

### ABSTRACT

Black students are more likely to be suspended for subjectively negative behaviors than their White counterparts. NASP has called for practitioners to address such disparities by becoming competent in multicultural differences. Ross Greene's Collaborative and Proactive Solutions aims to utilize equitable practices by promoting teacher-student collaboration in problem solving. The current study examines the impact of multicultural competency level in practitioners' perceived efficacy in using Greene's ALSUP interview form.

Addresses NASP Practice Domain Model 8: Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations

### LITERATURE REVIEW

- 13.7% of Black students received out of school suspensions, compared with only 5% of White students in the 2013-14 school year. (NCES, 2019)
- Okonofua and Eberhardt (2015) found teachers were more likely to rate students with stereotypically Black names as needing harsher disciplinary actions for minor behaviors, label them "troublemakers," and believe infractions were more indicative of a behavioral pattern than for students with stereotypically White names.
- A foundation of equitable practices is necessary within school psychology due to the growing racial and cultural diversity of our student population compared to the majority White, female demographic of school psychologists (Malone, 2016).
- Ross Greene's CPS is "equity in action," with a core concept that children do well if they can (Hayes, 2021). A primary component of CPS is the Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP). This interviewing form emphasizes teacher-student collaboration to understand the root of students' behavioral challenges by identifying lagging skills the student is having difficulty demonstrating and the adult expectations the student is having difficulty meeting (Greene & Hayes, 2021).
- There is no required multicultural competency education for those using CPS in practice. While this model may begin to reduce the disciplinary disproportionality students of color face in schools, its impact could be even greater when paired with multicultural competency education.
- The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between practitioners' multicultural competency and their perceptions of the quality and efficacy of unsolved problems generated using the ALSUP for students of differing racial identities.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### Participants

- 19 participants certified as CPS providers and fully trained in using the ALSUP were surveyed through Lives in the Balance, the company behind CPS.
- 2 participants within the White student vignette group did not complete the final aspect of the survey, the Multicultural School Psychology Counseling Competency Scale. Their results from ALSUP analysis have been included in qualitative analysis, but excluded from quantitative analysis.

#### Measures and Procedures

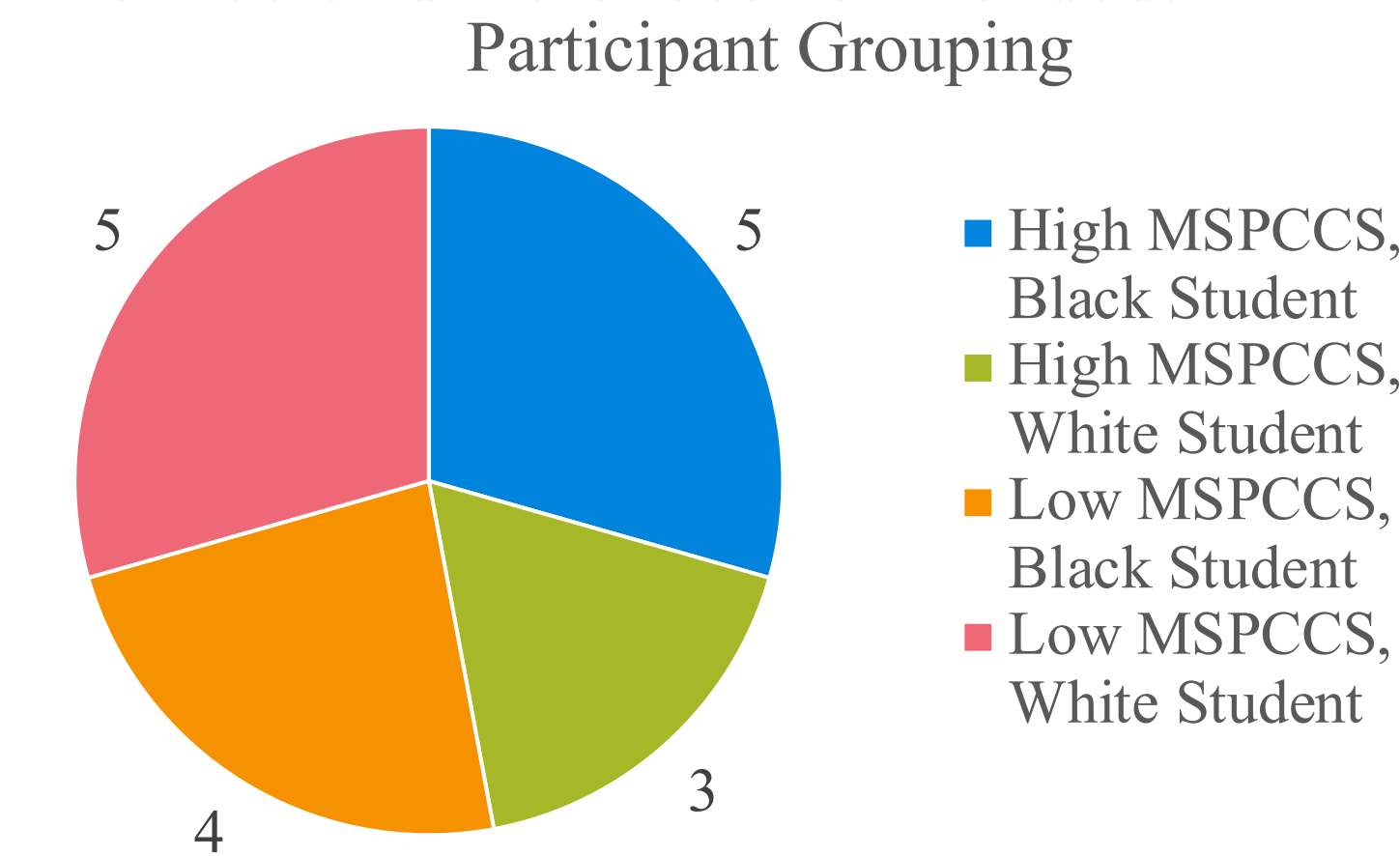
- Participants read the lagging skills and unsolved problems (USP) from an ALSUP interview between a school psychologist and a classroom teacher, altering the student's racial identity. Participants were randomly selected via Qualtrics survey randomizer distribution to analyze ALSUP efficacy for a White student or a Black student.
- Participants then evaluated the quality of USPs using Lives in the Balance ALSUP Meeting Checklist, rating the USPs on a scale of 1-5 on six best practice characteristics. A mean overall rating was calculated as well. Additional qualitative questions were included to discuss the effectiveness of the ALSUP for the student.
- Finally, a modified version of the Multicultural School Psychology Counseling Competency Scale (Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997) was completed as a self-report on ability to work with diverse populations.

Student Vignette	
Name: Jaiden	Grade: 6 <sup>th</sup>
Gender: Male	Race: <b>White/Black</b>
Age: 11 years, 7 months	Primary Language: English
<p>Jaiden is noted to be a funny, kind student who excels with creative assignments, and loves to spend free time playing sports with friends, especially basketball. He is currently in the general education classroom full time and does not have any documented medical diagnoses. It has been noted that Jaiden struggles with his attention and social-emotional skills, especially emotional regulation when he gets frustrated. Jaiden does have a history of office referrals, receiving 7 within the first 3 months of the school year this year. Two referrals came from fights in the lunchroom, 4 from problems occurring at recess, and 1 from refusal to participate during independent math work time.</p>	

### RESULTS

#### Data Analysis

- Participants were grouped based on independent variables: high versus low multicultural competency level (overall MSPCC rating above or below the median score, 3.09) and vignette group. Means and standard deviations were then compared across groups. Limited cell size prevented researchers from testing the significance of differences as intended.



- A content theme analysis was used to examine qualitative data of ALSUP efficacy in participant practice.

#### Results

- Expected results included that those with higher amounts of multicultural competency would be more likely than those with lower multicultural competency to rate the Black and White student vignettes more similarly in quality and efficacy.

	High MSPCCS	Low MSPCCS
White Student Vignette	3.61 (0.42)	3.23 (0.22)
Black Student Vignette	3.13 (0.30)	2.91 (0.22)

Table 1: Overall ALSUP Quality Rating by Participant Grouping.

- A trending theme was found that the White student vignette ALSUP was rated slightly higher in overall quality than the Black student vignette ALSUP. MSPCCS self-rating did not have as strong of an impact on rating as initially hypothesized.
- The Black student vignette group rated the ALSUP's ability to be used as an equitable tool more similarly across MSPCCS self-rating groups (mean(SD) = 3.40(1.14), 3.33(0.21)) than those who rated the White student vignette (mean(SD) = 3.00(1.00), 3.40(1.14)).
- Qualitative theme analysis found that as a tool, participants find strengths in the ALSUP's emphasis on needs rather than behavior (N = 5), quickness and ease of use (N = 4), allowing adults to see if expectations are clear and realistic for students (N = 4), and providing actionable intervention possibilities (N = 5). The primary weakness noted by participants of the ALSUP is the difficulty wording Unsolved Problems correctly (N = 6).

### DISCUSSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

- Due to the small sample population of this study, conclusive results cannot be determined of the true potential impact multicultural competency has on practitioners' efficacy in using the ALSUP. Trending themes shown within analyses found that the provided ALSUP was rated to be more effective when rating the White student compared to the Black student.
- The most commonly cited strengths of the ALSUP included its emphasis on needs rather than behavior and that it provides actionable intervention possibilities. The primary concern was related to correctly writing Unsolved Problems themselves and working with other professionals to do so (i.e. teachers). Additional training and resources to assist with writing would likely be beneficial within daily practice and increase both efficacy and equity when using this tool.
- Because the rate of disproportionality in disciplinary practices negatively affect students of color in short- and long-term contexts, it is imperative to understand how to reduce this area of bias in our schools. Based within results of this study, it would be recommended that those training to become CPS providers do additional work in understanding their own and systemic biases while working to better their understanding and utilization of the CPS framework.
- It is recommended that future research includes a wider sample population to better analyze the impact of multicultural competency on ALSUP efficacy and equity, as well as understand how equitable this tool would be when working with students with intersectional marginalized identities.

### SELECTED REFERENCES

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