I. Disproportionality


Anyon (2009): Sociological theory & racial disproportionality. Learning disabled fastest growing segment of SE.


Artiles & Bal (2008): Notes problem of disproportionality for over 40 years. Introduces special issue of J of SE devoted to disproportionality in 6 nations on 4 continents. – See Powerpoint

Artiles & Klingner (2006): English language learners. 37 year literature shows AA & Native Americans as most affected in “high incidence disabilities.” Little info about ELLs.


Baugh (1995): Needed reform for AA language minority students. AA usually excluded from funding for language minority services because English is native language. But AAs suffered pidginization processes. Misconceptions re: AA English, and racist stereotypes. Belief that AA English is “bad” or ungrammatical contrary to linguistic evidence. Yet, misconceptions have profound implications. “Class differences in speech and race have left indelible socially stratified watermarks throughout the United States...” Inadequacy of language policies for AA students. AAVE is not pathological. AA English speakers should not be placed in bilingual classes for non native speakers. Call for comprehensive programs and policies....

Blanchett (2009). Special Ed as resegregation. SE & urban schools → miseducation, undereducated, inequitable treatment


Boone & King-Berry (2007): Great advances in education for students with disabilities, and although AA have stimulated legal changes, they have not benefitted from laws intended to benefit students with special needs.
Brandon, Higgins, Pierce, Tandy & Sileo (2010). Focus on AA parental alienation from public education.

Breland (1998): Lighter skinned Blacks seen as more competent.


Cartledge (1999): AA males at most risk of SE (esp. serious emotional disturbance). Need for appropriate interventions with this group.


Cochran, Feng, Cartledge & Hamilton (1993): Benefits of cross-age tutoring on low achieving AA males. (low achieving 5th graders, with behavioral disorder, tutored 2nd grade Black boys) Improved sight words (tutoring subject matter) and positive social interactions & teacher ratings.

Coutinho & Oswald (2000): historical perspectives; national & state-level estimates of D., causes. Need for an appreciation of the complex sociopolitical history and current context….and need for effective advocacy.

Coutinho & Oswald (2005): Gender disproportionality. Male to female rations that range from 1.5:1 to 3.5:1. Compares LD< SED & MR at state, regional and national levels. Data collected at US office of Civil Rights – Found substantial differences between states. Greater male D for LD than MR or SED.

Cullinan & Kauffman (2005): race of student, race of teacher: AA more likely to receive Emotional disturbance diagnosis. Teacher bias NOT found.

Daniels (1998): Educational inequities perpetuate D in both gifted & SE.

Dawson (2008): Dissertation. SE in CA. Increasing trends of D for AA. A means to address D is the use of “prereferal teams.” Identified 3 types of supports that are related to prereferral teams success at avoiding D.


Dyson & Gallannaugh (2008): D is SE in England. Not based on disabilities, but on “special education needs.” D not as related to minority status as to “broad educational and social inequalities.”

Dyson & Kozleski (2008): D as a transatlantic phenomenon. Compares US & England who have resources to assess & provide SE for children with special needs.
Ebersole & Kapp (2007): AA D in mental retarded programs. Due to stereotypes, tests used, social & educational environments. Study if 1st- 5th grade students in SE, identified as MR. Significant differences between AA & Whites in rates of placement.


Fearn (2002): D of AA. Overview of 6 promising SE programs: mainstreaming in pre-K & K; developing technical skills; pre-referral processes; supporting frustrated teachers; compliance monitoring in districts; avoiding SE bias in assessment.


Ford & Harris (1993): Ed’reform for gifted AA students. Failure to meet their needs.


Franklin (1992): Culturally sensitive instruction for AA with disabilities. Specific instructional strategies: task variability, culturally sensitive teacher-student interaction, social learning in peer groups, cross-age groups, cooperative learning.


Gallahar (2010): Dissertation: students perceptions of teachers’ expectations. Students “…core higher in mathematics when they believe their teacher treats them fairly & equitably….”


Gregory (1997): AA boys & misbehavior. 3 strikes metaphor. 3 types of school responses: corporal punishment, suspension, and SE for behaviorally disordered. Data from 43,034 schools, 25M students. “Extremely large disparities in rates for AA boys vs those for girls and boys of other race/ethnicity groups were found. AA males were most frequently punished.


Hamovich (1999): At risk youths rejected the status attainment ideology promoted in an after-school program. Suggests alternative schools for AA students.

Hardin, Mereoiu, Hung, & Roach-Scott (2009): focus on bilingual & latino. – inconsistent screening & evaluation, too few bilingual professionals, communication barriers.


Harry (1992): AA parental participation in SE. Two dominant views among professionals: (1) deficit view of AA families; and (2) deficit view of children’s learning difficulties. Need to restore balance of power between parents & professionals.

Harry & Anderson (1995): AA males & D in SE. Ed’I programs biased against Blacks. AA talents should be recognized instead of treating differences as deficits.


Harry, Klingner & Hart (2005): AA family strengths vs. school personnel’s negative stereotypes. Atmosphere of negativity among school personnel re: poor AA families. 3 case study students referred for SE. Neglect to consider the cultural capital (strengths) of AA families.


Henderson (2009): Dissertation: Pre-referral intervention teams to diminish D.
Hilliard (1992): Need for new paradigm in SE for AA students. SE services must be pedagogically valid and culturally sensitive & salient.

Hosp & Madyun (2007): D at state, district or individual-level variables. Need to focus more on individual-level variables.


Irving & Hudley (2008): AA males & pervasive problems – school failure, dropout, low college enrollment, SE, low test scores. Cultural mistrust predicts oppositional cultural attitudes which are both inversely related to academic achievement & outcome expectations. Cultural mistrust & oppositional cultural attitudes undermine educational outcome expectations. Need to cultivate a strong cultural identity that is consistent with academic achievement.

Ivey (2008): Dissertation. D more likely when due to professional judgment vs. organic causes such as blindness, deaf, etc. AA at risk in the categories of emotional disturbance & cognitive disability... due to teacher beliefs, biases, and racism. Northeast Ohio. Recommends staff training for AA pedagogy & special education laws & procedures.


Krezmien, Mulcahy & Leone (2008): incarcerated youth. More likely to have disabilities & prior therapy. AA more likely to have been committed.


Lo & Cartledge (2006): D for AA males. Need for functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) and behavioral intervention plans (BIPs) to reduce D for AA males.

Martin & Martin (2007): Family/school partnership. The “Williamson Project” involved parents, community leaders & school personnel to improve achievement and reduce behavior problems. Need to develop character traits within family & community context & to restructure school environments to resemble family environments and culture.

McCray & Garcia (2002): AA D & linguistic D.

Moore (2002): AA teachers referral of AA students, early childhood. Ss felt inadequately trained. Held higher expectations for AA students than their White counterparts; referred on the basis of extreme behavior or perceived disability.

Moore, Henfield & Owens (2008): AA males in SE. n = 10, urban high schools, & their attitudes & perceptions of high school counseling.


Morrow (2010). Dissertation. Evaluating a program to decrease D. New Jersey. Program to reduce D: data collection, district-wide professional development; district stakeholders learned about D and proposed solutions. This team was surveyed. Awareness about D & thinking about professional practices that lead to D.


Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson & Bridgest (2003): How AA males walk & teachers’ perceptions (AA movement styles associated with perceptions of lower achievement, higher aggression, and more likely to need SE).

Norton (2009): D for AA, esp. re: speech-language impairment. Due to biased assessment. Speech-language therapist (SLT) needs to have a working knowledge of the rule-based nature of
nonmainstream English & an unbiased attitude toward NME. SLT viewed AAVE as “incorrect” with bias in favor of Mainstream American English. Need for sociolinguistic training.

Obi & Obiakor (2001): AA exceptional learners – difficulty of distinguishing “genuine” learning problems of culturally & linguistically diverse students. Empowering these learners. Many AA learners are “misidentified, misassessed, miscategorized, misplaced & misinstructed.”

Obiakor (1992): Self concept of AA students & SE. Presumption of “low” self-concept, but SC tests & concepts are inappropriate. Focus on AA SC as multidimensional & methods to enhance.


Olmeda & Kauffman (2003): AA students with EBD & social competence deficits. AA D in SE. Need for culturally sensitive social skills training.


Osher, Cartledge, Oswald, Sutehrland, Artiles & Coutinho (2004): Focus on racial D. D = segregation in restrictive settings, stigmatizing, limiting access to services. To reduce D: identification rates, service disparities, school effects, cultural competence, family collaboration. Also discusses school practice, policy & law, teacher training & research.


Oswald, Coutinho, Best & Singh (1999): SE & school-related economic & demographics. AA in MMR & SED. Focus on extent of D. AA 2.4 times more likely to be identified as MMR, and 1.5 times as SED (serious emotional disturbance) than non-AA. Economics significant predictors.


Patterson (2005): AA males in SE & need for appropriate interventions & use of “guided notes” on AA boys with EBD and LD in SE. Efficacy of guided notes. (see article for definition)

Patton (1998): Focus on D & AA. Persistent patterns of AA in mildly disabled and emotionally disturbed programs. Special education knowledge producers and their assumptions, worldviews & epistemologies serve to perpetuate the D drama. Need for different knowledge producers who are culturally and interculturally competent.


Reis (1986): Model to reduce D. 3 phases: (1) assess learning environment to rule it out as a cause & to ensure its suitability for cultural & linguistic diversity; (2) test selection to assess cognitive functioning, adaptive behavior & achievement; and (3) continual justification of SE placement. Return to regular classroom, or least restrictive environment, should not require same comprehensive assessment that led to the initial placement in SE.

Robinson (2003): Gifted students suffer because of D of minorities in SE. D as a result of historical inequities and consequences of poverty. “We are punishing the innocent for the sins of a society that has been unable to conquer these problems.” Focus on serving the academically advanced.


Rueda, Klinger, Sager & Velasco (2008): Reducing D. SE had a noble goal → to provide services. But, overrepresentation of culturally & linguistically diverse (esp AA & Latino) and in MMR, LD, ED & speech & language impairments). But general education programs are least restrictive for providing greatest access to high expectations and a challenging curriculum, without stigmatizing labels. D → less access to general education & opportunities. Provides recommendations. GET.


Scarborough & McCrae (2010): D in SE among infants & toddlers & maltreatment. AA D & poverty D.


Sinclair, Christenson & Thurlow (2005): promoting school completion for urban EBD. Experimental study that worked for AA & males from 9th grade – 12th grade.

Skiba, Knesting & Bush (2002): culturally competent assessment, more than unbiased tests. Problem of D mandates assessment that is culturally appropriate & sensitive. Test bias, alone, is not enough to explain D. Long history of unequal opportunity & oppression, esp. for AA, which is played out in educational settings. “…unbiased tests provide an accurate estimate not only of individual capability, but also of the conditions that depress that capability. A failure to take differential educational opportunity into account when considering minority test performance may lead to serious errors of test score interpretation.” Culturally competent assessment is about the tests, but also about the “…educational conditions that systematically disadvantage students of color” and seeks remedies.


Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Simmons, Feggins-Azziz, & Chung (2005): Poverty & D. Assessed district-level data for 295 districts in mid-western state. Poverty made a weak & inconsistent predictor. Rates of suspension & expulsion predicted D. Where poverty is useful as a predictor, “…its primary effect is to magnify existing racial disparity.”


Talley (1979): System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment (SOMPA). Used to reduce ethnic D.

Taylor, Gunter & Slate (2001): Teachers’ perceptions & teacher/student gender/ethnicity. Videotape analog -- & 32 item behavior rating scales. Gender of teacher, but not ethnicity, mattered, & student gender also affected. AA females more than W females, and W males more than W females. (No mention of AA males.)


Wilkens (2009): profoundly deaf AA in SE. Less access to regular schools than their White peers.

Wilson & Banks (1994): AA males & D in SE. Need for better social psychological theory & taking into consideration the environmental contexts.

Yeh, Forness, Ho, McCabe & Hough (2004): SE D & parental explanations.

Zabel & Nigro (1999): Juvenile offenders & BD, LD. AA & males were more likely to have had SE experiences.

