

## **Differences in Grade 3 Reading Achievement by the Economic Status of Students of Color: A Texas Statewide Analysis**

**Heather A. Hamilton<sup>1</sup> and John R. Slate<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1&2</sup>Sam Houston State University

### **Abstract**

In this Texas statewide analysis, the extent to which differences were present in reading achievement by the economic status of Grade 3 Hispanic and Black students was determined. Specifically examined was the relationship of poverty to the three State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Reading Reporting Categories for Grade 3 Hispanic and Black students in the 2015-2016 school year. Inferential statistical analyses revealed the presence of statistically significant differences between Hispanic students who were Poor and Hispanic students who were Not Poor were present in every STAAR Reading Reporting Category. Similar statistically significant differences were present in every STAAR Reading Reporting Category between Black students who were Poor and Black students who were Not Poor. In every instance, Hispanic students who were poor and Black students who were Poor were outperformed by their counterparts who were Not Poor. Given the majority of students of color in Texas live in poverty, and that early reading skills are essential to success, these findings are concerning. Implications of these findings and recommendations for future research are discussed.

**Keywords:** Texas, Grade 3, STAAR, Reading, Economic Status, Black, Hispanic

### ***Introduction***

Literacy skills have become more complex as societal demands have changed. The influx of technology and collaboration, combined with the necessity to interpret complicated and conflicting pieces of information, continues to heighten the need for high-level literacy skills (Reardon, Valentino, & Shores, 2012). The ability to use literacy skills across contents, such as history news, and user manuals, and across various sources, is an indicator of successful reading (Goldman, 2012). Educators, unfortunately, are decreasing the time spent on subjects such as social studies and science (Duke & Block, 2012; McMurrer, 2007); a practice that could have long-term detrimental effects on reading abilities (Duke & Block, 2012). Simply stated, students in the United States are not prepared for the demands of literacy in the 21st century (Goldman, 2012).

Particularly of concern are reading achievement differences by family income. Whereas ethnic/racial achievement gaps have decreased over the past 50 years, income achievement gaps have increased and continue to increase in the area of reading (Reardon et al., 2012; Stinnett, 2014). A possible explanation may be the long summer break students in the United States experience (Goldman, 2012). During this time away from school, students living in poverty typically do not have access to activities such as summer camps or travel (Goldman 2012), decreasing learning opportunities. Additionally, not considered in the poverty threshold are the differing amounts of monies required to provide appropriate learning opportunities by age. A book for a young reader may be possible to acquire, but a trip to camp for an older child may not be so easy to obtain (Lee, 2009).

When children live in poverty early in life, their struggles with reading continue throughout childhood (Lee, 2009). Early childhood experiences set the foundation for literacy development (Waldfoegel, 2012). Parental influence on reading development is a key piece of the foundation. Providing books, reading together, and discussing what was read are all a part of a home environment that fosters literacy development (Waldfoegel,

2012). Parent education levels contribute to a child's reading development, as well. The level of education by a parent correlates to the family income, and may contribute to income inequality (Reardon et al., 2012).

Between 1998 and 2010, the income gap increased by 10% for families with school-age children (Reardon, Waldfogel, & Bassok, 2016). Educators must continue to address the issue of students falling behind due to financial inequality, but these efforts cannot be achieved solely with out-of-school programs (Waldfogel, 2012).

The combination of ethnicity/race and poverty are important factors to consider when addressing student academic needs. To date, the number of studies in which researchers (e.g., Paschall, Gershoff, & Kuhfeld, 2018) have focused on income achievement gaps within ethnic/racial groups are limited. In a most recent Texas, statewide investigation, an analysis of the Grade 3 State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Reading assessment results from the 2015-2016 school revealed a stair-step effect on the Phase-in standard of Approaches Grade Level, Meets Grade Level, and Masters Grade Level (Hamilton, 2019). As the passing standard increased, the passing rate of students of color (i.e., Hispanic and Black) living in poverty decreased. Clearly documented by Hamilton (2019) was that students of color in poverty had statistically significantly lower percentages who were academically prepared in reading than their counterparts who were not poor.

Though limited, studies within ethnic/racial groups are important. Students of color are more likely than are White and Asian students to live in poverty and to live in areas with more concentrated poverty and lower-performing schools (Hernandez, 2012). Schools with high percentages of students of color living in poverty do not produce high levels of achievement (Berliner, 2013).

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Almost 60% of public school students in Texas are living in poverty (Texas Education Agency, 2016a). During the 2015-2016 school year, 75.8% of Hispanic students were living in poverty, and 71.4% of Black students were living in poverty. These percentages were 30% higher than any other racial/ethnic group (Texas Education Agency, 2016a) in the State of Texas. According to Lee (2009), poverty negatively affects the reading skills of children living in poverty. Additionally, the longer children live in poverty, the lower their reading achievement will be (Lee, 2009). School systems do not have the ability to change the poverty status of enrolled students, but educators do have the ability to instruct children of poverty.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which differences were present in reading achievement by the economic status of Grade 3 Hispanic and Black students in Texas. Specifically examined was the relationship of poverty to the three State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Reading Reporting Categories for Grade 3 Hispanic and Black students in the 2015-2016 school year. Archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to make these determinations.

### ***Research Questions***

In this study, the following overarching research question was addressed: What is the effect of economic status on the reading performance of Texas Grade 3 students? Specific sub questions under the this overarching research question were: (a) What is the effect of economic status on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I of Texas Grade 3 students?; (b) What is the effect of economic status on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II of Texas Grade 3 students?; and (c) What is the effect of economic status on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III of Texas Grade 3 students? These research questions were answered separately for Hispanic students and for Black students.

### ***Significance of the Study***

Though literature on the effects of poverty on literacy and reading achievement is available (Hamilton, 2019; Lee, 2009; McGown, 2016; Reardon et al., 2012; Stinnett, 2014; Valentino & Shores, 2012), research regarding the topic of reading achievement on the Grade 3 STAAR test for students of color living in poverty is not extensive. This research was conducted to increase the available literature on the topic. Educators who could benefit from this study could include all individuals in the field of education, as literacy is a life-long skill embedded in all subject areas (McGown, 2016; Reardon et al., 2012).

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

By analyzing archival data, an ex post facto research design was present (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). As with research with a pre-existing dataset, extraneous variables could not be controlled. One categorical independent variable, economic status, was present. Three quantitative dependent variables, STAAR Reading Grade 3 Reporting Category scores in the 2015-2016 school year, were present.

### **Participation and Instrumentation**

Data were requested through a Public Information Request form from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. Specifically requested were the Grade 3 STAAR Reading test scores by Reporting Category for all students, as well as student demographic characteristics, for the 2015-2016 school year. Administered to public school students in Grades 3-12, the STAAR test is given for the first time to students in Grade 3 (Texas Assessment, 2019).

Student reading achievement is measured by the STAAR Reading test across three Reporting Categories. In the Reading Reporting Category I, student understanding across genres of a variety of texts, specifically including vocabulary development, is assessed (Texas Education Agency, 2011). For the Reading Reporting Category II, student abilities to understand and analyze literary texts, which includes fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, and embedded media literacy skills, are measured (Texas Education Agency, 2011). Regarding the Reading Reporting Category III, student abilities to understand and analyze informational texts, which includes expository and embedded procedural and media literacy are assessed (Texas Education Agency, 2011).

Economically disadvantaged is defined by the Texas Education Agency (2018a) as qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Family income must fall 185% or less of the federal poverty line to qualify for free or reduced lunch (Burney & Beilke, 2008). Students who qualified for either the reduced-price lunch program or for the free lunch program were in the Poor group and students who did not qualify for either program were in the Not Poor group of students. Thus, in this investigation, economic status consisted of two groups of students.

## **Results**

Prior to conducting any inferential statistical procedures, the normality of the dependent variables, (i.e., STAAR Reading Reporting Category I scores, STAAR Reading Reporting Category II scores, and STAAR Reading Reporting Category III scores), was ascertained. All of the standardized skewness coefficients (i.e., the skewness value divided by its standard error) and the standardized kurtosis coefficients (i.e., the kurtosis value divided by its standard error) were outside the boundaries of normality,  $\pm 3$  (Onwuegbuzie & Daniel, 2001). Furthermore, the assumption for the Box's Test of Equality of Covariance was not met. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances revealed that the assumptions were violated for the three dependent variables. Although the assumptions for the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) procedure were not met, the robustness of a MANOVA procedure makes it appropriate to use on the data in this study (Field, 2009).

With respect to the first research question, the MANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, Wilks'  $\Lambda = .93$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .07$ , moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988) in reading achievement for Hispanic students as a function of their economic status. Univariate follow-up analysis of variance procedures revealed statistically significant differences in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I scores,  $F(1, 104422) = 4890.00$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .05$ ; in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II scores,  $F(1, 104422) = 7477.88$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .07$ ; and in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III scores,  $F(1, 104422) = 6238.96$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .06$ . The effect size was small for the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I and moderate for STAAR Reading Reporting Categories II and III (Cohen, 1988).

In regard to the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category I scores, Hispanic students who were Poor had an average score that was approximately one correct response less than the average score for Hispanic students who were Not Poor. With the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I containing only 5 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), this difference is an important one. Delineated in Table 1 and displayed in Figure 1 are the descriptive statistics for these analyses.

**Table 1**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category I Performance of Hispanic Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
Not Poor	18,838	4.58	1.42
Poor	85,586	3.70	1.60



Figure 1. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I for Grade 3 Hispanic students by their economic status.

Concerning the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category II scores, Hispanic students who were Poor had an average score that was almost three correct responses lower than the average score for Hispanic students who were Not Poor. With this STAAR Reading Reporting Category II consisting of 15 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), a three question difference is substantial. Readers are directed to Table for the descriptive statistics for these analyses. Depicted in Figure 2 are the average responses for these two groups of Hispanic students.

**Table 2**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category II Performance of Hispanic Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
Not Poor	18,838	13.56	3.38
Poor	85,586	10.86	3.98

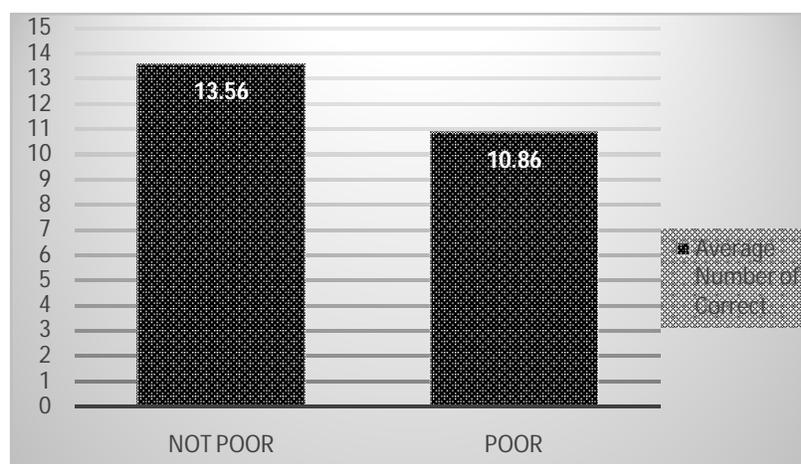


Figure 2. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II for Grade 3 Hispanic students by their economic status.

Regarding the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category III scores, Hispanic students who were Poor had an average score that was almost two fewer correct responses than the average score for Hispanic students who were Not Poor. With the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III consisting of 14 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), this difference is important. Revealed in Table 3 and displayed in Figure 3 are the descriptive statistics for these analyses.

**Table 3**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category III Performance of Hispanic Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
Not Poor	18,838	11.38	3.35
Poor	85,586	9.11	3.68

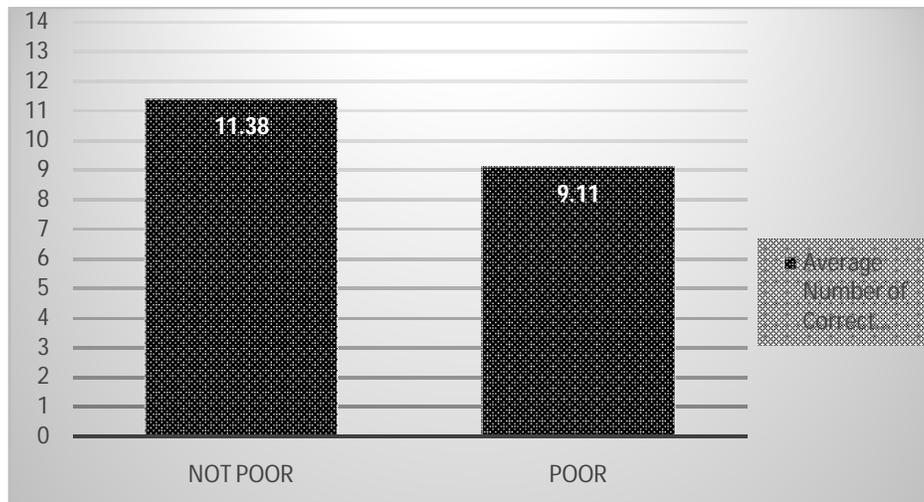


Figure 3. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III for Grade 3 Hispanic students by their economic status.

With respect to the second research question, the MANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, Wilks'  $\Lambda = .92$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .08$ , moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988) in reading achievement for Black students as a function of their economic status. Univariate follow-up analysis of variance procedures revealed statistically significant differences in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I scores,  $F(1, 19336) = 1060.34$ ,  $p = .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .05$ ; in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II scores,  $F(1, 19336) = 1317.59$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .06$ ; and in the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III scores,  $F(1, 19336) = 1547.20$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .07$ . The effect size was small for the STAAR Reading Reporting Category and moderate for STAAR Reading Reporting Categories II and III (Cohen, 1988).

In regard to the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category I scores, Black students who were Poor had an average score that was one correct response less than the average score for Black students who were Not Poor. With the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I consisting of only 5 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), the difference is important. Delineated in Table 4 are the descriptive statistics for these analyses. Depicted in Figure 4 are the average responses of these two groups of Black students.

**Table 4**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category I Performance of Black Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
-----------------	---	---	----

Not Poor	3,697	4.44	1.50
Poor	15,641	3.46	1.67

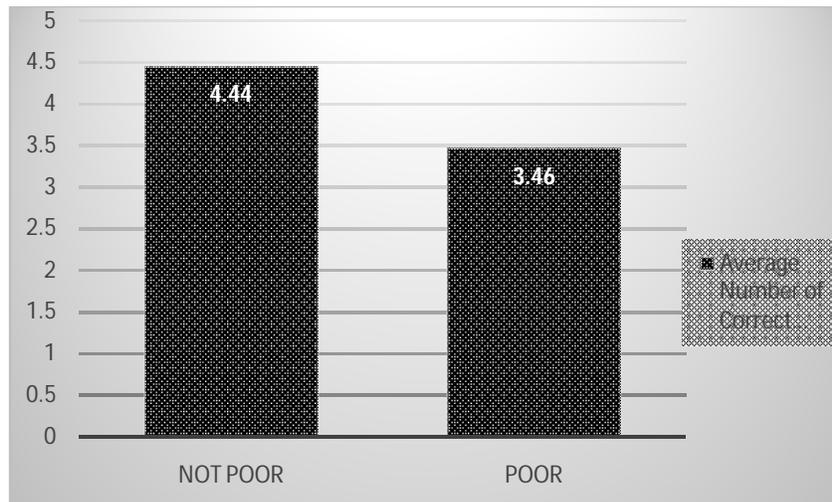


Figure 4. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category I for Grade 3 Black students by their economic status.

Concerning the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category II scores, Black students who were Poor had an average score that was nearly three responses less than the average score for Black students who were Not Poor. With the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II consisting of 15 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), a three question difference is sizable. Readers are directed to Table 5 and Figure 5 for the descriptive statistics for these analyses.

**Table 5**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category II Performance of Black Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
Not Poor	3,697	12.83	3.76
Poor	15,641	10.17	4.14

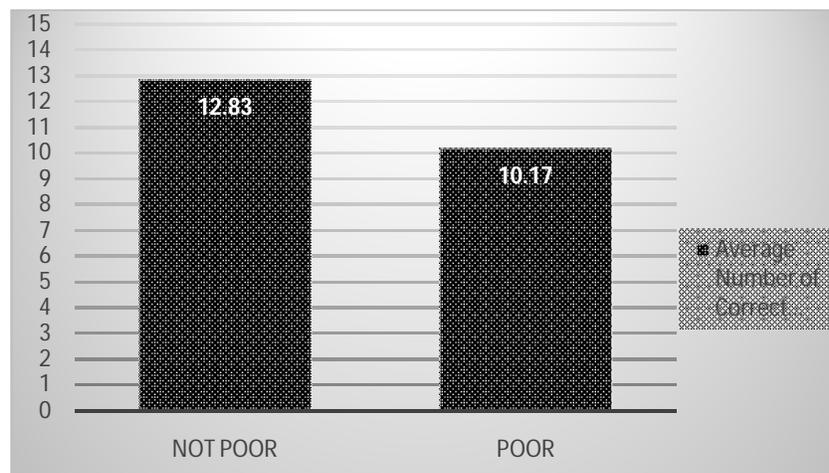


Figure 5. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category II for Grade 3 Black students by their economic status.

Regarding the Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Category III scores, Black students who were Poor had an average score that was almost three fewer correct responses than the average score for Black students who were Not Poor.

As STAAR Reading Reporting Category III contained only 14 items (Texas Education Agency, 2016b), this difference is substantial. Revealed in Table 6 and displayed in Figure 6 are the descriptive statistics for these analyses.

**Table 6**

Descriptive Statistics for the Grade 3 Reading STAAR Reporting Category III Performance of Black Students by Their Economic Status

Economic Status	n	M	SD
Not Poor	3,697	10.65	3.63
Poor	15,641	8.00	3.74

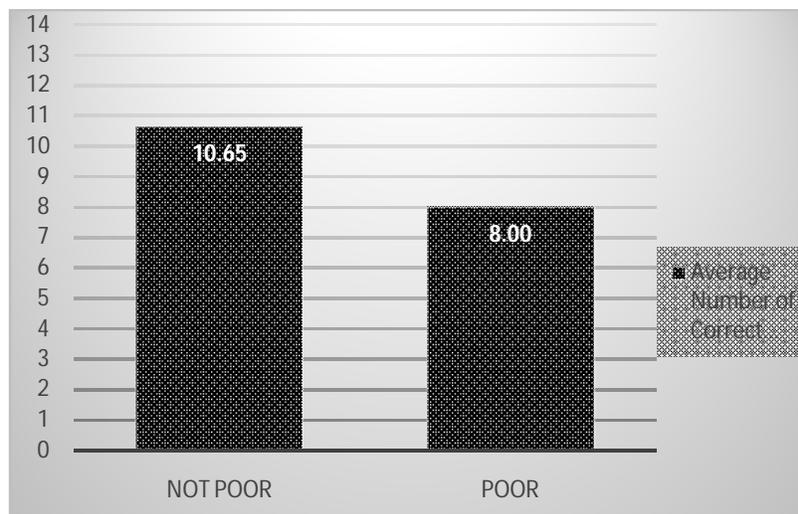


Figure 6. Average number of correct responses on the STAAR Reading Reporting Category III for Grade 3 Black students by their economic status.

**Discussion**

Examined in this study was the extent to which differences were present in reading achievement by the economic status of Grade 3 Hispanic students and Black students in Texas in the 2015-2016 school year.

Statewide data on the three Grade 3 STAAR Reading Reporting Categories were analyzed. Inferential statistical analyses revealed that statistically significant results were present for overall reading achievement as well as for all three reading components for Hispanic and Black students.

On the three STAAR Reading Reporting Categories, students of color in poverty are not achieving. Hispanic students who were Poor achieved at a lower level than Hispanic students who were Not Poor in every STAAR Reporting Category. The difference begins in STAAR Reporting Category I, which contains only five questions. Hispanic students who were Poor answered one fewer question correctly than Hispanic students who were Not Poor. The gap grew in STAAR Reporting Category II, with Hispanic students who were Poor correctly responding to three fewer questions than Hispanic students who were Not Poor. A gap remained in STAAR Reporting Category III, where Hispanic students who were Poor answered two fewer questions correctly than Hispanic students who were Not Poor. With consideration to the overall STAAR Reading performance, Hispanic students who were Poor had six fewer correct responses than Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Of the 104,424 Grade 3 Hispanic students who were administered the STAAR Reading test during the 2015-2016 school year, 81.9% of Grade 3 Hispanic students were economically disadvantaged. This figure is just over 6% higher than the overall percentage of 75.8% of Hispanic students attending public school in Texas during the 2015-2016 school year (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

With respect to Black students, the gap between students who were Poor and students who were Not Poor remained. In STAAR Reporting Category I, Black students who were Poor achieved one less correct response than Black students who were Not Poor. The gap increased in Reporting Category II, with a difference of three correct questions separating Black students who were Poor and Black students who were Not Poor. The difference in STAAR Reporting Category III was also three questions for Black students who were Poor as compared to Black students who were Not Poor. When considering what is indicated with regard to the overall STAAR Reading performance, Black students who were Poor responded to approximately seven fewer questions correctly than Black students who were Not Poor. Of the 19,338 Black students who were assessed, 15,641, or 81%, were economically disadvantaged, as compared to 3,697, or 19%, who were not economically disadvantaged. This figure is approximately 10% higher than the overall 71.4% of Black students who were living in poverty in Texas as a whole (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

### ***Connections to Existing Literature***

As previously indicated, income achievement gaps are increasing in the area of literacy (Reardon et al., 2012; Stinnett, 2014). In a recent Texas, statewide investigation, Hamilton (2019) analyzed the reading performance of Grade 3 students on the STAAR Reading test. In her investigation, she documented the presence of statistically significant differences in the passing rates of Black students who were poor in comparison to Black students who were not poor and in the passing rates of Hispanic students who were poor as compared to Hispanic students who were not poor. In that investigation, as well as this article, students from poverty were not as successful as their peers who were not poor.

In three other recent, Texas-based investigations, the researchers (Harris, 2018; McGown, 2016; Schleeter, 2017) established the presence of similar results. Harris (2018) examined the STAAR Reading assessment performance of Grade 4 students who were poor and Grade 4 students who were not poor. Schleeter (2017) analyzed the STAAR Reading test results of Grade 3 English Language Learners who were poor and Grade 3 English Language Learners who were not poor. McGown (2016) investigated the STAAR Reading achievement of Grade 3 students who were poor and Grade 3 students who were not poor. In all three studies, students who were poor were successful at a lower rate than students who were not poor. These findings are consistent with current literature regarding academic performance in reading and poverty.

### ***Implications for Policy and for Practice***

Documented in the results of this empirical statewide analysis was the existence of income achievement gaps for students of color with regard to reading. Required in a recent House Bill 3 provision is that all elementary teachers receive training in the science of teaching reading (Texas Education Agency, 2019).

This bill may be viewed as evidence that policymakers have placed an importance on improving the literacy skills of Texas' students. Upon implementation of this law, establishing a monitoring system to track the results of students, with the goal of determining the effectiveness of teachers, will determine if the provision is a success.

In addition to policy-required training, a review of current teaching practices is necessary to eliminate gaps from forming prior to Grade 3. Specifically, a focus on students of color living in poverty is necessary with consideration to the over 100,000 students who were economically disadvantaged in this study. Establishing whether teachers have the knowledge and resources to instruct specific student groups is paramount for preventative and reactive actions. To affect positively the academic achievement of students of color in Texas, implementation of efforts before and after the Grade 3 year will best address the income gap.

### ***Recommendations for Future Research***

Recommendations for future research studies can be made based upon the findings of this empirical, statewide analysis. As each STAAR Reading Reporting Category contains a different number of items with different degrees of difficulty, it is suggested that this study be replicated with the data analyzed as a percentage. Such an analysis would permit a comparison of the reporting categories with respect to difficulty level. To extend the study, including Asian students in the population and analyzing the data as percentages for boys and for girls would provide additional vital information for educators. Another idea for researchers to consider would be to conduct a regression analysis to predict which demographic characteristics are most likely to be successful or unsuccessful with regard to the Grade 3 STAAR Reading test performance.

A final recommendation would be to conduct this study in other states, using whatever state-mandated assessments would be present. The degree to which results based upon Texas students would be generalizable to students in other states is not known.

### **Conclusion**

Evidence from this study may be interpreted to mean that poverty has a clear and detrimental effect on the reading achievement of students of color. In spite of recent legislation providing higher levels of funding to the highest poverty schools and realigning funding determinations based on student need (Texas Education Agency, 2019), students in poverty continue to perform at lower levels than their ethnic/racial counterparts who are not in poverty. A review of overall trends reveals Black students were less successful than Hispanic students in the 2015-2016 school year. The ethnic/racial achievement gap has received attention for many years (Paschall et al., 2018; Stinnett, 2014), but now the focus must shift to the income gap, as well. To close gaps, educators must monitor the numerous categories available to track student progress. A clearer picture of who needs increased academic intervention will emerge, and the students with the most needs may finally receive the missing assistance.

### **References**

- Berliner, D. C. (2013). Effects of inequality and poverty vs. teachers and schooling on America's youth. *Teachers College Record*, 115(12), 1-26. Retrieved from [https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/11e1/b9b898c097be95ac07993e94d582b6d92f4d.pdf?\\_ga=2.214317719.1010386859.1571528509-634193211.1571528509](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/11e1/b9b898c097be95ac07993e94d582b6d92f4d.pdf?_ga=2.214317719.1010386859.1571528509-634193211.1571528509)
- Burney, V. H., & Beilke, J. R. (2008). The constraints of poverty on high achievement. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 31, 171-197. <https://doi.org/10.4219/jeg-2008-771>
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Duke, N., & Block, M. (2012). Improving reading in the primary grades. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 55-72. doi:10.1353/foc.2012.0017
- Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hamilton, H. (2019, August). Differences in Grade 3 reading by the economic status of students of color: Much cause for concern. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Texas Council of Professors of Educational Administration, Dallas, TX.
- Harris, L. (2018). Differences in the reading performance of Texas grade 4 students as a function of economic status, gender, and ethnicity/race: A multiyear statewide study. Doctoral Dissertation, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX.
- Hernandez, D. J. (2011). Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation (NICHD, R24 HD044943). Retrieved from The Annie E. Casey Foundation website: <https://www.aecf.org/resources/double-jeopardy/>
- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2017). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (6th ed.) Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Goldman, S. (2012). Adolescent literacy: Learning and understanding content. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 89-116. doi:10.1353/foc.2012.0011
- Lee, K. (2009). The bidirectional effects of early poverty on children's reading and home environment scores: Associations and ethnic differences. *Social Work Research*, 33(2), 79-94. doi:10.1093/swr/33.2.79
- McGown, J. A. (2016). Differences in reading performance of Texas elementary school students as a function of economic status, gender, and ethnicity/race: A multiyear statewide study. Doctoral Dissertation, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX.
- McMurrer, J. (2007). *Choices, changes, and challenges: Curriculum and instruction in the NCLB era*. Washington DC: Center on Education Policy.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Daniel, L. G. (2002). Uses and misuses of the correlation coefficient. *Research in the Schools*, 9(1), 73-90.

- Paschall, K., Gershoff, E., & Kuhfeld, M. (2018). A two decade examination of historical race/ethnicity disparities in academic achievement by poverty status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 47(6), 1164-1177. doi:10.1007/s10964-017-0800-7
- Reardon, S. F., Valentino, R. A., & Shores, K. A. (2012). Patterns of literacy among U.S. students. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 17-37. Retrieved from <http://jstor.org/stable/23317409>
- Reardon, S. F., Waldfogel, J., & Bassok, D. (2016, August 28). The good news about educational inequality. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/opinion/sunday/the-good-news-about-educational-inequality.html>
- Schleeter, G. D. (2017). Differences in the reading achievement of Texas Grade 3 English Language Learners as a function of their economic status, ethnicity/race, and gender: A multiyear statewide study. Doctoral Dissertation, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX.
- Stinnett, M. (2014). The influence of poverty on literacy achievement. *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, 42(3), 65-69.
- Texas Assessment. (2019). All about the STAAR test. Retrieved from <https://texasassessment.com/families/all-about-the-staar-test/>
- Texas Education Agency. (2011). Grade 3 reading assessment eligible Texas essential knowledge and skills. Retrieved from: <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/AssessCurr-ReadG03.pdf>
- Texas Education Agency. (2016a). Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2015-2016. Retrieved from [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll\\_2015-16.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll_2015-16.pdf)
- Texas Education Agency. (2016b). STAAR Grade 3 Reading Blueprint. Retrieved from <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Blueprint%20STAAR%20Gr%203%20Reading%202016.pdf>
- Texas Education Agency. (2019). House Bill 3. Retrieved from [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/HB3\\_2-Page.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/HB3_2-Page.pdf)
- Waldfogel, J. (2012). The role of out-of-school factors in the literacy problem. *The Future of Children*, 22(2), 39-54. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23317410>