from administrators-they need to have buy-in as much as teachers. If we're doing things in the classroom and kids trust us, and they're willing to step out from a fight and come with us so they are removing themselves, and then they get the same punishment, then why should they do that next time?

Focused Code: Restorative Practices (RP) Facilitator/Coordinator

One way administrators can show their support of restorative practices is by hiring a Restorative Practices Facilitator/Coordinator. An RP facilitator would also help ensure that a school's structure is conducive to restorative practices. Thomas asserted, "I would like to have a person in the building whose sole job is to run restorative practices and they are available seven periods to mediate." Similarly, Tonya said,

I think if we could just maybe—if there was just like a person or at least one or two in the building who are just really comfortable with that [restorative practices] and can come in and maybe just restorative practices-you know, for teachers who are need help.

Lila emphasized the need for a RP facilitator or coordinator that not only understands restorative practices but also understands and connects with the school community. She expressed,

I wish that there were more opportunities to learn how to do this [restorative practices] that wasn't a canned presentation that some company got paid to do. Give me somebody who really knows these kids, who really cares about them, and who wants better for them. Train me, train the admin, train the teachers, with fidelity and really help us learn to restore discipline.

Focused Code: Allotting Time for Restorative Practices

Once administrators are willing to support school-based restorative justice and to hire an expert in this area, another component of *School Structure* is allotting time for teachers to use restorative practices. Many participants shared the conflict they feel with wanting to execute restorative practices more consistently but not having the time with the expectations of teaching content/standards and fulfilling other duties and responsibilities. Victoria stated in her interview, "I feel if teachers had the time to follow up with students, which we don't because we have class, class, class, class! So the follow up is what we lack. We don't have the time or the opportunity." Similarly, Rufus shared,

> *It's definitely something that you have to make part of your own agenda… and it's hard to fit in because we're trying to manage a class, trying to get kids to do their work, and all that. Then, to pull a kid aside and have meaningful conversations. It is difficult to find the time and the place for it.*

Martha used a metaphor to articulate her thoughts.

> *Can you see the top of the iceberg? That's all you… you're seeing; not even a portion of what's really part of the whole iceberg. And I think sometimes, teachers feel like, if I do all of this, this is all I'm touching because they've got all of this under here. And you know what I don't have the time or energy in the day to do that, to scratch the tip of the iceberg and not feel like I'm getting anywhere. That's the sort of impression I get.*

During individual interviews, a number of participants offered tangible solutions for administrators to consider when determining ways to ensure teachers have time necessary to implement restorative practices effectively. One recommendation was to create a school schedule that allows teachers to facilitate community-building circles with students regularly. Another

suggestion was to minimize the use of teacher planning periods. This would allow time for teachers to have restorative conversations, meetings, and circles with students more often. Another idea was to have a substitute available all day to cover classes when restorative conversations or circles need to happen between teachers and students. Some participants also mentioned the need for teachers to receive training that will help them learn to integrate the restorative approach into their content/teaching. Overall, participants felt that one or more of these suggestions would allow more time, which would essentially help them implement restorative practices more effectively.

Category B: Trainings

Participants also identified *Trainings* as a factor that would help them execute restorative practices more effectively. When asked to describe what these trainings should entail, several participants mentioned the need to gain a better or deeper understanding of the origin and tenets of restorative justice, as well as the research that supports its viability. Moreover, all 12 participants stressed the importance of having training opportunities that would challenge or has challenged them to shift their mindset regarding misbehavior and the purpose of discipline, punishment, and consequences. These teachers also discussed the need to explore the notion of power between students and teachers as well as teacher expectations for students. Some participants also reiterated that every RP training opportunity should include a component that allows teachers to have meaningful dialogue with one another. As a result, I used the following focused codes to describe the *Trainings* category: (a) learning restorative justice tenets, (b) understanding misbehavior, (c) understanding the purpose and differences between punishment, consequences, and discipline, (d) understanding power differentials, (e) exploring teacher expectations, and (f) learning restorative practices. Based on the way teachers described each of these focused codes, I have divided the *Training* category into three subcategories. These

subcategories describe the overall goals of the trainings teachers should receive. Specifically, the goal of the first subcategory is to help teachers understand the origin of restorative justice and its tenets; the aim of the second subcategory is to challenge teachers to shift their mindset; and the purpose of the third subcategory is to teach teachers restorative practices.

Connection to Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

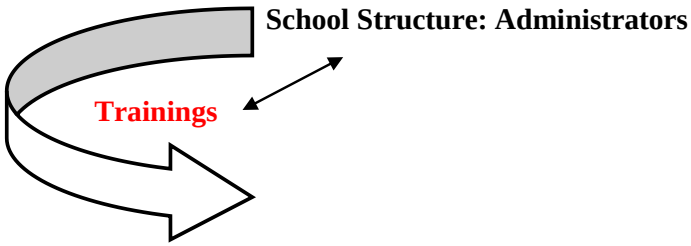

Figure 2. Relationship between school structure and trainings.

I used an arrow to illustrate that *Trainings* for teachers should begin after the basic components of *School Structure* are in place. It is important to note that the arrow is curved and not straight. The purpose of the curved arrow is to demonstrate that the process between *School Structure* and *Trainings* is not linear; instead, both processes should constantly inform one another. I also included a double-sided arrow to reinforce that the feedback teachers give based on the trainings should inform administrators' efforts. For example, if teachers voice in a training that they need more planning time to facilitate restorative conversations with students, then building leaders and RP Facilitators may brainstorm ways to change the school's structure to accommodate teachers' request.

Subcategory: Restorative Justice Origin and Tenets

Many participants mentioned the need for training opportunities that would help them learn more about restorative justice. Specifically, teacher participants expressed the need to

understand the origin, tenets, and important vocabulary associated with restorative justice. Participants also voiced the need to learn about schools or districts similar to theirs who have had success with restorative justice implementation. For example, Tonya asserted, “I would really like to know what… like the research behind what I'm doing. Why does it work? Somebody tell me why it works and what other things I can do to expand my restorative practice vocabulary. Like how can I open things up and go past—just this service part of consequences”?

Subcategory: Shifting Teacher Mindset

Focused Coding: Understanding misbehavior as a symptom of unmet needs. Many teacher participants disclosed how previous restorative justice and nonviolent communication trainings helped them understand misbehavior as a symptom of unmet need(s) and realize the importance of listening to students. Allie stated, “99 times out of 100, 999 times out of 1,000; it [student misbehavior] has nothing to do with me. And so just to kind of put on my listening ears to kind of see what's really going on here.” Similarly, Rufus reiterated,

> *You're [teachers] are not going to be successful until you understand how to meet their needs and that every behavior is an attempt to get a need met. You know, if a kid throws a chair across the room, they're not doing it to be mean; they're trying to get a need met.*

Brittany discussed how the training she received helped her understand that misbehavior is connected to an unmet need or needs. As a result of the training she received, she asks students a simple question when they misbehave:

> *What do you need? You know? And so the big difference, I think, is more just like I'm not even necessarily saying that the behavior is wrong. I'm just saying or I'm definitely not saying that the behavior is wrong. I'm just naming it and then trying to see if it's something that needs to be fixed for the child.*

Focused Code: Understanding the purpose of discipline, punishment, and consequences. A number of participants expressed how learning that misbehavior is often connected to unmet needs helped them begin to rethink the purpose of discipline, consequences, and punishment. Tonya, who is a veteran teacher, revealed how her mindset began to change after her first training. She shared, "After the training, I didn't think that anymore. Instead, I thought, what has happened to this child, or what are we gonna do to fulfill that need?" In another part of her individual interview, Tonya made a powerful assertion about discipline. She stated,

> *We need to build kids that have empathy and compassion and work from the space of love and goodness. We talk so much about discipline, but discipline isn't punishment. Discipline is structure and doing your best inside of the structure. It's doing your best to stay into this structure or in being disciplined. Discipline is who you are—not what someone does to you. So I think that we talk so much about—these kids are… they're so bad, they're so bad. Well what are we teaching them? What are we showing them, what makes them want to be good? What are we doing?*

Martha, who is also a veteran teacher in an elementary school, opened up about her initial resistance to trying restorative strategies with students until an administrator challenged her to try it and to reframe her thinking around discipline and consequences. Martha expressed,

> *I was freaking out one day when all this stuff changed with how they [administrators] were gonna evaluate me. And she [my administrator] was just like coach; that's what she said; coach. You do this stuff anyway. You just never put a label to it. And it was like okay. Don't sweat it. Now, I believe in it 100 percent. I think being able to sit down and say, because it's worked for me, and that, and I refused to send the boy and girl who got*

in a fight, two fifth graders in my class, to the office because I knew nothing was going to happen. Regardless of the consequence, let's get down to why, why this happened.

Tonya, Martha, andother participants stressed that teachers cannot truly be open to restorative justice and its strategies with a punitive mindset. For example, Rufus stated,

Until the entire thinking about what discipline is changes, then this [restorative justice] is not going to be able to take root. You can't approach something from the point of view of 'we're going to punish you to make you a better person' and have anybody believe that you actually want them to be a better person.

Focused Code: Exploring power differentials between students and teachers. Almost every participant shared how their perception of power changed as they began to understand restorative justice and to use restorative strategies with challenging students. More specifically, teachers discussed how changing their viewpoint of power helped them implement restorative practices more effectively. Lila shared,

I think restorative justice asks the leaders of the classroom and the teachers involved to be reflective, to realize that we too are perpetrators in a lot of the conflict in our classroom. A lot of times, our ego gets in the way and our pride and the want to be right or to be seen as an authority can really impede us in asking… Like we're asking our students to be like reflective and compassion. And then if we can't meet them with that same mindset, then they're not gonna ever model that. Yeah and so you would definitely need to be a teacher who is able to look at yourself critically because you're asking your students to do the same. And it's like if you're not willing to be part of that dance, then your social justice is gonna be or your restorative justice is gonna be hollow to me.

Rufus affirmed Lila's point as he described a follow-up conversation he had with a Hispanic male student in the hallway after a blow up in class. Rufus reflected,

> *And I was like, we're both trying to protect our ego. I don't want them [other students] to think that they can do that to me and have zero control over this class anymore. And you've got, you know, eighteen of your buddies around you, and I know you don't want them to think you're weak, and you don't want them to think that you're going to let this teacher, this male teacher dominate you and tell you what to do and. We've got to come up with a better way of relating that doesn't revolve around that power struggle.*

I jotted down the word "relief" as Martha described her personal journey with letting go of power. In the focus group interview, she shared,

> *I was looking down here where it says letting go of power and control and sharing power with students. Just those two words. Power and control. I think that's so powerful; not to use the word again, but, um, that—that's been a journey—a personal journey of mine. I am not in control of anything. I am powerless over people, places, and things, and I think— uh, a girlfriend of mine used to say to me, 'You know, Martha, don't give them anything to kick against.' You know, and I think that's that push-me-pull-you thing that we [teachers] get into, or that I get into, or used to get into with students. You know, I want you to do this and you're gonna do it And it's that push back and forth, and then when I realized it's-it [laughs] doesn't work, um— I don't know, it's that awakening.*

As Tonya shared her thoughts about power, I jotted down the word "acceptance." She expressed,

> *I'm gonna muscle this into you [students]; you're gonna learn, you have to be twice as good, and you have to— No, it doesn't work that way. It's—it's a constant shifting of*

power because that's what life is. Sometimes you do hold the power. What are you gonna do when you— when you have it?

Focused Code: Exploring teacher expectations. *Memo: Several participants have mentioned their efforts to adjust their expectations for students of color. I feel irritated as I hear their explanations. I jotted down word and phrases like "ignore," "overlook," and "not that big of a deal" as I listened during individual interviews. Why am I having such a hard time accepting these responses from participants? It is probably because, as a person of color myself, I equate what some participants describe as adjusting expectations to lowering expectations and enabling negative behaviors. Students of color are not lesser than. I know that their intention is not to enable students or to lower expectations, but I have to prioritize impact over intent. I believe, no, I KNOW, that Black students will rise to the occasion when we, as educators, raise the standard. That was my experience as a teacher. I did not let up on the Black males who made my job difficult. Yes, I found more successful methods to serve them, but I never lowered my expectations. Should I asked participants to expound on this in their individual interviews? I'm not sure. It sort of feels like I would have been making the interview about me. The focus on student expectations is beyond the scope of this dissertations study… but it is? Come on, Ashlee… feels like a cop out to me. I will not feel right unless I address the way I am feeling with my participants. I will bring it up in the focus group conversation. I will share with participants how I feel, and will ask them if they consider student expectations to be an important component of the restorative training they receive. I have to stay true to myself…*

Many participants described the ways in which they adjust expectations to meet the needs of students of color. For example, one participant shared,

I adjusted my expectations, or more so, I started to overlook certain things because there were more important things to look at. So a child curses in class. Is that really the end of the world? Like do I really need to focus my energies on that or the fact that this child is struggling with how to write a complete sentence?

Another participant described the way she adjusted her expectations to avoid confrontations with students. She shared,

Oh well, you're tardy but get your instrument; and I'm much more like whatever it's a tardy, but it's no skin off my back, you know. Because I used to like take it personally. Well why are you late? Like I'm freaking out, but that's not a big deal.

Another teacher's example of adjusting expectations focused more on academics as opposed to behavior. He stated,

Like, I've had to learn that sometimes they can't do what I'm asking them to do, and, you know, even though they should be able to do it, in my mind, by the 11th grade, they're not able to. And if I continue to have this expectation, without adjusting that, and without changing my practice to help them get there, then I'm being irresponsible, and I'm punishing them for not having the background knowledge and experiences that they should have- that they would have needed in order to be where I expect them to be.

During the focus group interview, I was honest with participants about my reactions to many of their examples of adjusting expectations. I asked them if they felt that a focus on expectations was a vital component of the training teachers receive regarding restorative justice. All five teachers who participated in the focus group felt it was extremely important, and the fact that we spent almost an hour on this topic alone during the focus group interview demonstrated its relevance. I was humbled that my participants allowed me to feel comfortable enough to share

how some of their responses impacted me. Tonya, however, affirmed exactly what I was feeling as she shared her thoughts about having high expectations for students of color. Tonya asserted,

> *I walk a path a little more similar to the students we're talking about, I and know what they're gonna face when they step out of their door every morning. And so, for me, those high expectations mean that I am going to try to prepare them for anything that they may possibly encounter, um, in, uh, a-a- essentially a broken society. Um, and so, my expectations for students of color is, is also colored by my life experience. And there are days when we really don't have a lot in common. They don't, you know, we look the same. I grew up in a two-parent home, middle-class home. My mom has a Master's, my dad did not graduate from high school. And so, in my house, everybody expected my mom to be the—the pusher, you know, she was the hard one. You know, she was the more restorative one. My dad said, "Education is your ticket, I didn't have that ticket, you will have that ticket." So, that all colors the way that I look at our students. And I think about the students that sit in front of me, and I wanna prepare them for whatever they're going to see. Because they're going to see a lot more than we can even imagine. Even, you know, my journey is not gonna be the same journey. So, for me, I'm always trying to model, you know, I hold myself to these expectations and even though my boss may-may say, 'This is where I want you,' I don't wanna be there. I need to be here, myself, and I want to be ready for the power when it's my turn. So, I kinda- it's kinda always my way of navigating my classroom. Just always wanna- I always wanna model that for them.*

I could tell that participants were taking time to process what Tonya and I shared about our perspectives of what it means to have high expectations for Black students. I was also humbled that a participant felt comfortable enough in that space to ask the question, "As a White

teacher, can I have the same conversation about expectations with Black students as you all?" What I took that to mean was, as a White person, can I be real with Black students about why demanding excellence will help them to prepare for the racial discrimination, marginalization, and oppression they experience and will continue to experience in society—even though, I, as a White person, can't relate to their experiences? As a group, we decided that is it just as critical for White teachers to have these discussions with students of color. These discussions are a part of being vulnerable to students and being real with them about why it is so important for them to take full advantage of their educational opportunities. These discussions are also a way to empower students of color and to challenge White teachers to reflect constantly on the dangers of not demanding excellence from students of color.

After our in-depth conversation as a group, we acknowledged that expectations for students of color may differ if we are not honest that our personal perceptions, assumptions, etc. will inform what we believe about students of color capacity to be successful in school. We also concluded that adjusting expectations is about helping all students to recognize their true potential and to work toward becoming their best selves. We also determined that adjusting expectations is also about acknowledging students' progress but not ignoring or overlooking negative behaviors. For example, Allie asserted,

> *I really feel like maintaining higher expectations really means wanting each student to do their best, and then to continue on that pathway. It doesn't mean excusing them when they drop the F bomb, but it does let them know that, 'Hey, that's not okay in my classroom,'—and then they start to apologize to me and self-regulate that. You know, and then that's—that's improvement based on, you know before. A week ago, or a month ago, you were dropping it every time and you weren't even thinking about me. Now you're*

thinking, "Oh, yeah, uh, she doesn't like that, so I'm not gonna do that. So, I think that if— I think we need to redefine what high expectations mean.

Subcategory: Teaching Restorative Practices

In addition to providing training opportunities that challenge teachers to transform their mindset regarding misbehavior, discipline, consequence, power, and expectations, every participant in the Georgia school district expressed the need for more explicit restorative practices trainings. These teachers felt that having more opportunities to learn restorative strategies would help them execute restorative practices more effectively, For example, Thomas shared,

I mean I would like more training in restorative practices and restorative circles. I see the value in them, and I kind of do the impromptu informal quasi restorative circles. I don't think that what I'm doing is damaging a child, but I feel like if I had more knowledge about it, then I could more successfully implement it.

Further, Victoria and Martha attributed the lack of buy-in at the high school and elementary levels, respectively, to the lack of opportunities teachers have to learn and practice restorative practice.

Several participants felt that nonviolent communication (NVC)is an essential piece of the training teachers need to receive to implement restorative practice effectively. Allie described her NVC training as an opportunity that helped her learn the importance of being able to identify needs and feelings and then be able to work with a student to develop a potential solution. Thomas shared how his NVC training challenged him, as well as other teachers, to start acknowledging and working through personal conflicts. He and his colleagues also had the opportunity to talk through real-life student situations using the NVC process. Victoria shared how she noticed more teachers using the NVC statements with students and how these questions

really helped to deescalate conflict with students. Similarly, Martha, Brittany, Jessica, and Alex noted the positive impact of NVC training on the conversations they are able to have with students.

It was clear to me during the individual interviews that teacher participants who serve in Washington, DC, and Connecticut have had much more training and opportunities to execute restorative practices in comparison to the teacher participants from Georgia. Consequently, these teachers affirmed how the aforementioned training opportunities helped them learn effective ways to implement restorative practices. Alex shared how teachers in his school receive specific trainings to learn how to facilitate circles and restorative conferences with students that help them to de-escalate. He also described these trainings as being solid, ongoing, and giving teachers the opportunities to check in often about how things were going. Likewise, both Jessica and Brittany described how participating in a number of trainings and professional development opportunities helped them to develop skills such as basic facilitation, response circle, and nonviolent communication skills. Jessica also incorporated creative drama and arts to help students to make deeper connections/meanings during circle facilitation, and Brittany received training that helped her learn more effective ways to facilitate circles with students in special education.

Subcategory: Teachers' Role

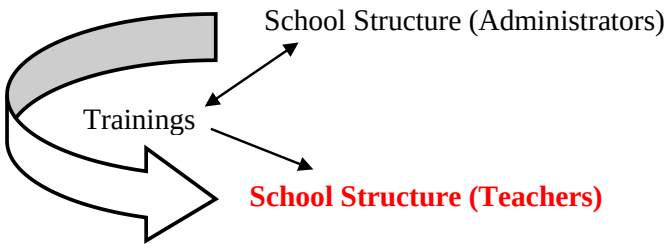

Figure 3. Teachers' roles.

I mentioned the role of teachers earlier as a subcategory under *School Structure*, however I did not provide a thorough explanation of this subcategory due to its position/placement in the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*. Although participants acknowledged teachers' role in supporting *School Structure*, they also felt that teachers would need to receive the *Trainings* described in Category B before they would be able to execute the focused codes of (a) facilitating community building circles regularly with students and (b) teaching students to use restorative practices. For this reason, the curved arrow, which goes from *School Structure (Administrators)* to *Trainings* and then to *School Structure (Teachers)*, demonstrates that teachers cannot contribute to the *School Structure* category until building leaders create the structure that allows for restorative practices implementation and ensures that teachers have the necessary trainings to understand restorative justice and how to execute its practices. The one-sided arrow going from *Trainings* to *Teachers' Role* also reinforces this concept. Again, the curved arrow demonstrates that these categories do not work in isolation from one another. Instead, these categories should inform and influence one another throughout the school year.

Focused Code: Facilitating Community Building Circles Regularly

A number of participants discussed using circles regularly to build community as an essential part of what teachers must do to implement restorative practices effectively. For example, Jessica and Tes facilitate circles every Monday. Jessica shared, "I do check-in circles Monday mornings that have turned into the students doing the check-in circles—like I am not in charge anymore." Alex shared how much circles are infused into his school's culture. "We also use a lot of the circle process in our school; we have an Advisory period which I teach, and we use circles. We actually do them all the time and we do them for everything." Sofia briefly

described her experience of having circles every day in one of her schools. “And every day we started with circles. Umm, and I was amazed at how the students interacted with each other in the circle. And since then, I—almost five years ago, I’ve been using circles in my classroom”.

Focused Code: Teaching Students to Use Restorative Practices

Another role of teachers is teaching students to use restorative practices effectively. Jessica described how teaching students to participate and facilitate a circle helped them be better yoga students. Jessica shared,

> *I would say I train kids up front to be able to run and to work in a circle and to participate in the circle. So when I give them a project like, if they have to come up with their own yoga sequence or something like that, they run—they get in their groups and everybody is able to get their ideas together. So I think teaching them about restorative practices actually provides a lot more sharing where some kids would let other kids do all the work.*

Alex described how using community-building circles regularly helps prepare kids for more difficult conversations. Alex expressed,

> *We train kids in the process with simple prompts, like, ‘How was your Spring Break’, so that when school shootings happen, we can use the same structure and talk about that. Or when hate speeches are being used in a place. We train them with the process with stuff that is easier so that you can just repeat it when things get harder.*

Some participants highlighted that teaching students to understand and use restorative practices translates into helping them to build better character. For instance, Sofia teaches students to use the circle to welcome new students. She shared, “If somebody new comes to my

classroom, we start the class, and we do a circle to introduce the students to the person who's coming and to, you know, also learn about the person who's coming." Jessica asserted,

> *Training kids to wait for the talking piece is whole other set of things in a culture, which would be modern culture, where don't want to wait for anything. So it helps to instill the value of waiting and listening to others.*

Category C: Professional Development/Consultation

Although teachers identified *School Structure* and *Trainings* as factors that would help them implement restorative practices more effectively, participants named *Professional Development/Consultation* as the factor that would help them execute restorative practices with confidence. Based on participant responses, I defined *Professional Development/Consultation* as the opportunities teachers have to receive targeted training and support based on their individual needs and student data. Teacher participants also characterized professional development/consultation as the opportunity to speak, work, and collaborate with their colleagues and experts in the restorative practices field. I describe the focused codes of modeling, having RP experts to co-facilitate circles, talking through scenarios, having more time to practice restorative circles, and collaborating with colleagues to reach challenging students in this section.

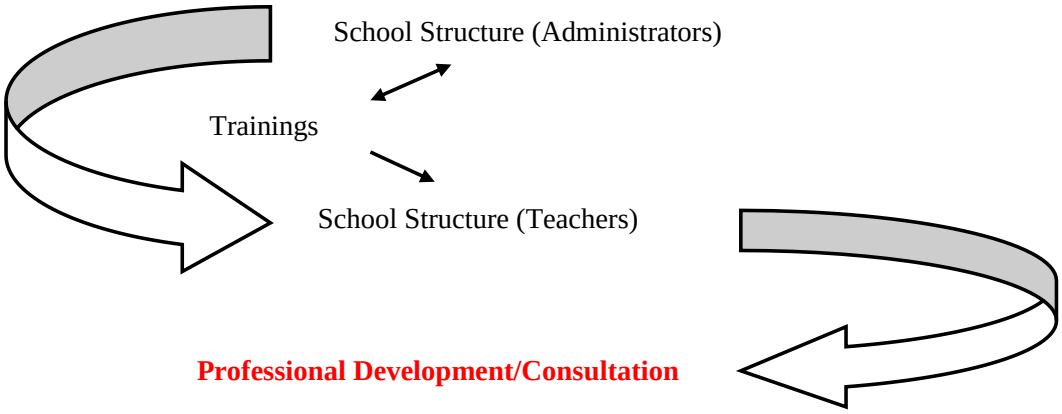

Figure 4. Professional development/consultation.

In the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*, I depicted the Professional Development/*Consultation* category on the opposite side of the *Training* category, but I also have a curved arrow coming from the subcategory of the *Teachers Role*s under *School Structure*.

The purpose of this placement is to indicate that professional development/consultation, which will help teachers improve their level of confidence with restorative practices, is equally as important as the trainings they receive to learn how to implement restorative practices effectively. It is critical to note, however, that *Professional Development/Consultation* should not begin until after teachers have started to facilitate community-building circles regularly and to teach students how to use restorative practices. The rationale for this sequence is that the focused codes teachers identified as a part of the *Professional Development/Consultation* process require them to have experience implementing restorative practices with students. Once teachers receive the training they need to implement restorative practices effectively, they need to practice executing what they have learned in training, and then they need access to professional development/consultation opportunities, which will help them improve their level of confidence. I described the focused codes in detail below.

Focused Code: Modeling

Teacher participants described several ways that consultation would help them improve their level of confidence with restorative practices. For example, the majority discussed modeling as an important part of this process. Victoria noted,

> *I would like to actually see real life examples—like in an actual classroom, with an actual kid that's not acting or reenacting something. But if we could just get a visual of how it looks and how it sounds, I think that would help me.*

Lila shared her desire to see building leaders model appropriate use of restorative practices with teachers. Lila expressed,

> *I would love for teachers to be approached with a restorative mindset of knowing that the administrators aren't there to judge them or to ding them on evaluations. Like, hey, if we have an issue, I'm gonna talk to you like an adult because I know that you probably didn't intend for that to happen the way it did.*

To reiterate this point, Sofia and Brittany disclosed how seeing their building leaders model the use of circles with staff members helped them feel more confident in their efforts. Sofia reflected,

> *I came into a community where the principal started a circle and was at the same level as everybody else in the room. The principal shared some very personal things right away with people she didn't know basically. And um, learning from seeing that in front of you is powerful. I mean, I believe in educating and transmitting, and transmitting is, you know, when you do it, and you make the other person do it with you.*

Brittany had a similar reaction to observing her building leader model how to facilitate circles with her and colleagues. She asserted, "And then after seeing models of circles, I felt like, I could do this; I could do this with adults; I can do this with kids."

Focused Code: Having Experts to Co-Facilitate

In addition to observing successful models of restorative practices, several participants felt that having an RP facilitator(s) available to help co-facilitate circles would help boost their self-confidence. It is important note that even though having an RP expert is also mentioned in the *School Structure* category, it is also a focused code in the *Consultation* category because participants described a specific way that using this position and/or person would help them

improve their confidence with restorative practices. Alex described the impact of having an expert available to assist with a circle. He shared,

> *I think a part of it is having a solid number of experts who are reasonably good at doing it to co-facilitate things with new people. So like when [RP Coordinator] was at our school, if you had a culture issue in your class, like you needed a restorative thing to happen and you don't feel like you're good enough to do it on your own, he would come and do it with you. He would be in the circle, so he would be there and be a part of it, and that really helped. You need enough adults to co-facilitate things. Like, me and that kid had a really bad interaction and to mediate that properly, you need a third-party sometimes. I needed someone who was an expert and that wasn't me.*

Thomas described similar thoughts in his response.

> *And so, I think having somebody with… that's good at this, standing alongside a teacher who's feeling maybe a little shaky with it. I think that this can help teachers to see how it's really done. I mean, I think having a co-pilot with it might help. You know because [RP Facilitator] really helped me to handle situations by just being there to co-facilitate.*

Focused Code: Talking Through Scenarios

Several participants mentioned the need for consultation opportunities to include time for them to talk and work through student scenarios as a way to help them improve their confidence. For example, Allie stated,

> *I think more follow-up needs to be done just going through situations. So here's a kid who did this. This is what I did. Let's talk about some ways I maybe could have done this differently. So not necessarily role playing, but just talking it out.*

Rufus reiterated this sentiment in his response;

Just having time where throughout the year, this was an ongoing thing. We just got together and talked and—and—instead of their being this huge, complicated plan for the [professional learning] session, just how are things going? Let's talk about your experiences with restorative practices. That would be awesome

Focused Code: Working as a Community to Reach Challenging Students

Similar to talking and working through scenarios, almost all of the teacher participants mentioned the importance of using fellow colleagues as a resource for difficult students. These teachers felt that having access to colleagues would not only help them to feel more confident but it would also help them to form a stronger sense of community among the teaching staff. Tonya stated,

You're not gonna get them all; you personally. But I think that if we work together as a team, we're going to get them all. Some people will get the kids over there and then some people will get these kids; and so eventually, we've got them all.

Similarly, Allie described how using the Freshman Academy model for ninth grade students helped create a team approach among the students and adults alike. Allie expressed,

I feel like Freshman Academy—it's a transition from middle to high school, but we have each other's backs and we meet more than anybody else, so we can talk about, hey, this issue… you know this student's issue? Does anybody have a good relationship with this student? And then we go from there.

Martha also shared an example of how teachers intentionally meet to discuss challenging students and to create a plan of action to help these students be successful.

We [team of elective teachers] spend time discussing what's working and what's not working with different students because they—they show up differently based on the

class. Like, a child will show up completely different in PE than they do in the classroom, or in art and music. It's crazy. And so, having the ability to just have conversations with other adults… it's just support discussions about you know, what can I do to help support you and what you're going through right now with a certain child in your classroom and here's what's work for me.

Lila and Rufus, who are both high school teachers, echoed earlier participants, but they also stressed the need for building leaders to create time and spaces for teachers to have these conversations. Rufus asserted,

Teachers can't be isolated from each other if we're gonna do this [restorative practices]. You can't just—it's not something that you can just follow like a lesson plan. I feel like we're gonna have to support each other. It's gonna have to be a collaborative process for everyone in the building, working together and knowing each other. You gotta be able to look beyond your classroom and see the people around you, other teachers, as, um, as support staff; as people who can help with a certain kid and things like that.

Moreover, Lila mentioned the importance of these conversations happening across content teams and grade levels.

Focused Code: Having More Time to Practice Using Restorative Practices

The majority of participants also expressed the need to have more time to practice using restorative strategies. Although this focused code is very similar to the one described in the *School Structure* category, participants explicitly stated that having more time to practice restorative practices would help them feel more confidence with these strategies. Jessica used a metaphor to illustrate its importance. She expressed,

It's like when you… you don't ever sit down and learn the words to a song on the radio; you just listen to it over and over and over again. And I feel like every time I do a circle with kids… I deepen my own understanding of it.

Martha used a driving metaphor to emphasize the importance of repetition.

So that's what it's like, and the more you do it, all of a sudden, you're like, oh, wait a minute. I can make a left here. I don't worry about crossing traffic. Okay, I'm starting to get this thing. But that's what it reminds me of.

Allie and Sofia echoed the sentiment of "practice makes perfect." Allie stated, "the more practice you do, then that's gonna come back to you in those hard moments," and Sofia asserted that "the more I do it, the better I get."

Category D: Internal Awareness

After conducting my first four interviews, I noticed a recurring theme that did not align with my two original research questions. When participants discussed their experiences of working with African American, Hispanic, and Latino students and their efforts to use restorative practices, they were open and honest about the internal work they had to do to have more successful experiences with these students. More specifically, the following focused codes resonated across all individual interviews: (a) teachers reflected on the parts of their identity that afford them privilege; (b) they acknowledged their personal values, biases, and assumptions; and (c) they also acknowledged the marginalization, oppression, and discrimination that students of color experience due to their race and/or ethnicity. The prevalence of these responses challenged me to come up with another research question that would capture these teachers' level of openness and authenticity. The research question I created is, "What personal work must teachers do in order to implement restorative practices effectively?" This question is broad enough to cover all the varied participants responses but specific enough to convey the

importance of teachers engaging in this process to become effectual restorative practitioners. I also needed a category name that would illuminate the depth of participants' reflections. Consequently, I used the phrase *Internal Awareness* to describe the personal work these teachers have done and are doing to serve students of color more effectively.

Connection to Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

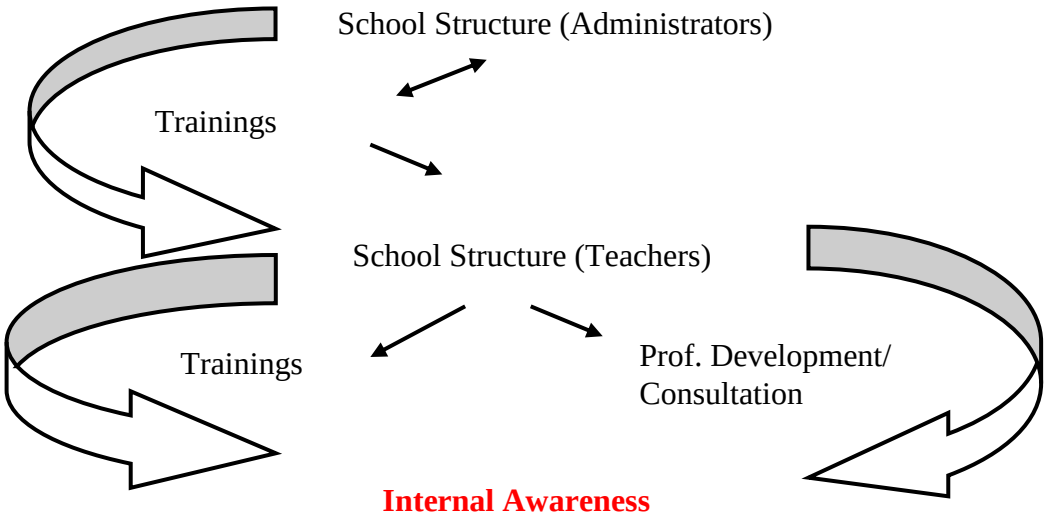

Figure 5. Internal awareness.

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* shows two arrows pointing toward the *Internal Awareness* category. The arrows flow from both the *Training* and *Professional Development/Consultation* categories because many participants did not begin the *Internal Awareness* process until after they learned about restorative justice, shifting their mindset, and restorative practices. More specifically, a number of teachers did not recognize the need to reflect and make any personal changes until after they participated in trainings and had the opportunity to use restorative practices with students. Based on teachers' desire to work with colleagues, RP experts, and to talk through real scenarios, I believe that such professional

development/consultation opportunities will also reinforce the need for teachers to engage in the personal work necessary to be able to implement restorative practices effectively. Consequently, both point to *Internal Awareness* to demonstrate that both factors are necessary to encourage teachers to do the personal work. I use one-sided arrows to reinforce this point. Further, I used curved arrows on both sides to demonstrate that training and consultation opportunities should be continuous processes in which teachers engage throughout the school year. I explain the focused codes for *Internal Awareness* below.

Focused Code: Being Reflective and Honest

Many participants discussed being reflective and honest as critical elements of *Internal Awareness* and as characteristics that are essential to being a good teacher. For example, Allie shared, "I am very reflective about my practices, and so I'm constantly thinking about how I can change things." During the focus group interview, Thomas stated,

> *I think that being honest with self is probably the most important thing. I think the problem with a lot of teachers is we are defensive of our practices, and—and thinking that no, umm… just convincing yourself that you are doing what's best. I think there are a lot of teachers who are like 'this is the way; this is the light; I'm doing it this way'. And they are not really thinking about whether or not—maybe it's not the way, and I think that's tough.*

Jessica and Lila, who are both White teachers, modeled self-reflection and honesty in their individual interviews; these teachers acknowledged their privilege and bias by naming their fear of working with students of color. Jessica reflected,

> *I was too scared to go into the public schools here. I didn't have any experience teaching, and I didn't have any experience with an all-Black community; and at the time, I was just*

scared, so I did a little bit of substituting and then went straight to the suburbs, like farm country, and I worked there for 11 years until I got my footing.

Lila reflected on how her fear of people of color in color transferred to her fear of students in the classroom. She expressed,

So when I went to college, I almost felt afraid to talk to people of color because I was like afraid that I was gonna say something that would like transgress a boundary or to come off like naïve or hurt someone's feelings. So my first years of working with Latino and African American students, I was really kind of like fearful of engaging and talking about that or even thinking about them as different.

Intentionality is the word that comes to mind as I think about Alex's responses throughout his entire interview. As Alex reflected on his journey of internal awareness, he shared a college experience that helped him recognize his privilege but also helped him develop his purpose in life. Alex reflected,

At Harvard, the students run a homeless shelter—a fully functional shelter run entirely by undergrads. I think that was the first time I spent a large chunk of my time with folks who really had it rough in life. And in a setting where I really didn't really know what I was doing at the beginning and felt a tremendous sense of responsibility because we were helping people get fed and helping people find conditional housing. Like, we were way over our heads. However, that was a good experience to help me realize the particulars of America in a real way. Reading the news and stuff is all well and good, but our country is very good at segregating itself, so you have to force yourself to be in a position if you really want to genuinely interact with people of color. If you're a wealthy white person, you have to like actually try. If you don't try it's never going to happen. That was

when it started, and then I wanted to be a teacher because I wrote my undergrad thesis on the college process and how does it reinforce structural inequity and racism in our society or not. And I decided I want to be a teacher and applied to Teach for America and got placed teaching in North Philly. It's a two-year gig but I'm in year nine now.

Focused Code: Being Vulnerable/Human

In addition to being honest and reflective, several participants discussed the importance of being vulnerable with students as an additional step in the process of internal awareness. Participants described vulnerability as the willingness to: (a) open up to students, (b) admit when they are wrong, and (c) apologize. Some teachers acknowledged the challenges/fears of showing vulnerability. For example, Tes shared her initial fears of facilitating restorative circles with students.

I think probably the greatest factor is just anxiety and fear that they [teachers] don't know what. This unknown to them; it's uncomfortable; it's touchy feely. Like what do I do? You know because it is so open. You have to be willing [to be vulnerable] whether you're doing a circle or whether you're just being.

Similarly, Sofia stated, "It's not gonna be easy, because some people don't like to visit those vulnerable parts of themselves. So it's not an easy process to open up in any case, and it can be very painful."

Tonya and Allie also explained factors that influence teachers' decision to be open with students. For example, Tonya mentioned the contradiction between the concept of vulnerability and the way teachers learn the concept of control in their teaching programs. "And that's [vulnerability is] hard because we're taught to be the leader of the classroom. You're at the front and you're in charge." Allie opened up about the fear of failing in front of students.

It's cause we don't want them to think that we are a failure. I mean, I know I'm a perfectionist-by nature, and so, I don't—I wanna think that I can do everything on my own, and I don't want anybody to see my struggles.

Once teachers accept the fear and discomfort of being vulnerable to students, participants believe that teachers must also push themselves to recognize the power in admitting their faults to students and apologizing when necessary. Further, Tonya and Lila describe the importance of modeling for students how to be human, how to own your mistakes, and how to apologize. Tonya described the way she apologizes to her band students when she makes an error in directing. Tonya expressed,

Like you know what? I messed that up. It was my bad; it's all good. I made a boo boo. And so I think that this helps them [students] understand that I might not be here all the time and there may be things going on with me too. And if they can understand that sometimes I'm not having a good day, I'm going to try to understand when they're not having a good day.

Lila recounted a difficult situation with a student that had a negative impact on her interactions with other students.

Hey, "I'm sorry I yelled at you guys yesterday. I was just really sad because some kid was super mean to me at lunch today, and I shouldn't have taken it out on you all." Like, I felt like I could be more real with them.

Jessica also modeled her vulnerability with her students by using the circle process to address the Parkland shooting. Jessica expressed,

I don't know if it was more traumatizing for me or the kids but that Parkland shooting… I just—I don't know if because I do restorative practices, I was like, I came in [my

classroom] and said, you guys, I can't go through this day without us sitting and talking about this.

Jessica went on to say that even though it was scary to not know where the conversation would go, it was even scarier to think of what the rest of the day or school year would be like without being open to having that conversation in spite of the demands to stick to the curriculum. Even though vulnerability is a difficult process in which to engage, Lila and Tonya reveal why this level of openness with students is critical. Lila stated, "Like we're asking our students to be reflective and compassionate. And then, if we can't meet them with that same mindset, then they're not gonna ever model that." Similarly, Tonya asserted, "They [students] need to know we're human, that we have feelings, that we make mistakes, and that we're not perfect."

Category E: Additional Trainings

Many participants identified *Additional Trainings* topics they believed would not only help them engage more deeply in *Internal Awareness* work but would also help them implement restorative practices more effectively. Specifically, teachers emphasized the importance of being trained to understand and implement culturally responsive strategies and (b) help students develop social emotional learning skills. I describe these focus codes in more detail below.

Connection to Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

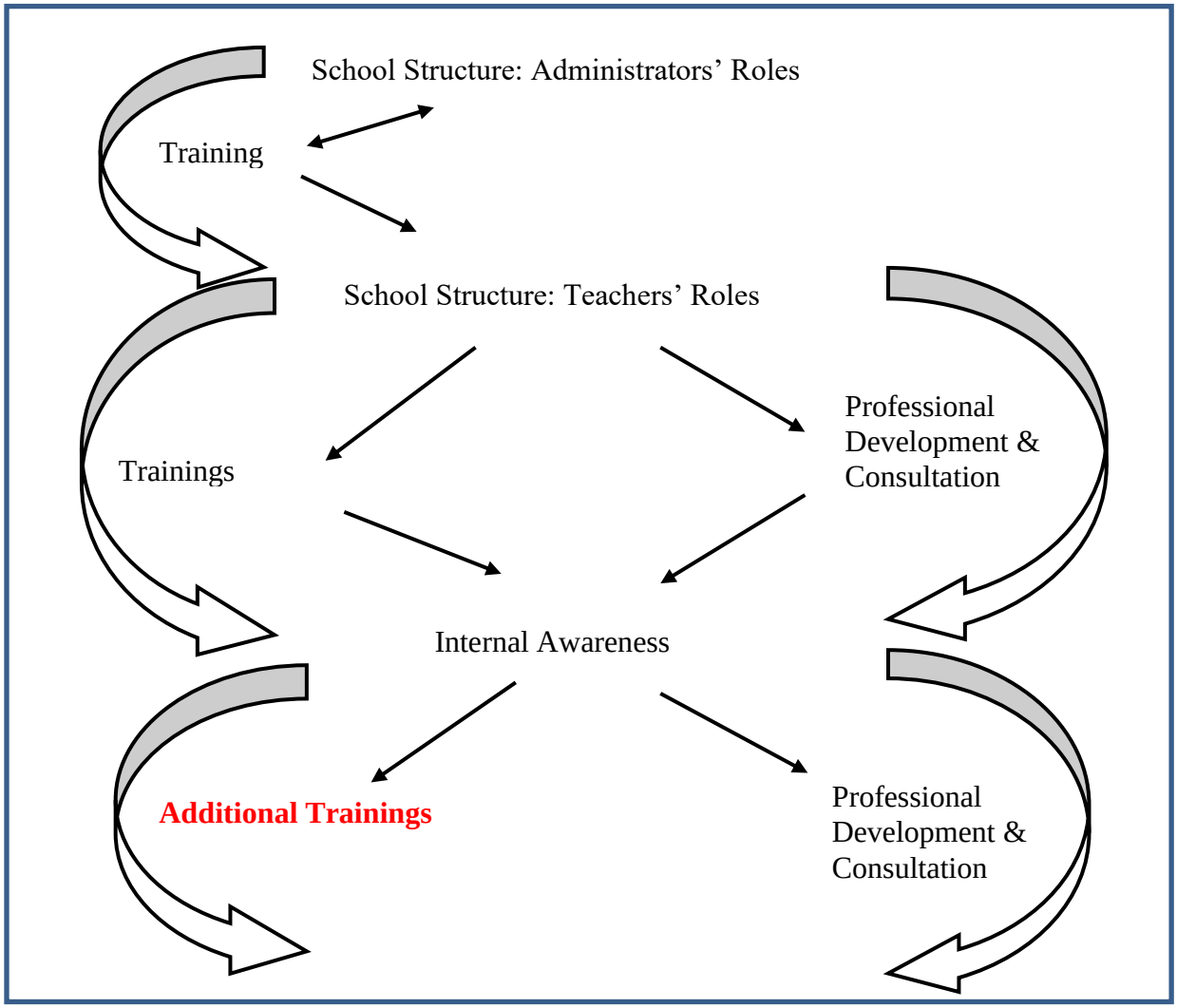

Figure 6. Additional trainings.

I positioned the *Additional Trainings* category on the same side as the curved arrows for Trainings to maintain consistency with the model. Another reason for its position is because even though the *Additional Trainings* category focuses on different topics, these topics, as along with those explained earlier under the *Trainings* category, are all necessary for teachers to implement restorative practices effectively. It is also important to note that the curved arrow for *Additional Trainings* aligns more closely to the *Internal Awareness* category because teachers may not

recognize the need for these additional trainings until they start doing the personal work necessary to implement restorative practices more effectively. The curved arrow for *Professional Development/Consultation* is still present because teachers will still need opportunities to speak and work with colleagues and experts as they learn to apply what they are learning in the *Additional Trainings* category. I also used one-side arrows going from the *Internal Awareness* to both *Additional Trainings* and *Professional Development/Consultation* to reinforce these concepts.

Focused Code: Culturally Responsive Practices

Once teachers are able to acknowledge their privileges, biases, and the injustices students of color experience in society and through the educational system, as described in the *Internal Awareness* section, it is equally important for teachers to learn effective ways to acknowledge and address such issues with students. This type of training, which aligns with culturally responsive practices as described in research, is critical when considering restorative practices because teachers need to know how to effectively facilitate circles focused on these topics. A number of participants described ways they are culturally responsive in their efforts with students. Specifically, many described how they use their platform as teachers to acknowledge and address marginalization, discrimination, and oppression. For example, Alex and Allie shared how they used the circle process to address students' feelings about the 2016 presidential election. Alex stated,

> *We didn't really have school like the day after the presidential election; we like sat around and talked about what does this mean for your sense of self and does this country care about you? You know what I mean? It was real harsh. So I think I am very engaged in wanting school to be a place where we like talk about that reality.*

Allie, Rufus, and Martha believe that one way teachers can develop the skill and confidence to effectively acknowledge and address marginalization, discrimination, and oppression is to first start having these difficult conversations with colleagues. Allie shared,

> *I'm wondering if that's one of the, you know, talking about internal processes and what we need to get this. Maybe the first conver— the first thing is to start having small conversations with people who are willing to, you know, and have the— me as a White teacher, ask a Black teacher or a Latino teacher, 'Hey, what are your experiences?'*

Rufus asserted,

> *Until we talk about all these issues and how, you know, we treat those who are different from us… I mean we can talk about how to restore a relationship and how this concept of, you know, reflecting on our own choices and behavior works; but we can't do that without reflecting on things that have happened in our nation and are happening in our nation now and not be afraid to ruffle some feathers.*

Martha believes that many teachers are willing and ready to engage in such conversations. She reflected,

> *There are people [teachers] who are showing up for these types of opportunities to meet with you [Ashlee] to talk about these things. And something you [Ashlee] said about the importance of being willing to say that there is a stereotype [for who Black males should and can be], or you [teachers] are coming to school with a predisposed notion of what to expect when you get here. That you're not gonna empower [Black males]; you're [teachers are] just gonna see me [Black males] as the next, you know, umm, Nick Chubb, or the next whatever because they can play sports.*

Focused Code: Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

A number of participants also believed that helping students to develop their social emotional health is a critical element of implementing restorative practices effectively. In fact, Thomas and Allie asserted that teaching social emotional skills should take precedence above teaching content. Thomas stated,

> *I've realized that it's more important for me to help kids find [develop] the social skills that are going to lead them to healthier happier relationships. And so, I am more concerned about their emotional well-being than anything else because I mean that's the key. If you're not happy, nothing good is gonna happen.*

Likewise, Allie reflected,

> *I do attribute most of our academic failures going back to that emotional well-being. Because when they [students] get frustrated, they don't know how to deal with it in a way that's productive, and so then they get in trouble. So then they're missing class, and then they don't, you know, know how to get caught up; and so I think that's one of the issues. I do feel like that until we [schools] deal with these emotional things, we're not gonna see a big change in our academics. And to me obviously, their emotional wellbeing is more important than their academics.*

Alex demonstrated Thomas and Allie's point by describing the social emotional support students receive at his school. Alex shared,

> *There is a class where we also teach social skills like how to self-regulate, how to communicate clearly, and how to understand your identity. If you don't know how to do the right thing, we have to somehow teach you new skills.*

Tonya and Brittany described the importance of schools being intentional when teaching students to develop their emotional intelligence. Tonya noted,

> *I think that they [students] can start on the… they [students] can have the tools that they need to build their future sails when they leave us. And I think that if we don't teach them how to be still, go inward, and not point outward for the problems. But go inward and say, 'Okay, how did I handle that? Was I my best self just then?' And I think if we don't teach them how to do, they're not gonna learn it. You don't come out of the womb knowing how to do that. That's something you have to teach them. And we need to build kids that have empathy and compassion and work from the space of love and goodness.*

Brittany shared how meaningful social emotional development has been for her students who are in special education. She expressed,

> *It's [social emotional learning is] about how can we make it so that we're not always out of control of where our bodies are doing, what they're saying. And so that's been the— the independence of the children to start regulating themselves is I think what the big, huge pieces for me and I have seen such improvement in three of my students who have special needs and have significant difficulty with, like, impulse control, attention, like, it's not perfect, but it's so much better.*

During the focus group, Thomas also asserted that NVC essentially helps students develop social emotional skills. He stated,

> *You know, I mean, I think that it [NVC] kind of allows all parties to step back and look at the situation kind of— I mean, the hope is to look at it from an objective place. Um you know, going through the whole communication like, that's, like, yeah, okay, okay, let's*

look and see where everybody is coming from, see how we reacted and then how do we move forward? I think that's-that's social-emotional skills right there.

Rufus agreed with Thomas' point but also acknowledged that teachers should model social emotional skills for students. He shared,

And I agree with [Thomas] that it's— that restorative practices essentially are social-emotional skills- that you learn along the way and no matter what, we are always teaching social-emotional skills and sometimes we might not be teaching positive ones, you know? We have to be very careful what we show and model for students in the way we respond to situations.

Category F: Relationship/Rapport Building

After analyzing the concepts and categories for both the individual interviews and the focus group interview, I noticed a number of codes that focused on teachers intentionally working to build better relationships with students of color. These codes include (a) building/creating classroom communities, (b) acknowledging disconnections, (c) forming connections, (d) helping students of color feel connected to school, (e) building on students' strengths, and (f) empowering students of color. These focused codes make up the *Relationship/Rapport Building* category. Based on participant responses, I believe *Relationship/Rapport Building* will help teachers implement restorative practices more effectively because students of color will feel more connected to schools as well as to teachers and peers within the school. Furthermore, they will be more willing to engage in restorative processes to address issues that may arise.

Connection to Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices

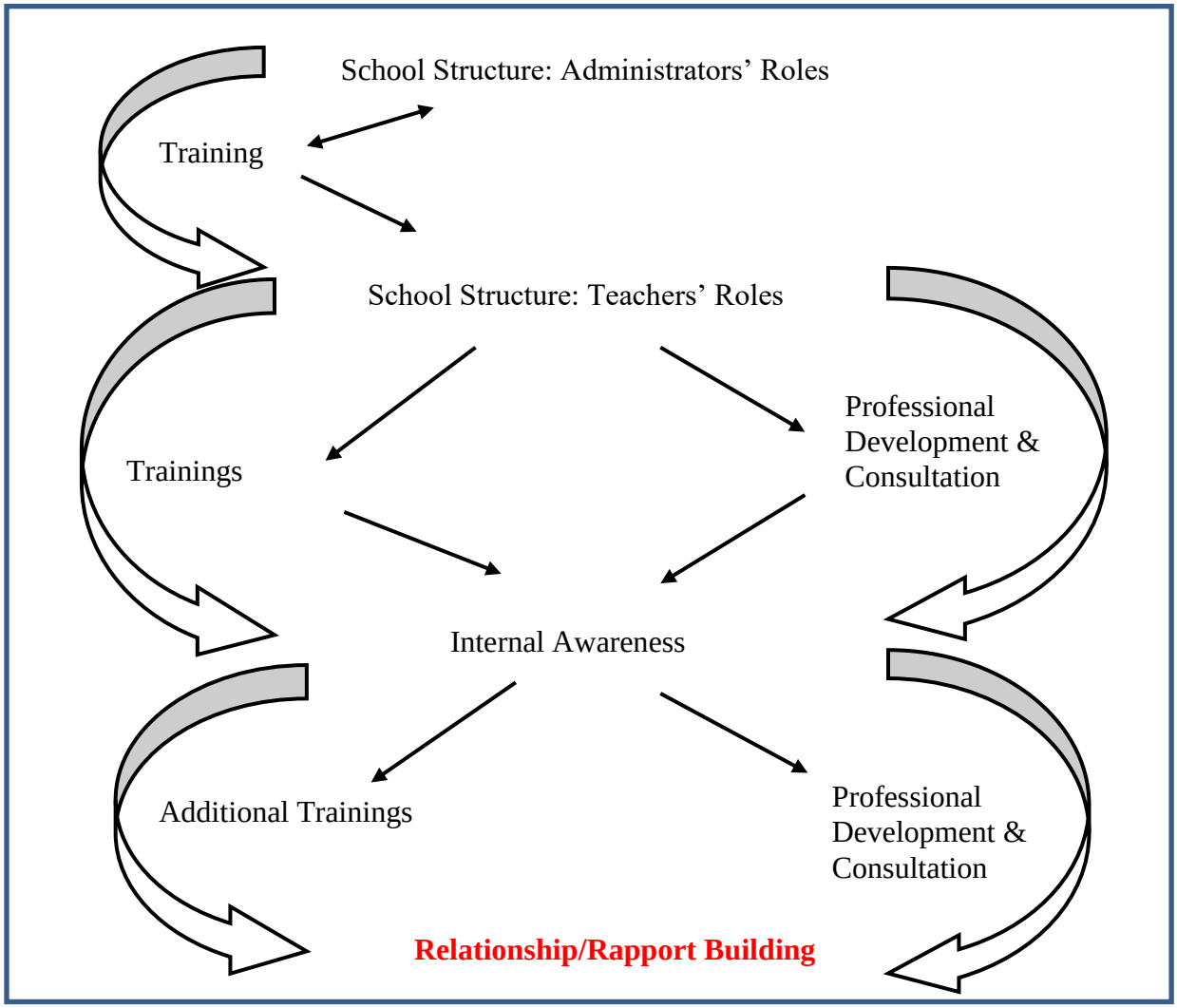

Figure 7. Relationship/rapport building.

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* centralizes the *Relationship/Rapport Building* category at the bottom of this model. I also positioned the curved arrow to start at the *Internal Awareness* category and then to wrap around and point directly to the *Rapport/Relationship* category. Each of these depictions are intentional. Based on participant responses, I believe teachers gain the skills described in the *Relationship/Rapport Building* category by recognizing the personal work they must do implement restorative practices

effectively and being receptive to the skills they learn from the *Additional Trainings* category. The curved arrow on the opposite side of one for *Additional Trainings* also symbolizes the need for *Professional Development/Consultation* as teachers work to improve their capacity to build relationships with students of color.

Focused Code: Building Classroom Communities

One skill that helps teachers build relationships with students of color and implement restorative practices effectively is the ability to build community within the classroom. Many participants expressed the importance of creating classroom spaces where students and teachers feel safe, respected, welcomed, and free to make mistakes. Further, creating these positive environments has to start from the first day students enter the classroom. Rufus asserted,

> *I would say that trying to first just build a positive culture of community from day one is important. Getting to know each student and their names is very important; but I try to do activities, whether it's an interview, or whether it's games, like two truths and a lie, to get at things that are important to students.*

Tonya, who is a band director, described her efforts to create and maintain a classroom community even while teaching subject matter that focuses heavily on competition.

> *I think it just keeps the space cleaner. I know that sounds weird. But the energy in the room, it can get real fake and real heavy in performance-based classes. Because everyone's depending on everyone to do their job, so that we can meet this goal together and that can get real… especially in the like secondary. They can get really thick and tense because if somebody feels that they've been working really hard, this person is not working really hard, but in a performance group everybody's performance is together. They can get real angry and real… So trying to keep the space as clean and as positive as*

possible, trying to keep the energy in the room, all about… making yourself better rather than digging around in your flaws and picking at it and all that. It's all about I want them to know that this space is about getting better. And that's why I say all the time, the doors are closed, we're here together, we're all trying to get better, So let's not focus on the negative. Can we just focus on moving forward and letting go of all this stuff that's icky about our day or about our life? Let's just have this moment together to just grow and get better

Jessica, Sofia, Allie, and Brittany noted how building community helps minimize behavior or discipline issues in the classroom. Jessica expressed,

I have very little discipline problems in my class, so we don't all circle up and talk about what happened to you if somebody were to mouth off or walk out. If there's some kind of breakdown in our process—I have been lucky enough to not have that happen. I carry the energy of the class. Like, four words, there is no room; there is no room for that to happen.

Sofia mentioned how the regular use of circles helps to reduce the potential of misbehavior. "And because of the circle and restorative practices that help to create our community, my classroom doesn't allow or doesn't, um, let things—negative things happen."

Focused Code: Acknowledging Disconnections

Another skill that helps teachers build better relationships with students of color and implement restorative practices more effectively is the willingness to acknowledge disconnections. Participants described this focused code as the conflicts or struggles that hinder a true connection or relationship between teachers and students. Although disconnections might

sometimes manifest as student misbehavior, they are often rooted in something deeper. For example, Thomas reflected,

> *I've checked myself. I mean, I'm of white middle-class upbringing and I can't place my white middle-class values on everybody, because that's not right; it's not fair. And that's a work in progress. I think it will be for the rest of my career and probably the rest of my life. So I'm trying to find how best to serve the students that I serve. And even just last night, I was… and I don't wanna drift too far. But I was listening to a song that's talks a lot about it and the whole song is basically about cops killing black teenagers. And it just kind of put me to thinking, and I was thinking about some the African American males that I teach this year. And I was thinking about some of the tensions that we've had together, and how I was not serving them. Well, there was something about me that was not connecting with them, which cause conflict which… And that's something that I've got to kind of figure out of that I'm gonna be thinking about.*

Likewise, Rufus acknowledged his struggles of connecting with African American students. Rufus expressed,

> *When I think about African Americans as a group, I don't know… I would have to say that they're completely, not all obviously, not all, but when I think about my experiences, the thing that bothers me the most is how turned off to the system they can be and how they let their distrust of the system hurt themselves. And instead of doing all the things that education can do to empower them, they shrink away from it—as like a value of the system that they don't trust. And I've struggled with how to impart to them that, no this is how you win. This is how you beat the system. And I still struggle with that.*

Jessica also opened up about her initial disconnections with African American students.

I mean I really just was intimidated by the culture, so I just… I didn't know I didn't have any connection. I come from a place that there was one or two African American people in my life at all times, and I was not immersed in the culture. I don't understand, like, that I did not understand.

The reflections here closely align with those described earlier in the *Internal Awareness* section, however acknowledging disconnections challenges teachers to reflect more deeply about how their areas of privilege might potentially impact the way students behave and engage in school. For example, Brittany expressed how her efforts to connect with students of color became even more purposeful after she realized that the way she treated students of color did not align with what she said she believed. Brittany shared,

I knew going in—like I felt like I had done a lot of work in looking different for my students. But—but I realized how much harder it was for me to truly have connections, to develop mutual empathy and understanding with my own students, and to also manage difficult behavior in a way that was gonna continue to show that I had respect and love for them. Uh, I didn't succeed in that. Like, I got to the end of the year, and I found myself growing more and more, um, you know—there was just like a lot of cognitive dissonance with what I was saying I believed and how I was acting as a teacher. Like, I was frustrated; I was sarcastic sometimes; like, I was at a point where I felt like, this—this is useless, like, I don't care, you know. I just couldn't take it emotionally, and so I was not connecting with the children of color, and that was very clear to them. And as I look back on that experience, I thought, okay, I have to really put in a lot more work. I cannot just say that I'm working for children that don't look like me and understand what that means

in regards to work I have to do also. Like, you know, really take action and always be thinking about how I'm responding to my students of color.

Likewise, Rufus made a brief, but powerful statement about ways teachers can work to address disconnections.

But our students have different experiences with the system and different relationships with us because of our race and culture, and you know, and-and it's not just like we have biases; they have biases too; um, but we—we have to put the individual and how we feel about the individual above the behaviors that they exhibit.

Focused Code: Forming Connections

As teachers learn and work to address disconnections, they must also take deliberate steps to build connections with students of color. Participants felt that forming better connections with students would help them to implement restorative practices more effectively because students of color would be more trusting of the process. Jessica's reflections describe the meaning of connections better than I could. She shared,

I guess to try and understand where the population is coming from and then also to find the similarities in myself like.... I know we're different but we're not that different. We're all regular human beings and we're all responding to love and trauma. And no matter who we are, I find that the circle practices not only benefits them [students], but they benefit me as a member of the communities and of the school-not just their teacher. I also belong to their community. And I'll say it's also really important for me that they [students] know each other. I was with that girl last time or I don't want to work with that kid, or whatever. You can't call that girl or that kid and not know their name and not know something about them! Like, you both have some stuff in common, so let's start with

that. I like the deeper connections. I don't like small talk. Like, I really prefer to connect with people and to have really robust conversation and longer lasting feelings from the conversations or experiences.

Tes, Brittany, Tonya, and Sofia reflected experiences similar to Jessica's, however these teachers reiterated the significance of empathy and compassion when forming connections with students. Tes shared,

My concern is people just think because you sit in a circle, it's a circle. That's not what a circle is. You have to have understanding of these kids, and empathy, and compassion, all that. I think my own personal background and having come from a difficult childhood has made me more empathetic and understanding of where the kids are no matter what their color or background is. You know if you've had trauma in your life, that's a connecting factor.

Brittany expressed,

So I kind of had a learning disability but it was sort of, like, circuitous. Over time I slowly found a way to work in education, but it's been six years of undergrad and doing a year of student teaching. I really wanted to work with this population of students [special education] though. I have had the opportunity to have deep connections with lots of different groups because of growing up in DC. Um, going to these public schools, being a part of a community that I really wanted to give back to as a teacher. And also I had felt like I would have a lot of, um-- I felt like I would have a lot of empathy and compassion for the children in the school the most because I had been through a struggle as-as a student.

Tonya and Sofia reiterated the importance of empathy but also acknowledged the authentic conversations they are able to have with students of color due to their racial, cultural, and linguistic connection. Tonya asserted,

> *No, I am a person of color, so I know the journey that we're on. I tell them [Black and Brown students] that all the time. I say, look, I know what you'll face when you go into that world. I know what's gonna happen. I know how the world is gonna treat you, how they're gonna look at you, how they're gonna feel about you. Hear me.*

Sofia reflected,

> *I mean I experienced it myself, and it's one of the reasons I do this [teach]. I was an ESL student too in college, and I know how difficult it was to learn a new culture, a new language and systems, and I knew the stress itself of having to do, you know, interviews with immigration and having to get a student visa and having to not know what's gonna happen after I graduate. And understanding that is very important. You [teachers] try to learn as much as you can from what they're [students are] going through. Even though it's impossible to be in somebody else's shoes, it's important to try from to understand.*

Focused Code: Helping Students of Color Connect to School

As teachers work to build connections with Black and Brown students, teacher participants felt that it is just as important to make sure these students feel like they are valuable members of the school community. For example, Tonya discussed how she uses the band program to build agency among students and families.

> *I guess my band mission is like—I want to build agency in the students and in our parents so that everybody feels as if they are a valuable and meaningful part of band program*

because band is nothing but a microcosm of the school and the school is nothing but a microcosm of society.

Similarly, Victoria noted the correlation between school and society, but she also asserted the importance of teaching students their role in creating a school culture where every student, regardless of race/ethnicity, feels connected. Victoria expressed,

And not to get too political, but like our political climate is making kids stressed even if it's subconsciously. And it's making adult stressed; it's making everybody anxious. They [students] feel like afraid all the time as the time—you know especially the minorities. Oh my gosh! Like I get it. I understand like and honestly, like, I think we need, like, for the students to help also with making them [students of color] feel more like they [students of color] belong. That's what makes my African American and Hispanic kids a little like defensive because they feel like the rich are White kids. Not that all White kids are rich, but the more affluent population is so just clueless! They're just so clueless I mean. So they [African American and Hispanic students] feel like they have nothing to relate to them with, which is like how our society is. So if we don't do better in the schools, of course they're gonna grow up and be… and vote for Trump. Because it was not an educated… I'm sorry I'm getting political, but I think we have to do more with like making… like educating students who may be more affluent. We need to educate them about like how the world is. Because we're teachers, so this is where it comes from. Because if you feel left out, then of, course you're not gonna be motivated. So it's all of that. I do feel that most negative behavior is just a lack of confidence and a lack of feeling important, and we [school] don't do it. I don't know if we can, but we don't do well enough to…

Sofia also mentioned the importance of demanding that other students help in making their peers feel connected to school. She shared,

> *I try to make them feel, in my classroom, like we are family. And that's how we help each other, that is how we learn from each other, that we support each other, that we're there when things go great and we're there also when things don't go great. And, um, it's a place where they can relax and feel happy about what they're doing which is learning and love that subject because they're happy doing it.*

Focused Code: Building on Student Strengths/Assets

Every participant mentioned, in one way or another, the importance of acknowledging and building on the strengths of Black and Brown students. Tonya and Victoria reflected on the joy of working with students of color in their band and orchestra programs respectively. Tonya shared that one of her most enjoyable teaching experiences was in a school where the band program consisted of mostly Black, Hispanic, and Latino students who had to build their program up from the ground. The students were invested in creating a band program and took ownership in the process. By the time Tonya left, the students had uniforms, were performing in band competitions, and had helped create a sense of pride within their entire community. Victoria shared how her Black and Brown students helped her White students be better.

She expressed,

> *Like in general with orchestra, the kids who are African American or Hispanic tend to be more extroverted just in general. And I feel like they bring out the Caucasian kids' personalities more. So to be honest, when I first started to get more students with a non-Caucasian background, I did feel like it brought much more of an element of fun to my classes.*

Jessica and Rufus reflected on the strengths of students of their Hispanic and Latino students who are newcomers to this country. Jessica shared,

> *Then they [Hispanic and Latino students] come here [to school], and they just want to work, work, work. These students have, and what I guess from a person my age would call, a typical immigrant child mentality. Like the parents work hard; the kids are expected to work hard. They are also very religious. Their families are often intact—not always functioning, but intact, and they have a high.... most of them have a high motivation to succeed in school.*

Similarly, Rufus expressed,

> *A lot of my undocumented population, even though they have severe challenges and there's a lot of fear there, have been raised to believe in the ideals of America—I would say almost more than Americans actually have. Especially ones that come from El Salvador or Mexico or places where there's very little opportunity. And I feel like most of the Hispanic students that I've taught over my years like when I just think of you know, them as a group, they have this drive to succeed.*

Many participants also noted that fact that teachers do not focus on the strengths of Black and Brown children enough. During the focus group interview, Rufus affirmed this reflection with a very powerful statement regarding an Equity Training he attended. He asserted,

> *One of the things they [presenters in Equity training] talked about a lot is that even in well-meaning ways, we're conditioned to look at students' deficits in order to help them. We don't look at their assets and build on them. Instead of saying, what does this kid do well, and how can we use this strength to help build these other areas, we're taught to focus on their deficits, and we're taught to teach them to focus on their deficits and to*

reflect on their deficits in order to make those things better. But who likes to just think constantly about the things you are not good at? And it's hard to, um, as an adult to do work on things that you're not good at and it's vulnerable and it's scary. And so we are asking kids that aren't— umm, don't have the capacities and the experiences that we've had and just the um, you know, the maturity to confront these things about themselves that are hard and that's- that's the— that's the view of education that they get. Its constantly being told, 'You don't do this well, you don't that, you need to improve this, you need to improve this.' Then it's— It is, like, overwhelming for kids.

Focused Code: Empowering Students of Color

Similar to building on student strengths, another skill teachers who work successfully with Black and Brown students have is the ability to help them recognize the power they have within themselves to be successful. Tonya included a historical perspective to connect the significance of teachers being intentional regarding their efforts to empower Black and Brown students.

You know, I think that the way the education is— was set up originally it was to teach assimilation, right? So assembling immigrant students into, um, White Protestant culture and stripping away what was unique to them and instilling in them the values that were important to those in power. And so I think that— And you know I have lots of conversations about this and a lot of people take it the wrong it the way, but I think what segregation did do, was, it allowed black students to a —see lots of black professionals. And that it is possible, you—you know your pharmacist is black, your doctor is black, your attorney is black, you know, the largest farm in town is owned by a black man and-and-and his wife and his family and it's been in their lineage or whatever for, you know,

since the abolishing of slavery. And so you've got all these moments where students of color are feeling empowered and—and feel like in school they're not just valued for sports, they're— or because they can rap, you know. They are valued because they're academics, they're scholars. They're preparing to go to college, and I think that somewhere along the way, we kind of, forgot that with integration; and we began to go back to this idea of, the assimilation piece, and forgot that they, you know, they-these students are Black and Latino.

It's about empowering every student as a scholar, um, and that's where I think we could take what all of the good things that were present in segregated schools and mash it into what we do now in a very integrated society. We need to remind ourselves that, you know, little Raquan is better at academics than we're giving him credit for. He can be better at academic endeavors than we give him credit. He can—he—granted he's an absolutely brilliant athlete, he can also be an incredible scholar if he is empowered to be. If he's told that that is a path that you can take, you should take, you're more than capable of achieving something great. And I think that that's the thing that happens.

In her individual interview, Tonya reflected on how Black and Brown children have internalized that have been applied to them. She expressed,

Like they [Black and Brown students] think their value is in sports, or they think their value is in hip hop, or they think their value is in how they look, or how attractive they are to girls or how attractive they are to boys or how… Like they think that that's… They're supposed to be this and is just we're not… I don't think we're giving them the tools to go inward and be still because sometimes in their world, nothing's still. Nothing is still and nothing is quiet. And if we don't give them the tools to go inward and really

figure out who they are and really start to fall in love with who they are and give them the tools to continue to build while people are constantly trying to chip away at it, they're gonna continue to flail and flounder. Then they're gonna bring other children into this world, and they're gonna flail and flounder even more. So the empowerment piece is critical. We [teachers] have to teacher Black and Brown children that when someone looks at you, they might not expect you to do half of the things that you are expecting yours— from your yourself. And so, I want their expectation for themselves in their own behaviors, their own accomplishments, their own achievements, I want it to be higher than anyone else's. Um, because I feel like that's truly where power, where the power lies. They believe that they can do, and they expect themselves to do, then no one and nothing, no oppressive practices or structures or social norms or constraints are going to stop them.

Thomas mentioned how empowering Black and Brown students also benefits teachers. He shared,

I think that like the more you empower the students, the more you make them feel like they, they are of value, the more you're gonna get buy in from them. And when you do have to have a tough conversation and sit down with one another, the kids feel as if they have a level of respect within the structure that exists because, like, hey, I [the teacher] appreciate who you are and what you bring to the table. So I think that that can change the way a conversation goes, like, not even just a restorative conversation, but just any conversation because there's dignity there.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this constructivist grounded theory study was twofold. I aimed to create a theory that explains the factors that help teachers feel most successful in their execution of restorative practices. I also wanted to create a theory that describes the factors necessary to help teachers feel most confident with the implementation of restorative practices. The two initial research questions guiding this dissertation were "What factors make teachers feel most confident with implementing restorative practices in the classroom," and "What factors make teachers feel most successful with implementing restorative practices in the classroom?" However, the sentiments participants shared about the level of internal work necessary to carry out restorative practices effectively revealed a third research question. This question was, "What personal work must teachers do to implement restorative practices effectively?"

Restorative practices (RP) are highly regarded as a viable solution to address the issue of racial disproportionality (Fronius et al., 2016; Hurley et al., 2015),but the research available to guide schools on the training and support teachers need to ensure effective implementation is scarce (Mayworm et al., 2016). Additionally, little is known about the factors that inform the implementation process for RP. As a result, this study's findings will offer insight to administrators/building leaders, RP coordinators, instructional leaders, school counselors, and teacher education programs regarding their role in supporting RP implementation. Findings from this study will also challenge teachers, whether novice or veteran, to personally reflect on the impact of their perceptions, actions, and reactions toward students of color. This dissertation

study is significant because its findings will empower teachers and guide the support teachers receive to ensure RP is implemented with confidence and success.

I used the perceptions and experiences of 12 teachers from school districts in Georgia, Washington, DC, and Connecticut to guide this dissertation study. Chapter 4 presented the demographic information for these teachers and illustrated their varying years of teaching experience as well as the diverse range of subjects taught. Ten participants had 10 or more years of teaching experience, and no participant had less than four years of experience. All 12 teachers participated in an individual interview that ranged from 45 to 80 minutes, and five of the seven Georgia teachers participated in a focus group interview. The data analysis process, which included initial and focused coding as well as constant comparison and theoretical sampling, led to the creation of the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* (Figure 1). This model is a depiction of the six themes and four subcategories that emerged due to the data analysis process.

This chapter will relate the findings of this study to the current literature and will offer practical implications for practice. It will also highlight unique findings that expand the current literature. Additionally, this chapter will discuss this dissertation's limitations and offer recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

I used the six themes that emerged from data analysis to create a visual representation of the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* (Figure 1). These themes were (a) *School Structure*, (b) *Trainings*, (c) *Internal Awareness* (d) *Professional Development/Consultation*, (e) *Additional Trainings*, and (f) *Relationship/Rapport Building*. A few of the aforementioned themes also yielded subcategories. *School Structure* included two subcategories: administrators' roles and teachers' roles. Similarly, *Restorative Justice Training Opportunities* produced two subcategories. These were shifting teacher mindset and restorative practices/strategies.

Discussion of Current Literature

Many of the factors presented in the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* (Figure 1) expand the current literature available on the factors that are necessary to implement restorative practices successfully (Armour, 2017; Kane et al., 2009; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Mirsky, 2007; OUSD, 2014; Reimer, 2011; Vaandering, 2014). Although teacher voices are the focus of this dissertation, the perspectives of administrators, RP practitioners, school counselors, and other stakeholders are also considered in current studies and evaluation reports (Armour, 2017; Kane et al., 2009; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Mirsky, 2007; OUSD, 2014; Reimer, 2011; Vaandering, 2014).

Category A: School Structure

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* illustrates that *School Structure* is the foundation of the factors teachers need to implement restorative practices effectively. According to participants, both administrators and teachers play a role in ensuring that schools achieve this structure. Administrators must buy-in to restorative practices, hire a Restorative Practices Coordinator, and allot the time teachers need to execute restorative practices. These findings affirm a number of studies and reports available in the literature (Armour, 2017: Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; OUSD, 2014). For example, participants from Kaveney and Drewery's (2011) study acknowledged support from their administrators and senior management as a significant factor that contributed to their access to professional development and ultimately their success with implementing restorative practices. The building leaders allotted release time for eight professional development sessions, and senior management allocated the necessary funding to support these sessions. Although funding was not a code that came up for majority of participants in this dissertation, a few did mention that principal support of restorative practices should include allocating funds to support such an initiative.

Teachers and staff members from Ed White Middle School and the Oakland Unified School District reflected similar perspectives when they described the factors they felt would have yielded more positive results with restorative discipline and restorative practices, respectively (Armour, 2017; OUSD, 2014). During individual and focus group interviews, Ed White Middle faculty and staff highlighted the need for a RD Coordinator and emphasized the importance of designating more time to use RD circles, especially during peak times of stress. Similarly, OUSD teachers and staff members discussed their frustrations with not having enough time to use circles or other restorative strategies, not having enough time to follow up with students, and being overwhelmed with various duties and responsibilities. They also expressed the need for the RP Coordinator to focus solely on restorative practices.

Category B: Trainings

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* depicts that before teachers can facilitate their role in *School Structure*, they must first receive the necessary *Trainings* to implement restorative practices effectively. These trainings include three components: (a) making sure teachers are trained to understand the tenets of restorative justice and its viability, (b) helping teachers shift their perspectives regarding misbehavior; the purpose of discipline, punishment, and consequences; the notion of power; and their own expectations, and (c) helping teachers learn restorative practices such as circles, nonviolent communication, etc. A number of studies support the need for trainings that address the notion of power (OUSD, 2014; Reimer, 2011; Vaandering, 2013) and teach restorative practices (Armour, 2017; Mirsky, 2007).

Reimer (2011) and Vaandering (2013) advised school staff and school board members to eradicate the use of retributive discipline practices and to transform their way of thinking about behavior and discipline. They also reiterated the need to change policies and practices to align with the tenets of restorative practices. Moreoever, Vaandering (2013) explicitly stated the need

for administrators and district leaders to critically examine the current trainings teachers and staff members receive to determine if and how these learning opportunities reinforce power relations that lead to punitive practices. Similarly, OUSD teachers and staff members acknowledged that many adults struggled with the idea of sharing power with students and were not willing to have open and honest conversations with students through the restorative practices. Consequently, faculty stressed the need for training opportunities that would address this issue and ultimately help improve staff buy-in and the school-wide culture.

Mirsky (2007) implemented SaferSanerSchools (SSS) in three Pennsylvania secondary schools. This program, which is a component of the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP), helped teachers learn the restorative skills necessary to serve students who were highly disruptive and unmotivated to succeed in school. Teachers who participated in the SSS program learned to use affective statements and questions and to help students identify and connect with their emotions. These Pennsylvania teachers also learned to facilitate circles, one-on-one restorative conversations, group meetings, and check in/check out circles (Mirsky, 2007). Amour (2017) discussed the need for teachers and staff members to receive more Tier 2 and Tier 3 training to develop their understanding of restorative discipline skills.

Category A: School Structure

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* indicates that once administrators comply with their role and teachers receive the aforementioned trainings, then teachers can fulfill their roles to ensure successful execution of restorative practices. These roles include facilitating community-building circles regularly and teaching students to use restorative practices. Oakland Unified School District teachers and staff were one of few studies to highlight the benefits of teaching students to use restorative practices to take ownership of their behavior and to be

leaders in their schools, such as peer mediators (2014). As a result, the subcategory of *Teachers' Roles* serves as unique element of this dissertation study.

Category C: Professional Development/Consutlation

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* illustrates that teachers should have access to *Professional Development* and *Consultation Opportunities* once they begin to implement restorative practices with students. Dissertation participants explained that these opportunities should allow teachers to observe restorative practices being implemented effectively, co-facilitate circles with the Restorative Practices facilitator or experts, work and talk through scenarios, practice restorative strategies, and collaborate with colleagues to reach challenging students. Dissertation participants' reflections expanded those shared by teachers and staff members in a number of studies (Armour, 2017; Kane et al., 2009; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; OUSD, 2014). However, it is important to note that dissertation participants' connection between *Professional Development/Consultation* opportunities and teacher confidence is unique to this dissertation study. In fact, Reimer (2011) is the only one of the previously mentioned studies or reports that discussed how the factor of professional development/consultation affects teacher and faculty confidence with restorative practices implementation. The studies described next link such opportunities to effective restorative practices implementation.

Kane et al. (2009) found collaboration among members of the school community to have a significant impact on using restorative practices to create change and described collaboration as a process that should create multiple opportunities for students, teachers, and parent(s)/guardian(s) to learn from one another. Although some of these collaborative opportunities were not planned, professional and staff development sessions became a high priority in many schools as a method to foster these partnerships and to allow designated time for

teachers to improve their restorative practices skill set through observation and discourse with colleagues. This research team also found that teachers functioning as leaders for restorative practices initiatives had a substantial impact on teacher buy-in and their efforts to implement this approach with fidelity. These head teachers modeled restorative practices through their work with students, families, and staff and ensured that information about restorative practices was shared with the school community.

Kaveney and Drewery (2011) identified professional development as a critical element of teachers' capacity to implement restorative practices effectively. These sessions focused on helping teachers develop their questioning skills when facilitating class meetings, which is a restorative strategy that helps teachers build community in their classroom when used consistently. These sessions also gave participants the opportunity to talk through scenarios and to receive feedback from experts and other colleagues about how to improve their practices. Ed White Middle and OUSD teachers and staff affirmed the need to have ongoing restorative discipline and restorative practices professional development and coaching throughout the school year (Armour, 2017; OUSD, 2014). Furthermore, Ed White Middle staff acknowledged the significance of administrators modeling restorative discipline by using this approach during faculty meetings.

Even though Mayworm et al. (2016) did not include teachers as participants in their study, this research team created a tiered model of professional development for restorative justice that focuses on providing teachers with group (Tier 2) and one-on-one (Tier 3) consultation services throughout the school year. This model not only affirms dissertation participants' reflections, it also outlines how schools could structure professional development and consultation opportunities for restorative practices throughout the entire school year.

Social learning and social cognitive theory. Although current literature does not acknowledge the link between *Professional Development/Consultation* and teacher confidence, social learning and social cognitive theories, which serve as the theoretical foundation of this dissertation, establish the connection between the two. Specifically, dissertation participants' descriptions of the *Professional Development/Consultation* category demonstrate the relationship between these theories and teacher confidence.

Rotter (1966) posited that expectancy or an expected outcome is what encourages a person to attempt a specific behavior. In relation to the *Professional/Development* category, expectancy outcome and the internal locus of control correlate with participants' request to have more time to practice restorative practices and to co-facilitate circles with restorative practices experts. Participants believed that more practice and successful outcomes would improve their level of confidence and encourage them to attempt restorative practices more consistently. Moreover, an increased level of confidence would help them believe in the power of their restorative practices skill set even with the most challenging students.

Bandura (1977) supported the notion of outcome expectancy but also connected self-efficacy to the outcomes individuals, such as teachers, experience. He also identified four sources teachers can use to develop their self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura 1977; 1977). The first three sources align with the findings presented in the *Professional Development/Consultation* category. For example, teachers who participated in this dissertation stressed the significance of having mastery experiences through professional development and consultation. Specifically, participants asserted that opportunities to work through scenarios with RP experts and colleagues, to practice restorative practices skills, and to co-facilitate circles with

RP experts would help them experience more success with facilitation and ultimately help them feel more confidence.

With regard to vicarious experiences, dissertation participants emphasized that seeing various models of successful restorative practices execution helped to improve their self-efficacy. These models included observing their building leaders use circles in faculty meeting with teachers, seeing RP experts facilitate circles with students, and having RP experts to co-facilitate circles with them. Dissertation participants also shared that having the opportunity to talk through scenarios with colleagues and RP experts, as well as consulting with colleagues regarding difficult students, provided social persuasion because other teachers would affirm and celebrate their efforts to support students but also offer suggestions to improve their practices.

Category D: Internal Work

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* demonstrates that access to *Trainings* and *Professional Development/Consultation* opportunities will encourage and challenge teachers to do the *Internal Work* necessary to implement restorative practices effectively. According to dissertation participants, this internal or personal work includes teachers being reflective and honest with themselves regarding their areas of privilege, their biases, assumptions, and values. It also includes teachers acknowledging oppression, marginalization, and discrimination and their willingness to be vulnerable to students. Participants' reflections affirm Mayworm et al.'s (2016) model of professional development model because Tier 2 support, which is group consultation, focuses on challenging teachers to confront their personal biases, assumptions, and to acknowledge the marginalization, discrimination, and oppression that influence student behavior. Participants' sentiments also attribute to the factors identified in a number of other studies (Armour, 2017; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Vaandering, 2013).

Teachers who participated in the Restorative Practices Professional Development Programme identified their willingness to be open, honest, and reflective as one of the components that helped them facilitate class meetings effectively. These participants expressed how brave they had to be to hear and receive negative feedback from students (Kaveney & Drewery, 2011). Similarly, Ed White Middle faculty and staff expressed how listening to students' stories and experiences challenged them to be more open and honest about their experiences and more reflective of their practices. Specifically, a number of teachers learned the importance of apologizing to students when they were wrong through the circle process and began to implement this practice (Armour, 2017).

Vaandering (2013) also identified teacher reflection as an essential component of successful restorative practices execution. This scholar asserted that teachers would not be able to change their mindset regarding power and control if they did not take time to think critically about the ways in which they engaged students or encouraged them to be active participants in their school community. She also stressed the importance of teachers reflecting on the ways they caused students harm or alienated them.

Category E: Additional Trainings

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* demonstrates that once teachers begin to engage in the personal work necessary to implement restorative practices effectively, they will need access to *Additional Trainings*, such as culturally responsive practices and social emotional learning, to address challenging issues that may arise through the restorative process. Even though dissertation participants highlighted the need for teachers to receive these supplemental trainings, current literature does not explicitly discuss culturally responsive practices and social emotional learning as factors that would help them to implement restorative practices more successfully. As a result, *Additional Trainings* is a factor that is unique to this dissertation study.

It is important to note, however, that some studies and reports in current research do allude to the need for culturally responsive training opportunities. For example, a few of the studies discussed earlier in this section posit that teachers and school staff using RP must be prepared to address systemic issues such as racism, power, and equity (OUSD, 2014; Reimer, 2011; Vaandering, 2013). Faculty and staff would need training to be able to execute this expectation effectively. With regard to social emotional learning, the successes many teachers and staff members mentioned imply that students developed some emotional intelligence because of the restorative process (Armour, 2017; Kane et al., 2009; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Mirsky, 2007; OUSD, 2014). The majority of dissertation participants reiterated that helping students develop social emotional skills would ultimately help teachers to implement restorative practices more effectively. However, a few participants believed that SEL skill development would happen subsequently through the restorative process.

Category F: Relationship/Rapport Building

The *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices* illustrates that once teachers engage in the trainings, professional development/consultation opportunities, internal work, and additional trainings necessary to implement restorative practices with confidence and success, they also learn *Relationship/Rapport Building* skills that help them build more authentic relationships and connections with students—specifically students of color. These skills, which include building classroom communities, acknowledging disconnections, identifying connections, building on student strengths, and empowering students of color, are also essential components of effective restorative practices implementation. Dissertation participants' reflections expanded those shared by faculty and staff in a number of studies (Armour, 2017; Kane et al., 2009; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011; Mirsky, 2007; OUSD, 2014).

Teachers and staff members who implemented restorative practices acknowledged the ways in which this approach improved their connections with students. For example, Pennsylvania teachers and other staff members expressed that SaferSanerSchools (SSS) helped them learn ways to build stronger connections with students and colleagues (Mirsky, 2007). Moreover, these connections helped both students and teachers be more receptive of the restorative process. For example, faculty and staff at Ed White Middle School and in the Oakland Unified School District found that forming stronger connections with students encouraged more challenging students to not only engage in the restorative process but to also be empowered by it (Armour, 2017; OUSD, 2014). Teachers and staff members at Ed White Middle also described how the restorative discipline circles helped both teachers and students to build mutual empathy toward one another.

Kane et al. (2009) found that schools focused on creating and maintain positive relationships within the school community had the greatest success with restorative practices. These scholars also acknowledged that a critical element of teachers' and staff members' willingness to foster stronger connections was rooted in their belief in their personal capacity to make schools better. This notion supports the theoretical foundation of this dissertation, which asserts that teacher efficacy plays a significant role in teachers' ability to change or improve their practices (Bandura, 1986).

Limitations

I used constructivist grounded theory to collect and analyze data and to construct the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*. This method of inquiry is qualitative in nature; therefore, scholars who desire to explore this dissertation topic or something relative to it with the goal of applying the results to larger populations will have to consider research methods that include quantitative measures.

Recruitment was another limitation of this dissertation study. Specifically, I had a challenging time identifying 12 teachers in the Georgia school district to participate in this study. Secondary teachers who expressed interest had recently participated in restorative practices training but did not meet the participant criteria for implementation and practice. I also believe more of the elementary perspective would have been useful; however, I was not able to secure many teachers who served K-5 students because not many elementary schools teachers in this Georgia school district had been trained in restorative practices at the start of this dissertation study.

Similarly, I think it would have been beneficial to have more teachers participate in the focus group conversation. Although I appreciate having five of the seven Georgia teachers represented in the focus group, I do believe having teachers from Washington, DC, and Connecticut would have made the conversation richer because these participants have had access to more restorative practices training and more opportunities for implementation in comparison to the Georgia teachers. I also believe having more participants in the focus group conversation would have helped to strengthen the theoretical sampling process, which was one of the analysis methods used to saturate codes (Charmaz, 2014).

Last, technology was a limitation of this dissertation study. At times, Skype and FaceTime did not connect well for participants outside of Georgia, and this issue really impacted my ability to understand participants' responses at times and ultimately affected the flow of the interview. I also believe issues with technology may have been distracting for participants. To address this issue during the dissertation process, I had participants repeat their responses, and I used the voice recorder on my phone as a backup method for recording. If I conduct a similar

study in the future, I will consider using advanced forms of technology, or I will only interview participants who are able to participate in face-to-face interviews.

Implications

Even though this dissertation study used teacher perspectives to create the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*, its findings offer implications for various stakeholders in education, including administrators or building leaders, RP coordinators/facilitators, instructional leaders, teachers, school counselors, and teacher education programs.

Implications for Administrators/Building Leaders

The findings of this study demonstrate that administrators/building leaders greatly influence teachers' ability to implement restorative practices effectively. However, funding plays a significant role in the extent to which administrators/building leaders can offer the school structure that would best support restorative practices implementation. For example, to have an RP coordinator/facilitator in schools, principals will have to allocate money for this position. If building leaders do not have the budget for such a role, then the next step might include asking district leaders for monetary support or working with a team of stakeholders to apply for money through various grant sources. Regardless of the funding source(s), it is imperative that building leaders be prepared to present a proposal, which includes data such as attendance, discipline referrals, ISS/OSS days served, and school climate, to clearly demonstrate the need for restorative practices as well as an RP coordinator/facilitator.

In addition to funding, administrators should collaborate with their scheduling teams and RP coordinator(s) to create one or more school schedules that will allow teachers protected time to employ restorative practices in their classrooms with students. Many schools already have schedules to accommodate Teachers as Advisors (TAA) program in secondary schools and

Morning Meetings in the elementary settings. Therefore, the stakeholders can brainstorm ways to incorporate restorative practices into these designated periods.

Administrators must also be intentional about accessing restorative practices training and professional development to ensure they are able to model for teachers how to implement restorative approaches successfully. Although it will be important for principals, assistant and associate principals to participate in some trainings with their staff, it is equally important for them to have professional development and training opportunities with building leaders in other schools if this option is available and/or if other schools in their districts participate in a restorative practices initiative. Administrators' competence with restorative practices could have a positive impact on teachers' support of and buy-in to this approach.

Implications for Restorative Practices Coordinators/Facilitators

One role of RP coordinators/facilitators is to work with administrators or building leaders to ensure that teachers receive restorative practices training and ongoing support with implementation throughout the school year. These trainings and professional development opportunities should be based on student data, teacher discipline referral data, and feedback from teachers and administrators. It is imperative that RP coordinators/facilitators work with building leaders even before the start of a new school year to designate days/times for initial restorative practices trainings and the follow-up professional development/consultation sessions. Presenting dates and times for these sessions from the very beginning of the school year demonstrates administrators' commitment to restorative practices and to teachers' skill development with this approach.

RP coordinators can also help organize school-based restorative practices teams. These teams should consist of administrator(s) who handles discipline, teachers from each grade level and/or content area, special education teachers, a school counselor, students from each grade

level, and community stakeholders, which can include parent(s)/guardian(s), mental health providers, etc. This team should serve as a checks and balances system to ensure that the process for school-based restorative practices is executed with fidelity. This team should also meet consistently, whether it be monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly, and team members should represent the voices of their respective stakeholders at each meeting.

RP coordinators should have systematic ways of collecting data to support the ongoing professional development and consultation opportunities teachers receive throughout the year. RP coordinators will also have to consider collaborating with experts in other areas such as social emotional learning and culturally responsive practices to ensure that the supplemental trainings teachers receive ultimately help them implement restorative practices more effectively.

Implications for Instructional Leaders

As described in final chapters of this dissertation, one of the most significant barriers for implementing restorative practices with fidelity in schools is time. As a result, building leaders and RP experts should consider collaborating with school- and district-level instructional leaders to provide teachers with professional development opportunities that will help them learn innovative and efficient ways to integrate restorative practices into their content areas. This might also mean that district-level instructional leaders can work to create curriculum guides that incorporate this approach.

Implications for Teachers

Teachers play a significant role in the successful implementation of restorative practices. As a result, it is critical for teachers to advocate for the support they need to execute this approach with confidence and effectiveness. If RP coordinators and school-based teams exist, then teachers could voice their concerns to their representative(s) and/or the RP coordinator, but if such positions do not exist, teachers must consider speaking with their administrators

regarding their concerns. If teachers do not feel comfortable speaking with building leaders, then they should collaborate with other colleagues to determine the best approach for advocacy. In such instances, it might be helpful for teachers to have data to support their claims and to brainstorm tangible solutions with colleagues. For example, if teachers are concerned with the amount of class time they are using to facilitate circles during instructional time, they may want to collect data that illustrates the following: days each week used to facilitate circles or restorative conversations, the amount of time it takes to facilitate either process, students involved, and the outcome. Tangible solutions might include an administrator or another colleague helping this teacher learn strategies to create a more positive classroom environment, asking school counselors to provide counseling services to students who are repeated offenders, or having the instructional leader to work with the teacher to determine how group work can be used to help students develop conflict resolution skills.

In addition to advocating for their needs, teachers must also be intentional about their self-care regimen when they begin using restorative approaches with students. As described in Chapters 4 and 5, the level of personal work that teachers will have to do to implement restorative practices effectively may cause an additional layer of stress, anxiety, or other emotions. Consequently, teachers must ensure that they are processing their thoughts and feelings with people they trust, whether other colleagues, building leaders, RP experts, or even mental health professionals. Teachers may also want to consider other forms of self-care such as exercise, mediation, or other mindful practices to help ensure they remain self-regulated and open to the restorative process.

Implications for School Counselors

Even though teachers were the focus of this dissertation study, school counselors also play a critical role in ensuring that school-based restorative practices is implemented with

fidelity. As mental health professionals who have a significant impact on school culture and climate (American School Counselor Association, 2015; DeKruyf, Auger, & Trice-Black, 2013; Kaffenberger & O'Rorke-Trigiani, 2013), counselors should also participate in training, professional development, and consultation opportunities with teachers and should serve on school-based RP teams if they exist. School counselors should also be willing to provide a safe space for teachers who might need to process their restorative practices experiences with students and should be ready to provide referrals for teachers who might need additional support from another mental health provider. It is also critical for counselors to be willing to provide small group counseling support for difficult students. Finally, school counselors may consider serving as the SEL expert when teachers need additional training in this area. Some counselors may also feel comfortable facilitating training opportunities that focus on culturally responsive strategies and interventions.

Implications for Teacher Education Programs

Many teachers who participated in this dissertation study expressed that their beliefs about control; behavior, consequences, and discipline; punishment; and student expectations originated in their teacher education training programs. Specifically, many teacher education programs encourage teachers to create classroom management systems that uphold them as the only authority figure. Teachers also learn to implement approaches such as Positive Behavioral Intervention, and Supports (PBIS) in teacher education programs. PBIS, which emphasizes rewards for good behavior and punishment/consequences for poor behavior, reinforces that extrinsic factors should drive student behavior. Furthermore, even though teacher education programs encourage teachers to have high expectations for all students, these programs do not challenge teachers to address how their personal values, biases, and assumptions significantly impact the expectations they have for students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds.

For these reasons, it is imperative that professors and instructors who teach in education programs learn adjust their teaching methods to align with current practices. More specifically, education programs should teach pre-service teachers how to use nontraditional approaches, such as restorative practices, to create classroom communities, to address behavior issues, and to help students develop the discipline they need to be successful in school and in life. Teacher education programs should also require pre-service teachers to adopt culturally responsive pedagogy as a vital component of their teaching philosophy. This is important because experts in culturally responsive pedagogy and practices assert that teachers' perceptions of students can either strengthen or lessen their self of efficacy (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Obidah & Teel, 2001; Paneque, 2004). Teacher education programs should also teach pre-service teachers ways to integrate social emotional learning (SEL) into their teaching practices. SEL not only helps students develop the skills they need to be successful, it reinforces the importance of discipline above behavior and consequences.

Future Research

The purpose of this study was to create a theory that would explain the factors teachers need to implement restorative practices with confidence and success. Based on the findings of this grounded theory study, I have four recommendations for future research related to this topic. Teacher perspectives are the foundation of this constructivist grounded theory study, however many studies that evaluate or examine the impact of restorative practices also include the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including administrators, RP experts, students, parent(s)/guardian(s), school counselors, etc. As a result, it would be beneficial to conduct similar research with different groups of stakeholders to determine how their perspectives affirm or negate the categories presented in the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices.*

It would also be valuable to conduct qualitative research with level-specific teachers to explore their experiences with restorative practices implementation using the *Perry Factor Model for Restorative Practices*. For example, if each qualitative study included the perspectives of only one level of teachers (elementary, middle, or high school), it would help demonstrate if the factors for implementing restorative practices with confidence and success change based on the grade level teachers serve.

In an effort to achieve generalizability, scholars could conduct quantitative research to evaluate the *Perry Factor Model of Restorative Practices.* For example, a survey could be developed based on the factors presented in this model, and participants could rate how much they agree or disagree with the categories and subcategories presented in this model. Further, a quasi-experimental design could be used to evaluate the office referral data and disproportionality risk ratio of schools that implement restorative practices using the *Perry Factor Model of Restorative Practices* in comparison to those schools that implement this approach without using this model. Similar to Armour (2017) and OUSD (2014), it might be beneficial for such studies to include multiple years (2–3) of data to evaluate the impact of *Perry Factor Model of Restorative Practices* overtime. Longitudinal studies, as well as other quantitative methods, could help standardize the implementation of restorative practices across schools and districts.

There were a number of focused codes mentioned by at least four or five participants in this dissertation study and were omitted because they did not reach the level of saturation required for analysis. These codes were using trauma-informed practices, learning to facilitate circles with Hispanic and Latino students, and working with students in special education. Although these codes did not have enough support from majority of participants to withstand the

data analysis phase of this grounded theory study, the teachers who discussed one or more of these codes identified them as being vital to effective restorative practices implementation. Further, these codes represent topics that receive a significant amount of attention in educational research. Consequently, if this study is replicated, it would be beneficial to include explicit questions in the interview protocol that encourage teachers to share whether or not they feel these three codes are key factors that influence their ability to implement restorative practices with confidence and success. Scholars should also use other qualitative methods to explore the connection between restorative and trauma-informed practices.

Epilogue

Many people have asked me why my dissertation focuses on teachers instead of counselors. I have reflected on this question throughout my entire dissertation process. I wish I had a more profound answer, but in my six years of serving as a school counselor, I have learned that it is impossible to serve students effectively without the support of teachers. More specifically, my efforts to address the barriers that hinder students' access to their education include collaborating with teachers to identify viable strategies and interventions that help students be successful. When teachers feel supported and are confident in their capacity to help even the most challenging students, I am more of an effective counselor.

My dissertation also focuses on teachers because as a social justice advocate and change agent, I strongly believe that my efforts must transcend the individual work I do with students and include systems-level advocacy. I am passionate about systems-level change because I know that without it, not all students will have equitable access to their education. I love the school district where I serve, but it is no secret that we are in need of systems-level change to meet the needs of students of color. I believe restorative practices have the potential to create the level of change we need if, and only if, this approach is implemented with fidelity. I also believe it is

impossible to execute restorative practices successfully if teacher voices are not at the heart of implementation efforts.

Throughout this dissertation process, I have also reflected on the way this research has impacted me as a mother of Black male in a public school setting. I must be honest and say that I struggle to navigate my identities as Jerimyha's mother, a supporter of teachers, a former teacher, a counselor in the same district where he attends school, and a scholar who knows that Black males are the most susceptible to racial disproportionality in schools. My son is intelligent, charismatic, compassionate, funny, and energetic, but he can also be unmotivated and challenging for teachers at times. How do I remove my professional identities to just be his mother? How do I collaborate with but also challenge his teachers to have high academic and behavioral expectations without acknowledging racial disproportionality and the microaggressions he has and will continue to experience in schools? Is that even possible? How do I help Jerimyha navigate an educational system that struggles to effectively serve students who look like him? I think about these and many other questions all the time. It is exhausting and frustrating at times.

Even as I struggle to strike a balance between my responsibilities as a mother and my professional identities, I remind myself of the privilege I have of knowing, and I think about all of the parent(s)/guardian(s) who struggle to support their child or children in schools because they do not have the same access as I do. I cannot and will not apologize for the education I have attained, but I will always collaborate with Jerimyha's teachers to ensure we are all doing our part to help him become a productive member of society. And I will continue to dedicate my life to advocating for students and families who need and deserve the same access as Jerimyha.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SOLICITATION LETTER TO ADMINISTRATORS

Dear [Principal of School],

My name is Ashlee Perry, and I am the school counselor at Clarke Middle School. I am also a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services.

As the leader of [School Name], I am seeking your assistance in my dissertation study titled, "Using Teacher Voices to Restore Discipline: A Grounded Theory Study".

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to use teachers' voices to create a theory that explains the factors that make educators feel most confident and successful with implementing restorative practices. Twelve teachers will selected to participate in this study. Teachers who participate in this study must:

1. teach African American and/or Latino students
2. have at least three years of teaching experience in this and/or other urban school districts
3. have participated in one or more restorative justice training in the 16-17 school year
4. have successful experiences with implementing restorative practices
5. be available to participate in a 45-60 minute individual interview
6. be available to participate in a 60-90 minute focus group interview
7. be available to provide follow up information if necessary

My formal request is that you distribute this email request(s) to teachers at [School Name] in an effort to identify potential participants for this study. My contact information will be included in the email solicitation and after teachers have contacted me directly, I will proceed with scheduling interviews.

All information we discuss during the interview process will be confidential and teachers' identity will not be revealed on any documentation associated with this study. No identifiers will be used for this research with the exception of a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality and the documentation of their demographic information.

Participation will include the following:

Individual In-Depth Interviews

- I will audio-record interviews and take reflective notes throughout the conversation.
- I will pay a company that is not associated with CCSD or UGA to transcribe the interviews.
- I will provide each participant a copy of the transcribed interview for his or her records and review.

- I will facilitate each individual interview separately.
- Individual interview length may range between 45-60 minutes

Focus Group Interview

- I will audio-record the interview and take reflective notes throughout the conversation.
- I will pay a company that is not associated with CCSD or UGA to transcribe the interview.
- I will provide each participant a copy of the transcribed interview for his or her records and review.
- Focus group interview length may range between 60-90 minutes

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call (229) 322-8782 or send an email to aperry14@uga.edu. The study has received approval through the UGA IRB process.

Ashlee Perry Natoya Haskins, Ph.D.
Primary Investigator Faculty Advisor

APPENDIX B

SOLICITATION EMAIL TO TEACHERS

Greetings,

My name is Ashlee Perry. I am the school counselor at Clarke Middle. I am also a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services. I am planning to conduct a qualitative research study to explore teachers' experiences with implementing restorative practices in the classroom. I will also use these experiences to create a theory that explains the factors that make teachers feel most confident and successful with implementing restorative practices.

Twelve teachers will selected to participate in this study. Teachers who participate in this study must meet the following criteria:

1. teach African American and/or Latino students
2. have at least three years of teaching experience in this and/or other urban school districts
3. have participated in one or more restorative justice training in the 16-17 school year
4. have successful experiences with implementing restorative practices
5. be available to participate in a 45-60 minute individual interview
6. be available to participate in a 60-90 minute focus group interview
7. be available to provide follow up information if necessary

Details about the study are listed below. The names of the participants will be confidential and at no point will their names be taken or documented on any part of the study. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure confidentiality. Following the analysis of the study all interview transcripts will be destroyed. My study will involve:

Individual In-Depth Interviews

- I will audio-record interviews and take reflective notes throughout the conversation.
- I will pay a company that is not associated with CCSD or UGA to transcribe the interviews.
- I will provide each participant a copy of the transcribed interview for his or her records and review.
- I will facilitate each individual interview separately.
- Individual interview length may range between 45-60 minutes

Focus Group Interview

- I will audio-record the interview and take reflective notes throughout the conversation.
- I will pay a company that is not associated with CCSD or UGA to transcribe the interview.

- I will provide each participant a copy of the transcribed interview for his or her records and review.
- Focus group interview length may range between 60-90 minutes

Please contact me via phone or email if you meet the criteria described above and are willing to participate in this study. Please also feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. My contact information is listed below. I hope to hear back from you soon regarding your participation in this study. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Ashlee Perry, Ed.S
aperry14@uga.edu
Cell: (229) 322 8782
Ph.D. Candidate, Counseling and Student Personnel Services, P-16
Department of Counseling and Human Development Services University of Georgia

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled, "Using Teacher Voices to Restore Discipline: A Grounded Theory Study" conducted by Ashlee D. Perry, Investigator from the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia under the direction of Dr. Natoya Haskins, Faculty Advisor for the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services, University of Georgia.

I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part in this study at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. If I decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as mine will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless I make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to use teachers' voices to create a theory that explains the factors that make educators feel most confident and successful with implementing restorative practices.

If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to participate in one 45-60 minute, audio-recorded interview, and one 60-90 minute, audio recorded interview. These interviews will allow me to recount my experiences of utilizing restorative practices with students and in the classroom. I will also be asked to be a part of the member checking process by reviewing my interview transcriptions as well as the researcher's codes and themes to ensure I agree with what has been said and interpreted. I may end the interview at any point and may decline to answer any questions I do not feel comfortable answering. I may also feel free to take a break during any portion of the interview.

While there are no foreseeable risks associated with this research study, some questions will be asked about unsuccessful experiences I have had with implementing restorative practices, which may cause me to discomfort. I can access counseling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to discuss any discomfort I may experience. The EAP is located at The Carson Center, 1435 Oglethorpe Avenue, Athens, GA 30606. The contact number is (706) 549 6658. However, as a way to mitigate any potential discomfort, I am able to skip any questions I am uncomfortable answering. If I do not teach in this district but am in need of counseling services, I understand that Ashlee Perry will work with me to determine if my district provides EAP and will help me identify potential mental health agencies in my area.

I acknowledge that I will receive a $25 gift card for completing both interviews.

The only people who will know that I am a research subject are members of the research team. No individually-identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others without my written permission, except if necessary to protect my rights or welfare; or if required by law. If the researchers use any direct quotes from my interviews or written reflections in any professional presentations or publications, the researchers or transcribers will remove or alter any information that could identify the quotation as mine. I will

be assigned an identifying pseudonym that will be used on all individually-identifiable written and verbal communication. Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However once the materials are received by the researcher, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. All individual information obtained will be treated confidentially. The audio records will be destroyed after the researchers transcribe the recordings and replace my name with a pseudonym. The investigator will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project.

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I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____ _____ _____

Name of Researcher Signature Date

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

_____ _____ _____

Name of Participant Signature Date

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 629 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Hello. My name is Ashlee Perry, and I am the counselor at Clarke Middle School. I am also a doctoral candidate at the University of Georgia in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services. The purpose of this study to create a theory that explains the factors that make teachers feel most confident and successful with implementing restorative practices.

I am utilizing the voices of teachers to facilitate this study. With your permission, I would like to interview you today about your experiences of utilizing restorative practices with students and in the classroom.

All information we discuss will be confidential and your identity will not be revealed on any documentation associated with this study. No identifiers will be used for this research with exception of a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality and the documentation of your demographic information.

I anticipate this interview will last between 45-60 minutes. I will audio-record our interview as well as take reflective notes throughout our conversation. Even though I will hire a company that is not associated with CCSD or UGA to transcribe the interviews, I will send a copy of the transcribed interview for your records and for your review.

You may end the interview at any point and may decline to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. You may also feel free to take a break during any portion of the interview. Please let me know if you need additional clarification or explanation about any of the questions. Do you have any questions for me before we begin the interview?

Demographic Information:

Assigned Participant Number:

Race/Ethnicity:

Gender:

Current Grade Level(s)

Current Subject Area(s):

Years of Teaching Experience (excluding this current year):

1. What made you want to become a teacher?
2. What do you love most about teaching?
3. Tell me about a little bit about your experiences of working with African American and Latino students.
4. Tell me about the restorative justice training(s) or professional development sessions in which you have participated.
5. When did you participate in each of these trainings?
6. Describe the restorative practices you utilize in your classroom and/or with students.
7. How has using restorative practices impacted your classroom environment, if at all?
8. How have restorative practices changed the way you interact with students, if at all?
9. How have restorative practices changed the way you discipline students, if at all?
10. Tell me at least three experiences when you have implemented restorative practices successfully.
11. Tell me at least one experience when implementing restorative practices successfully was more difficult or challenging.
12. What motivates you to continue applying restorative practices in the classroom or with students after you have had an unsuccessful experience?
13. How would you describe your level of confidence with implementing restorative practices in the classroom?
14. Is there anything that would help improve your level of confidence with implementing restorative justice?
15. Why do you think some teachers have difficulty utilizing restorative practices?
16. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about your experiences of being a teacher and utilizing restorative practices?

That concludes our interview. The information you provided me will be extremely useful to my research. After all participants are interviewed and initial themes have been coded, you will receive a Doodle request to participate in the focus group. Once you agree to participate, I will send you a copy of the questions for the focus group interview.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns pertaining to this interview.

Thank you again for your participation. Have a great day.

APPENDIX E

INITIAL CODING

1. Being influenced by others to enter the teaching profession	2. Being happy/fulfilled
3. Building relationships with students	4. Working with diverse populations of students
5. recognizing/addressing oppression, marginalization & discrimination	6. Recognizing/addressing personal biases, assumptions,values, trauma
7. Being honest with self/self-reflective	8. Acknowledging privilege & its impact
9. Empowering students of color	10. Dealing with student resistance, anger, and/or apathy
11. Adjusting expectations	12. Accepting misbehavior as the "norm"
13. Receiving positive feedback from students	**14. deleted (too similar to #32)**
15. Showing students you care	16. Working through conflict with students
17. Recognizing student individuality	**18. deleted (too similar to #43)**
19. Having buy in from building leaders	20. Having/needing RJ/RP training & professional development
21. Recognizing the importance of adult regulation	22. Recognizing misbehavior as symptom of unmet needs
23. Helping students & teachers to develop SEL skills	24. Using RP without realizing it
25. Using RP strategies	26. Helping students to process in the moment
27. Letting go of power	28. Creating a positive classroom environment/culture/building community
29. Having high expectations for students	30. Finding time to utilize restorative practices
31. Building on student strengths	32. Accepting RJ/RP as a process that takes time/refusing to give up

33. Changing/shifting adult mindset	34. Giving students space
35. Giving teachers space	36. Teaching students about RJ/RP
37. Being vulnerable/human	38. Creating a school culture/structure conducive to RP
39. Addressing pressure teachers feel to stick to content/other duties	40. Creating accountability system for Teachers & administrators
41. Needing RP to be a non-negotiable for all teachers	42. Modeling appropriate ways to use RP
43. Having RP/RJ Coordinator/ Facilitator in schools	44. Allowing teachers time to work/talk through scenarios
45. Having a RJ expert/practitioner to co-facilitate circles/RP processes	46. Using community building circles regularly
47. Having the opportunity to observe RP being done well	48. Hearing successful RP stories/experiences
49. Having more opportunities to practice RP	50. Having successful experiences with RP
51. Being an advocate/change agent for students of color	52. Accepting students of color for who they are
53. Helping students of color feel connected to school	54. learning/figuring out how to work With students of color
55. Acknowledging Disconnections	56. Having NVC training
57. Recognizing stressors for adults	58. Empowering teachers
59. Using RP to repair relationships	60. Treating students respectfully
61. Teaching students skills that will need for the real world	62. Using nontraditional discipline strategies
63. Addressing misconceptions of RJ/RP	64. Seeing kids grow academically and/or behaviorally
65. Giving students choices/autonomy to	66. Working as a community to reach

make decisions	challenging students
67. Recognizing the connection of RP paradigm to personal self/values	68. Getting feedback about RP implementation
69. Identifying with students of color/developing connections	70. Comparing school structure to prison
71. Acknowledging teacher burnout	72. Understanding cultural differences
73. Using punitive discipline practices	74. Hiring new teachers who support RJ/RP
75. Acknowledging traumatic experiences;having people in the building who are well versed in trauma	76. Having patience with students & adults
77. Learning about Black and/or Latino culture	78. Acknowledging the challenge of facilitating circles with ESOL & students in special education
79. Having negative thoughts about ability To facilitate circle	80. Realizing that it's not about you and taking this personally
81. Learning to be a good/active listener	82. Communicating with families
83. Valuing connections above content	84. Using teaching as a way to help students to develop character/become better human beings
85. Being kind, nice, and welcoming	86. Giving students hope and encouragement
87. Being afraid or saying or doing the wrong thing	88. Having courage/confidence to have difficult conversations
89. Encouraging students to be open, honest, and authentic	90. Empathizing with others, showing compassion
91. Sharing frustrations/challenges of working with students	92. Teachers modeling appropriate behaviors with students
93. Intentionally using RJ and RP to achieve social justice	94. Helping students to realize the impact of their actions & potential consequences
95. Hoping this research can be used to change policy in our district	96. Creating classroom environment where students and teachers share power
97. Needing district wide support for RJ	98. Being frustrated with buzzword/checklist Initiatives

99. Needing additional tools/feeling powerless	100. Feeling an internal obligation to teach/focus more than content
101. Defining what it means to be a good teacher	102. Wanting to feel valued as a teacher
103. Administrators using RJ with teachers	104. Believing that RJ is essential for students and teacher
105. Sharing frustrations with the Educational system focus on profit.	106. Having an adult available to cover class for restorative conversations
107. Discussing topics that interest and/or relevant to students	108. Feeling love from students even as a White teacher
109. Feeling lack of support from Administration/support staff	110. Needing immediate/timely action from Administrators
111. Giving students & teachers privacy to have restorative conversations	112. Being a novice teacher
113. Using mindfulness	114. Using RP to address trauma
115. Always being willing to grow	116. Restoring harm even when consequences must happen
117. Understanding what behavior is developmentally appropriate	118. Starting fresh everyday
119. Being uncomfortable with the unknown	120. Reading content focused on RJ
121. Being comfortable with being uncomfortable	122. Having several RJ experts in the building
123. Referring students for additional services	124. Acknowledging culture of violence
125. Comparing old school vs. new school practices	126. Taking it day by day (focusing on today's success)
127. Feeling heard/validated	128. Creating a space where teachers & students let go of fears, ego, etc.

129. Having homogeneous circles	130. Needing to be trauma informed
131. using circles to teach academics/content	132. using circles to help students & teachers feel more comfortable/confident with being open with their peers
133. Helping students to identify with one another	134. Respecting each person's process
135. Using strategies to be more inclusive of ESOL students	136. Checking in with students to find out if they are getting what they need
137. Critiquing other evidence based programs for behavior/discipline	138. Helping students to understand what behaviors are appropriate at school vs. home
139. Tailoring RJ/RP to meet student and teacher's needs	140. Being objective when naming objective behaviors/reframing redirection
141. Becoming a teacher to help students	

APPENDIX F

FOCUSED CODING

1. Being influenced by others to enter the teaching profession	2. Being happy/fulfilled
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57. Recognizing stressors for adults	58. Empowering teachers
59. Using RP to repair relationships	60. Treating students respectfully
61. Teaching students skills that will need for the real world	62. Using nontraditional discipline strategies
63. Addressing misconceptions of RJ/RP	64. Seeing kids grow academically and/or behaviorally

65. Giving students choices/autonomy to make decisions	66. Working as a community to reach challenging students
67. Recognizing the connection of RP paradigm to personal self/values	68. Getting feedback about RP implementation
69. Identifying with students of color/developing connections	70. Comparing school structure to prison
71. Acknowledging teacher burnout	72. Understanding cultural differences
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75. Acknowledging traumatic experiences;having people in the building who are well versed in trauma	76. Having patience with students & adults
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83. Valuing connections above content	84. Using teaching as a way to help students to develop character/become better human beings
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141. Becoming a teacher to help students	

APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research Questions:

- What factors do teachers feel are necessary to implement restorative practices effectively?
- What factors make teachers feel confident in their ability to implement restorative practices effectively?
- New Research Question: What personal or internal work must teachers do in order to implement restorative practices effectively?

Questions 1-3

During individual interviews, every teacher discussed the importance of social justice and doing the personal "work" necessary to effectively serve Black, Hispanic, and Latino students. This personal work, based on your responses, includes the following:

- recognizing personal biases, assumptions, and values
- addressing personal biases, assumptions, and values
- recognizing the marginalization, oppression, and discrimination that Black and Latino students experience in society and in schools
- addressing the marginalization, oppression, and discrimination that Black and Latino students experience in society and in schools
- acknowledging personal areas of privilege and the way these privileges impact students of color
- understanding cultural differences between you and the students you teach
- being honest with self/being self reflective
- maintaining high expectations while knowing how to adjust expectations
- shifting adult mindset regarding discipline and consequences
- shifting adult mindset regarding the role of teachers/education
- being vulnerable to students
- letting go of power/control
- sharing power with students

1. Would you use the points above to talk a little bit more about the personal work you've done and/or are doing to meet the needs of Black and Latino students in your school?

2. Are all the internal processes above necessary in order to implement RP effectively?

3. Are there internal processes missing from this list? If so, could you share what you feel should be added and why?

Question 4

All of the processes mentioned above take time and are a constant work in progress. However, which of these processes, if any, do teachers need to begin BEFORE utilizing restorative practices?

Question 5

Many teachers discussed the importance of understanding that student misbehavior is connected to an unmet need or needs. While this belief it is an important component of restorative justice, it also aligns with the ideals of being trauma informed. **Have you had training on what it means to be a teacher who is trauma informed? Do you think it's necessary for teachers to receive such training in order to implement restorative practices effectively?**

Question 6

Many of you mentioned the importance of teaching students social emotional skills. **Do you all feel like this is a necessary component of implementing restorative practices effectively?**

Question 7

Many of you mentioned the importance of teaching adults social emotional skills. **Do you all feel like this is a necessary component of implementing restorative practices effectively?**

Questions 8-11

Below are factors that many of you said would help you to feel most confident with implementing restorative practices:

- having opportunities to observe RP being done well
- having RJ experts/practitioners to model appropriate use of RP
- having building leaders to use circles and other RP with teachers
- having more opportunities to practice RP
- having successful experiences with RP
- receiving feedback consistently
- receiving praise/positive feedback from students and administrators/support staff
- having access to consultation regularly
- working through scenarios with colleagues & RJ expert(s)
- hearing successful RP stories/experiences
- having RJ experts/ practitioners to co-facilitate circles/groups

8. Would any of you be willing to talk a little bit more about any of the points above?

9. Do you feel all of the listed factors are necessary to help teachers feel more confident with RP implementation?

10. If not, which factors do you feel should not be listed and why?

11. Are there factors missing? If so, can you share what factors you feel should be added and why?

Questions 12-15

Below are factors that many of you said would help teachers to feel most effective with implementing restorative practices:

- having good relationships with even the most challenging students
- having a positive classroom environment
- having a school structure that supports RJ/RP implementation
- having/creating time to utilize RP with students
- having buy-in from building leaders
- having a RP Coordinator/Facilitator in schools
- having continuous RP training
- using community building circles
- having access to consultation opportunities
- making RJ/RP a non-negotiable for all teachers
- creating accountability system for teachers

12. Would any of you be willing to talk a little bit more about any of the points above?

13. Do you feel that all of the listed factors are necessary to help teachers feel most effective with RP implementation?

14. If not, which factors do you feel should not be listed and why?

15. Are there factors missing? If so, can you share what factors you feel should be added and why?

Question 16

Do you think it's necessary for students to be trained in RJ/RP in order for it to be implemented successfully in schools? If so, what do you think this training should entail?

Question 17
Is it necessary for teachers to receive training in nonviolent communication in order to utilize RP effectively?

Question 18
Some of the teachers I interviewed discussed facilitating circles with students who speak little to no English. Have you had this experience? If so, what are ways you help ESOL students feel included in the circle process?

Question 19
Many teachers mentioned the importance of focusing on the strengths of Black and Latino students and empowering them in schools. Do you think this is a necessary component of utilizing RP effectively? If so, what are ways you empower students of color and focus on their strengths?

APPENDIX H

CATEGORIES

Category	**Label**
Category A	School Structure
Category B	Trainings
Category C	Professional Development/Consultation
Category D	Internal Awareness
Category E	Additional Trainings
Category F	Relationship/Rapport Building

APPENDIX I

FOCUSED CODING UNDER EACH CATEGORY

Category A: School Structure

Subcategory: Administrators

- Having buy in from building leaders
- Making time for teachers to utilize RP
- Hiring a RP/RJ Coordinator/Facilitator

Subcategory: Teachers' Role

- Using community building circles consistently
- Teaching students to use RJ/RP

Category B: Trainings

Subcategory: Teach Restorative Justice

- Restorative justice origin, and tenets/values/principles
- Present data from schools and districts that illustrate the effectiveness of RJ

Subcategory: Shifting Teacher Mindset

- Recognize misbehavior as a symptom of unmet needs
- Explore the purpose of discipline, punishment, & consequences
- Explore notion of power
- High expectations vs. adjusted expectations

Subcategory: Teach Restorative Practices

- Nonviolent communication
- Teach educators to use RP strategies (circles, informal conversations, conferencing, re-entry meetings, community building circles, etc.)

Category C: Professional Development/Consultation Opportunities

- Model appropriate ways to use restorative practices/observe restorative practices being done well
- Allow teachers time to work/talk through scenarios
- Allow teachers more opportunities to practice restorative practices
- Have a RJ practitioner or experts to co-facilitate circles
- Collaborate with colleagues to reach challenging students

Category D: Personal Work/Internal Awareness

- Be self reflective/Be honest with yourself
    - Acknowledge areas of privilege and impact
    - Recognize personal biases, assumptions, & values
    - Recognize oppression, marginalization, and discrimination
- Be willing to be vulnerable/human

Category E: Additional Trainings

- Culturally Responsive Training
- Social Emotional Learning

Category F: Relationship/Rapport Building

- Build classroom communities
- Acknowledge disconnections
- Identify with students of color/form connections
- Help students feel connected to school
- Build on student strengths
    - Recognize and celebrate student individuality
    - Recognize and celebrate student progress
- Empower students of color