Business Case Report

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Business Case Plan

Our group selected a 2017-18 Harassment or Bullying Civil Rights Data Collection dataset. This dataset contains information on students disciplined for harassment or bullying based on sex, race, or disability category for all states. The file we selected contains three spreadsheets: total students, male students, and female students. Through analysis of this data, the impact of race/ethnicity, gender, and disability groups served on harassment/bullying was observed. As additional analysis, the number of disciplines for harassment/bullying was observed at a state level, first as a whole, and then a comparison of male and female reports. With the findings, conclusions were drawn, and policies were created to positively impact the amount of harassment and bullying that occurs in the school system.

Variables:

The variables in the dataset are state, total number of students, number of schools, and percentage of schools reporting. Race/Ethnicity is a key variable based on American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, White, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and two or more races was a key variable. The presence of disability was also a key variable, as students with disabilities served under IDEA and Section 504 were identified. The aspect of being an English language learner was also a variable. Lastly, the key variable of gender was demonstrated through two different spreadsheets.

Limitations:

There are several possible limitations to this chosen dataset. There is a possibility that not all disciplinary actions were reported, as some schools or districts may not have reported certain disciplines. The aspect of bias may also be apparent within the disciplinary actions that occurred, as contextual bias within the situations may have had an impact. This could result in disparities

within disciplinary actions that result from race, gender, or disability. This could then reflect systemic biases in enforcement rather than actual behavior issues. Data collection variability could also be a limitation due to the differences in how schools define bullying and enforce bullying policies. Lastly, missing data is a prominent limitation, as some states may have incomplete data.

Context & Observations:

With context, the dataset was provided by the Department of Education based on discipline reports from 2017 to 2018. This dataset was generated as part of federal reporting requirements on school discipline and bullying incidents involving students with disabilities. It was published by the Office of Civil Rights to monitor compliance with anti-discrimination laws and track disparities in school discipline. In addition, there are 52 observations present within the dataset. This number is based on the number of states present within the dataset, along with the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Main Question:

Our group's main question is, "What factor is most impactful in increasing the amount of bullying that occurs?" The amount of bullying that occurs is represented by the number of students who received discipline for engaging in bullying or harassment. To find an answer to this overarching question, we have three meaningful project questions to understand the true impacts of race/ethnicity, gender, and disability.

Three Meaningful Project Questions:

1. Does race/ethnicity have an impact on the number of disciplines that occur concerning bullying? With this question, which ethnic groups are most likely to engage in bullying and which are least?

2. Does gender impact the number of disciplinary actions that occur concerning bullying? Are males or females more likely to engage in bullying?

3. Does the presence of a disability impact the number of disciplinary actions necessary? Which group of students with disabilities is more likely to engage in bullying (those served under IDEA or Section 504)?

Methodology:

With the first question, Tableau was utilized to demonstrate the data. The measure names were placed in the columns section. These names include Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Two or More Races, Hispanic or Latino of Any Race, Black or African American, and White. A filter was then applied based on measure names, the mark type chosen was the bar type, and color was applied to the chart. Applying color to the chart with a specific color palette allowed the more frequently reported demographic groups to appear darker than the less frequently reported demographic groups. Lastly, a tooltip was applied to demonstrate the specific report numbers.

With the second question, Tableau was also utilized to demonstrate the data. The measure names were placed in the columns section. These names include female and male. A filter was then applied based on measure names, the mark type chosen was the bar type, and color was applied to the chart. Applying color to the chart with a specific color palette allowed the more frequently reported demographic group to appear darker than the less frequently reported demographic group. Lastly, a tooltip was applied to demonstrate the specific report numbers.

With the third question, Tableau was utilized to demonstrate the data, once again. The measure names were placed in the columns section. These names include students with disabilities served under 504 and students with disabilities served under IDEA. The mark type

chosen was the bar type, and color was applied to the chart. Applying color to the chart with a specific color palette allowed the more frequently reported group to appear darker than the less frequently reported group. Lastly, a tooltip was applied to demonstrate the specific report numbers.

Finally, with the additional analysis, Tableau was utilized as well. A general overview of the states was created, which included both male and female discipline reports. To create the overview, longitude (generated by Tableau) was utilized in the columns section, while latitude (generated by Tableau) was utilized in the Rows section. These aspects were created using the details of the country, state, and the sum of discipline reports. The mark chosen was automatic based on the chart selection of the map. Lastly, a filter was applied with the sum of the disciplines, a tooltip was applied to demonstrate the specific report numbers by state, and color was applied to make the states with the highest reports appear darker. With the gender and state focus, gender was simply added as another measure to create two separate maps.

Key Findings:

With race and ethnicity, the highest number of discipline reports was for White students. This may be due to this group's larger population in many school districts and communities. This conclusion highlights the importance of not assuming bullying behavior is concentrated in minority groups. However, the second highest number of discipline reports was Black/African American & Hispanic/Latino students. This demonstrates that the rate per capita (relative to population size) for some minority groups may still show disparities. Overall, this showcases that bullying and harassment are widespread issues across all racial and ethnic backgrounds, so interventions should be inclusive and universal, not targeted only at minority populations.

With gender, the highest number of discipline reports is for males. This is also consistent nationally, suggesting gender may be a strong predictive factor in bullying-related discipline. This outcome may be influenced by gender norms, behavioral expectations, maturity levels, and aggression level differences between males and females. This demonstrates that gender is an impactful factor in the amount of bullying & harassment that occurs, which suggests that interventions should focus mainly on male students.

With the disability group served, the highest number of discipline reports is related to students with disabilities served under IDEA (students with specific, federally defined disabilities). This may indicate that there are differences in the type or severity of disabilities covered under each statute. This also may demonstrate a lack of sufficient behavioral support resources for IDEA students. Overall, there is a significant difference in the number of students served under IDEA compared to 504, which suggests that interventions should focus mainly on enhancing resources for this group.

With the state overview, the highest number of discipline reports was from California, the second-highest was New Jersey, and the third-highest was Oregon. Through the analysis, it was demonstrated that there are significant variations across states. Some states reported significantly higher discipline rates, which may reflect stricter enforcement policies (California), more aggressive reporting, or deeper systemic issues.

With the state and gender overview, the states of California, New Jersey, and Oregon are the highest for males and females. Other high reporting states for both males and females were New York, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, & Minnesota. The variations across states are also shown by gender. The numbers are significantly greater for male students compared to female students, even though the state findings are similar. Again, this may be due to differences in state

enforcement, reporting, and systematic issues. However, there may also be an impact of gender norms, behavioral expectations, aggression levels, and maturity levels.

Recommendations:

For race and ethnicity, there should be universal anti-bullying campaigns, which are school-wide programs to address bullying among all racial/ethnic groups. This should occur particularly in districts with large White student populations. Equity-focused reviews should also occur to examine whether minority students receive harsher penalties for similar offenses. In addition, behavioral education should occur for all students to promote character education and culturally inclusive behaviors. Lastly, there should be a per capita analysis mandate, which will require schools to report disciplinary actions as a percentage of racial group enrollment to uncover any hidden disparities.

With gender, gender-sensitive programs should occur in a tailored manner to address gender-specific forms of aggression (verbal, relational, & physical). Positive behavior programs should also be implemented to create school-wide behavior management programs that emphasize conflict resolution, especially for male students. With disability, there should be an increase in behavioral support services, especially for IDEA students, to manage behavior before it escalates to disciplinary action. There should also be an incorporation of disability-specific training for educators to be trained in understanding and responding to behaviors linked to specific disabilities. Lastly, an inclusive anti-bullying curriculum should be taught to teach all students about disability inclusion and respect through educational programs.

With states, Frequent audits of discipline data should occur to ensure states comply with civil rights laws. In addition, equitable funding for interventions should occur, as states with higher disciplinary actions should receive targeted funding for training, counseling, and

restorative justice programs. Finally, public dashboards should be accessible for public review of district-level data on bullying and discipline by demographics.

Conclusion:

Overall, the data analysis reveals significant disparities in bullying-related disciplinary actions across race/ethnicity, gender, disability status, and state lines. The findings suggest a need for more equitable, consistent, and supportive disciplinary practices in the school system. Through intentional, systemic changes, we can ensure that all students, regardless of background, are treated fairly and supported effectively in their educational journey.