An Investigation of Student Enrollment Trends and De Facto Segregation in Louisiana K-12 Public Education

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Abstract

Per the *Brown V. Board* decision (1954), segregation in the American educational system is "unconstitutional", "has no place", and is "inherently unequal". Although American schools have been de jure desegregated for decades, issues of White flight, segregation academies, and poor academic preparation in public schools continues to raise concerns among parents, stakeholders, and students. This article seeks to advance previous research related to identifying issues of segregation by investigating the possible existence of de facto segregation in Louisiana secondary education. In looking at enrollment data from the 2018-2019 school year and using comparative analysis methodology, the findings of this study suggest the existence of de facto segregation throughout the state of Louisiana to be minimally existent in public schools. While the majority population in public schools consistently was Black students, the findings suggest that White, Native American, Latinx, and Asian students mostly attend public schools in both urban and rural areas. The findings also suggest there to be an emerging form of neo de facto segregation or segregation based on socioeconomic status among Black and White students and other minorities. These findings can aid educational leaders and policymakers in effectively planning for facilitating growth and the maintenance of diversity by providing insight on the current state of integration and the proper measures needed for ensuring equal and equitable leadership in schools.

Keywords: desegregation, educational leadership, Louisiana, secondary education, segregation

Introduction

Separate but equal educational facilities in the United States of America were declared as "inherently unequal" and unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in the *Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954) decision. Although it has been 6o+ years since the *Brown* ruling, the question of if and in what ways de facto segregation, segregation lead by society, has continued to exist within the American school system is still debated by researchers in various

fields. During the pre-Brown era, racially segregated schools were viewed as problematic because of their sub-par facilities, inadequate study materials, and on average low student academic performance (Grady & Hoffman, 2018). Within recent years, scholars (Aggarwal, 2015; Baum-Snow & Lutz, 2011; Frankenberg et al, 2003; Grady & Hoffman, 2018) have suggested that racial segregation in schools continue to persist across the United States of America and predominately in the South as the result of what has been termed "White flight" or the mass exodus of middle- and upper-class White people to areas bordering urban cities in order to evade legislated desegregation efforts.

Louisiana, like other Deep South states, experienced White flight in the 1960s when public K-12 schools began to desegregate. Louisiana also had the longest running desegregation case in American history---*Davis V. East Baton Rouge School Board* (1963). Although the Davis case was settled in 2003, 29 of Louisiana's 64 parishes remain under a desegregation order as of 2020. These 29 open desegregation orders indicate that in the post-Brown era, desegregation, segregation, and integration are still prevalent issues of interest in Louisiana secondary education.

This research aimed to objectively understand the contemporary state of the Brown desegregation efforts throughout Louisiana by investigating de facto segregation trends in public education. Specifically, the researchers analyzed the racial demographics of the three most populous parishes: Caddo, East Baton Rouge, and Orleans in comparison to their surrounding parishes. Through investigating racial trends in education within these three regions, the researchers believe that such data can aid Louisiana educational policymakers in their future desegregation efforts and allow other researchers a model for conducting further research in issues of social justice and race.

For this study, public schools were viewed as societal property having economic value to the general public because they are in-part funded by property taxes. The researchers therefore were interested in understanding if there was a correlation between racial trends among students attending schools located within major parishes and schools located within their outlying areas across Louisiana. Specifically, the researchers were looking for possible evidence of White Flight. To further contextualize this idea, the following section presents Critical Race Theory and the idea of Whiteness as Property which provided a framework for conducting this study.

Theoretical Framework

Within the context of this study, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is understood to be an interdisciplinary field stemming from Critical Legal Studies where scholars examine white privilege as a legal, cultural, and political condition within American society (De La Garza & Ono, 2016). Through the use of literary narrative to challenge racial discourse, CRT's framework is focused on the impact of racial oppression on people of color (POC) (Saddler, 2005; De La Garza & Ono, 2016). CRT theorists consider experiences with racism in the United States of America not as isolated incidents but as societal norms coming from centuries of systematic oppression of POC (Ladson-Billings, 2013; Martinez, 2014). Although there are multiple dimensions of CRT, this research was guided by what has been termed "Whiteness as Property".

Whiteness as Property in Education

As suggested by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and Ladson-Billings (2005), as it relates to education, the result of systemic oppression has been a growing inequality between White students and students of color (SOC). The result has been a negative impact on almost every facet of education for SOC (i.e., curriculum and instructional quality, preparation for standardized tests, funding for school materials, and disciplinary action). In recent years, researchers (Aggarwal, 2015; Frankenberg et al, 2003; Henderson, 2004; Grady & Hoffman, 2018) have continuously noticed that when there are few quality schools available in urban cities, White students and their families predominately segregated themselves from students of color by either paying tuition to attend a local private school or moving. Likewise, if there was a high-quality school available in an urban area, parents normally moved to a neighborhood near the school. Hence, there is an economic value in relation to schooling in America.

In framing this research through Whiteness as Property, Whiteness is understood to be a social construct based on the idea of "otherness" and racial subordination in relation to those deemed not White. Whiteness entitles White individuals to more property ownership, more freedom, better rights, higher quality of education, and decides who can become a benefactor of greater socioeconomic standing in the United States of America (Harris, 1993). Whiteness is rationalized to be property because property itself can be intangible and an individual's racial existence is created via a legal definition. In other words, those deemed legally White have historically not been disadvantaged based on race. On the contrary, people of color (POC), in comparison to White people, continue to be excluded from receiving the same quality of life in

various ways including education thus further and continuously perpetuating the racial oppression of students of color (Harris, 1993; Mensah & Jackson, 2018). This study sought to further understand this argument in Louisiana. To further situate the necessity of this study, the following section will present an analysis of the history of desegregation efforts in the United States of America, Louisiana, and its education system.

Literature Review

Segregation in the context of this study, is understood to be an ideology of racial superiority and separation enacted in the United States of America during the late 19th century until the mid-20th century (Harris, 1993). At this time, individuals who identified as POC were treated as second class citizens by those who identified as White Americans. Desegregation was the official governmental response to state-imposed segregation in education, public places, and work areas. The rest of this section is devoted to further explaining the historical development of segregation and desegregation in the United States, the Deep South, and the state of Louisiana.

Desegregation in the United States

Segregation in the U.S. began in 1865, also known as the "Reconstruction Era", when slavery became prohibited per the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. At the time, President Andrew Johnson worked to unify the country post-Civil War by allowing decisions of political equality for African Americans to be made by states. Especially in the South, the result of these actions was the creation of "Jim Crow Laws", government policies which physically separated racial minorities from Whites and prevented their advancement in employment, housing, education, politics, military service, sports, and business (Higginbotham, 2014).

Segregation in America was further solidified in the *Plessy V. Ferguson* (1896) decision. In this case, Homer Plessy, an African American, refused to move to the designated area for African Americans on a train going from New Orleans, Louisiana to Covington, Louisiana (Hilstrom, 2013; Medley, 2003; Smith, 2005). He was arrested and brought to court where Judge Ferguson upheld that the "Separate Car Act", which separated train cars by race, was constitutional. Plessy sought an appeal. However, the Supreme Court upheld that as long as facilities for Blacks and Whites were "separate but equal" they were constitutional thus further solidifying racial segregation to be legally justified in both private and public settings (Garcia, et al., n.d).

Post-Plessy, de jure (by law) racial segregation continued in the American south and de facto (by society) racial segregation continued in the north until the *Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* (1954) decision (Smith, 2005). *Brown V. Board* (1954) was a class action lawsuit led by the legal team of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (Romo, 2018). The NAACP filed a motion challenging the constitutionality of "separate but equal" in education. On May 17th, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal, generated "a sense of inferiority" in status which hindered minority childrens' ability to learn and deprived them of equal opportunity. The Supreme Court ordered all schools in America to desegregate "with all deliberate speed". Moreover, although the Supreme Court called for a prompt and reasonable start towards full compliance without specifying a timeframe, de facto segregation still existed for many years in several American school districts. In reaction, the Supreme Court made a second ruling determining that the operation of a dually segregated school system was illegal. The Supreme Court also mandated that desegregation in schools officially begin in what has been called Brown II (1955).

Legal actions during the Brown-era did not have enough power to completely end all forms of discrimination in post-racial America. For example, in Virginia's New Kent County, African Americans were still being treated as second class citizens and required to enter institutions through back doors, disrespectfully addressed by White counterparts, buried separately, and attended a dually segregated school system (Allen & Daugherity, 2006). Charles C. Green, an African American resident, attempted to dismantle the segregated school system by petitioning for integration, but the school board refused to comply. Green filled a lawsuit.

After going to court, the 1968 ruling became an extension of the *Brown V. Board* (1954) decision by requiring the creation of "Green Factors" (Allen & Daugherity, 2006; Hunter, 2011). The "Green Factors" were used by federal district courts to determine if a school district achieved racial balance or became unitary by reviewing the: student assignment, faculty assignment, staff assignment, facilities, transportation, and extracurricular activities (Hunter, 2011). *Green V. New Kent County* deemed freedom of choice plans as unequal leadership tactics because these plans shifted the responsibility of racial integration by having families choose which school their student(s) attended and only allowing overcrowding and other extraordinary circumstances as the only reasons for rejection (Allen & Daugherity, 2006; Armor & Rossell, 2002; Brown, 1968).

As freedom of choice was no longer an option for school boards, they began using busing and zoning to dismantle segregation within their school systems. Busing gave students the opportunity to attend larger schools within their district via transportation. Zoning extended city limits to include Black residential areas (King, 1986; Silver, 1997). The legal span of zoning, busing, and freedom of choice was short as they generally proved to be ineffective as desegregation efforts (Allen & Daugherity, 2006; Silver, 1997).

Desegregation in the Deep South

Prior to the *Brown v. Board* (1954) decision, the Deep South (i.e., Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, and South Carolina) had no schools that had been desegregated (Ravitch, 1983). There were many tactics used in the Deep South to avoid desegregation such as withholding funding from integrated schools, funding private institutions, ignoring federal orders, and unreasonable pupil assignment. When the Deep South began to desegregate in 1960, public schools saw an influx of White flight. Many White families removed their children from public schools and transferred them to private schools or moved to suburban neighborhoods to evade the arrival of Black students (Baum-Snow & Lutz, 2011; Boustan, n.d; Zhang, 2008). As found by Baum-Snow & Lutz (2011), of the White students who left urban public education in 1960, five percent transferred to private schools and the remainder migrated to non-central districts.

After the *Brown V. Board* (1954) and the Civil Rights Act of (1964), private school enrollment decreased nationwide but increased in the southern states (Baum-Snow & Lutz, 2011; Grady & Hoffman, 2018). Private schools in the Deep South became and still are referred to as "Segregation Academies" (Baum-Snow & Lutz, 2011; Grady & Hoffman, 2018). A decade after the initial *Brown V. Board* (1954) ruling, by 1964 the Deep South collectively only had two percent of racially integrated schools on record (Allen & Daugherity, 2006).

Desegregation in Louisiana

For this study, the central focus was desegregation efforts in Caddo Parish, East Baton Rouge Parish, Orleans Parish, and their surrounding parishes. It is important to note that, unlike the rest of the United States of America, Louisiana uses the term parish in place of county.

These three parishes were chosen because they are the three most populous in the state. Although other parishes such as Lafayette and Terrebonne were initially considered to be included in the study, the researchers felt that the biggest three would be manageable and others could be added for future study.

Caddo Parish is located in northern Louisiana near the Texas-Louisiana border. Its major city is Shreveport. East Baton Rouge Parish is located in central Louisiana and its major city is Baton Rouge which is also the state's capital. Orleans Parish is located in southern Louisiana south of Lake Pontchartrain. It is home to the city of New Orleans, the largest city in the state of Louisiana.

Desegregation efforts in the state's public-school systems started when Louisiana lawmakers tried to circumvent it by passing legislation under Governor Robert Kenon. During the Kenon administration, Louisiana lawmakers drafted an amendment in 1954 to the state's constitution which mandated public school segregation (Stone,1992; Wright, 2015). This amendment was approved during a general election with a vote of 82% to 18%. It was also declared that failure to uphold segregation within schools would be treated as a criminal offense (Stone, 1992).

In 1954, school superintendents in Louisiana were given the task of racially dividing the schools in their parish (Wright, 2015). During this same time period, the Joint Legislative Committee on Segregation was formed with the purpose to further circumvent the *Brown V. Board* (1954) decision (Blanchard, 1982). Willie Rainach led the committee and strategized to delay desegregation until the segregationist could convert public opinion. In other words, the committee used their position to hinder the start of school desegregation in Louisiana until segregation would be favored and accepted as a societal norm by the public.

In 1956, the committee continued to receive support from the state's new governor, and the Louisiana Act 319 was passed (Blanchard, 1982; Wright, 2015). Act 319 was proposed by Emily Wagner, an Orleans Parish (OP) school board member. It transferred authority to determine the racial composition of large city schools in Louisiana. As the other schools did not want legislative interference, it was amended to apply solely to OP's school board (Blanchard, 1982; Wright, 2015). Through the efforts of Louisiana lawmakers, public K-12 schools remained segregated until 1960 when New Orleans became the first major city in the Deep South officially ordered by a federal court to desegregate (Blanchard, 1982).

Desegregation in Caddo Parish

Caddo Parish (CP) public school system remained segregated and unchallenged until 1965. The lawsuit *Jones V. Caddo Parish School Board* (1966) was filed in 1965 and began the parish's

school desegregation. E. Edward Jones, alongside six Black families, requested that CP school board stop the operation of their racially segregated school system (Munoz, 2019).

In the late 1960s, the process of integration began through a freedom of choice plan that admitted a small number of African Americans students per year to previously designated White schools to slowly desegregate the CP public school system (Jones V. Caddo, 1966; Munoz, 2019). In 1981, CP was still unable to achieve unitary status and was given provisions by the district court to provide a certain level of education within Booker T. Washington High School and Fair Park Middle School.

Booker T. Washington High School and Fair Park High School were identified as all-Black schools by the district court with low quality education that needed to be integrated. In 2013, Fair Park High School was found to still be academically unacceptable leading to intervention by the Louisiana Recovery School District (LRSD). Some improvements were made, but the CP school board ultimately chose to close the school. The CP school board went on to merge Fair Park and Booker T. Washington High School's student population into Booker T. Washington and proceeded to turn Fair Park High School into a middle school (Cooksey V. Caddo, 2018). Regardless of this merge and previous initiatives, Caddo Parish remains under the desegregation order *of Jones v. Caddo* (1966).

Desegregation in Orleans Parish

OP public school system remained segregated and unchallenged until 1952. In 1952, *Bush V. Orleans* (1960) was filed on behalf of several Black parents against the New Orleans school board to end racial segregation in OP public schools (Blanchard, 1982; Stone, 1992). Judge Wright, a US district judge for East Louisiana, ruled in favor of the plaintiffs to end racial segregation in Orleans Parish public school system. A deadline of March 1st, 1960, later extended to May 16th, 1960, was given to the Orleans Parish school board to turn in a desegregation plan to the courts (Blanchard, 1982; Wright, 2015).

The OP school board failed to deliver a desegregation plan, and filed a plea stating they could not submit a desegregation plan as according to Louisiana law it was not in their authority per Act 319 (Blanchard, 1982; Wright, 2015). Because OP failed to deliver a desegregation plan, Judge Wright created the first desegregation plan drafted by a federal judge which stated, "All children entering the first grade may attend either the formerly all-White public school nearest their homes, or the formerly all Negro public school nearest their homes, at their option."

(Blanchard, 1982; Wright, 1982). In response, on August 17th, 1960, Governor Davis seized control of OP schools directing them to open in September as segregated, but this was nullified by the district court on August 26th, 1960 (Blanchard, 1982). By October 10th, the OP school board adopted a pupil placement plan derived from the Louisiana Pupil Placement Act to slowly begin integration.

On November 12th, Shelby Jackson, the Superintendent of Education in Louisiana, declared November 14th a state holiday to avoid school desegregation in OP (Wright, 2015). Additionally, on November 13th, the Louisiana Legislature swore in state police as deputy sergeant-at-arms so they could enforce school closures in OP and passed the state's eighth law set to block desegregation. Judge Wright then issued a restraining order against the entire Louisiana legislature for interfering and outlawed observance of Shelby Jackson's statewide holiday (Blanchard, 1982).

On November14th, 1982, Tessie Prevost, became the first African American girl to enter McDonough #19 High School accompanied by Leona Tate and Gail Etienne while Ruby Bridges integrated William Frantz Elementary alone (Blanchard, 1982). During the first year, Ruby Bridges attended classes alone occasionally joined by White students, but McDonough #19 High School's entire White student body continued to boycott (Blanchard, 1982). The OP superintendent, James Radom, estimated that during the boycotts most students enrolled who were not attending Williams Elementary or McDonough High transferred to schools in St. Bernard Parish. The remainders transferred to various other private and public schools or did receive a formal education (Blanchard, 1982). The outrage of Orleans residents eventually subsided in 1962, and in 1975 district Judge Hubert W. Christianberry ruled that OP school system had become unitary, thus closing the case of *Bush V. Orleans* (1958).

Desegregation in East Baton Rouge Parish

East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) public school system remained segregated and unchallenged until 1956. In 1956, the longest desegregation case in U.S. history, *Davis V. EBR School Board*, began (Bankston & Caldas, 2001). No progress was made in the case until 1960 when the federal district court prohibited EBRP from maintaining their racially segregated school system (Watson, 2015). Despite the federal order, the struggle to desegregate EBRP schools continued, and a motion was filed against the EBRP Board of Education on January 22nd (Stone, 1992). This suit was filed by an attorney representing the NAACP. The plaintiffs argued that EBRP

Board of Education did not comply with the previous ruling of the federal district court in 1960 to desegregate schools (Stone, 1992).

EBRP school board began desegregating schools in 1964 by implementing a freedom of choice initiative to give families the choice of the schools their students attended (Watson, 2015). Additionally, the EBRP school board created a biracial committee in 1970 whose purpose was to improve the desegregation process in public schools. EBRP's biracial committee went on to propose neighborhood zoning, a consent decree, and dozens of other orders in an attempt to rectify desegregation issues in EBRP (Watson, 2015). All the aforementioned initiatives made by the EBRP biracial committee were deemed a failure by District Judge John Parker in 2011 (Watson, 2015).

In 1981, EBRP schools were still racially segregated. To circumvent this issue Judge John Parker created a desegregation plan which entailed that schools previously designated for a specific race would be paired up, students would be bussed depending on racial balance needs, and that 15 EBRP schools would close (Bankston & Caldas, 2001). Judge Parker's plan faced opposition from the Louisiana Department of Justice as they believed this would cause White students to leave the EBRP school system, but it was still implemented in May of 1981 (Bankston & Caldas, 2001). As predicted by the Louisiana Department of Justice, White families removed their children from the EBRP public school system. At the end of the first year of Judge Parker's plan pre-existing private schools could not control their large growing waiting lists resulting in the establishment of new private schools (Bankston & Caldas, 2001).

As can been seen throughout Louisiana history, issues of segregation and desegregation in schools is of personal and economic interest to both White and non-White individuals. Because education is a matter of the state, the issue of control and power and the possibility of losing and gaining them made issues of desegregation a very important conversation that is still passionately debated today. In understanding the historical development of desegregation efforts made in Louisiana, the researchers saw further value in conducting this study. To understand if Louisiana has made progress since desegregation, the researchers focused on understanding the latest data trends of race in schools throughout the state. The following section provides an overview of the methodological approach used to conduct this study.

Methodology

To determine the degree of de facto segregation possibly still present in Louisiana public schools, a comparative analysis was conducted of the secondary student population in three major school districts and their surrounding areas. Quantitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) methodology helps researchers gain a better understanding about society by studying the similarities and differences of two or more variables to explain rather than describe correlations (Chingos et al, 2019; Esser & Vliegenthart, 2016; Frankenberg et al, 2003; Pickavance, 2001). This study employed QCA to highlight a correlation between contemporary racial demographics of urban schools and desegregation efforts in Louisiana, based on the number of enrolled students in Caddo, Orleans, and East Baton Rouge public school systems in comparison to their respective bordering parishes. These parishes were chosen because they were the three most populous parishes in the state and provided the researchers with a sizable dataset. Additionally, this study compared the number of eligible students not enrolled in their local public school system, and the amount of racial diversity in urban and rural parishes based on the eligible and enrolled population. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. If and to what degree does de facto segregation in public education exist throughout the state of Louisiana?
    a. If and to what degree does de facto segregation in public education exist throughout the New Orleans metropolitan area?
    b. If and to what degree does de facto segregation in public education exist throughout the Baton Rouge metropolitan area?
    c. If and to what degree does de facto segregation in public education exist throughout the Shreveport metropolitan area?

Using data from the Louisiana Department of Education Website and the U.S. Census Bureau, the total population of students eligible to attend a public school and the racial demographics of the number enrolled and eligible to attend public schools were analyzed. Other factors such as age and grade level were considered as well (see limitations and delimitations for more details). The percentage of the racial demographics were calculated for both the major districts and their surroundings areas and then compared to see if there was an unequal distribution of racial groups among urban and rural parishes.

The term "secondary education" within the context of this study included only public-school grades 8-12 and excluded K-12 virtual schools, K-12 learning institutions, immersion schools, educational facilities for the disabled, boarding schools, and secondary schools with a larger grade range. Additionally, only students ages 15-19 were included as this would be the most reflective age group for secondary schools. The LDOE's enrollment data and the U.S Census Age and Sex Table (B01001) were used to obtain the racial demographics of the population of eligible students and enrolled students based on race. The most recent year available of the U.S Census Age and Sex filtered by 'County', and 'Race and Ethnicity' was 2018. To ensure consistency among the data sets, The LDOE's enrollment data statistics of the 2018-2019 school year were used.

Procedures

To start this study, the racial demographics of all included public schools and parishes (see Appendix 1) within each metropolitan area were reviewed to gain a sense of the amount of racial diversity. To build the data set, pre-existing data from the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB) were collected. LDOE data were used to obtain the population and racial demographics of students who were attending public schools in each metropolitan area. USCB data were used to cross reference and validate the LDOE data. Only the most recent data set, from 2018-2019, were used. Originally, years 2013-2018 were going to be used, but it was later discovered that for the nature of this study only 2018-2019 was manageable when considering time, resource constraints, and the size of the research team. In looking at the data, the researchers considered the following:

1. If there were racial correlations found in school enrollment,
2. If there were any outliers suggesting a racial imbalance, and
3. If there were distinct differences between the central parish and bordering parish student populations.

Although this study observed various racial groups, the relationship between Black and White students was the primary focus. Asian, Hispanic, and Native American students were included in the sample to provide further insight into if other non-White racial groups are impacted by racial imbalance and integration issues within a school system.

Upon gaining the parish data for the three largest metropolitan areas, the research team strategically chose the surrounding parishes closest to each metropolitan area. For both the

metropolitan area and the surrounding areas, the researchers aimed to look at the percentage of racial groups within each area attending public schools. To calculate percentages, the number of students attending a public school in the parish or surrounding area in each racial group and each parish, was divided by the number of students eligible.

Findings

The following section provides a response to the proposed research question and sub questions. As shown in Table A.1 (See Appendix A), the data set for this study consisted of a total of 75 secondary schools in 14 parishes: Caddo, Red River, DeSoto, Bossier [Shreveport area], East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Livingston, East Feliciana, Ascension [Baton Rouge area], Orleans, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany Parish [New Orleans area]. The remainder of this section will present the findings and analysis of the data collected on racial demographics in these areas.

Louisiana

Upon analyzing the total Louisiana student populations for all included parishes, it was determined that slightly more than half of students (53.88%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools did enroll, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Louisiana Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	601	201
Asian	3,345	1,784
Black	60,202	29,820
Hispanic	9,870	6,791
White	73,078	31,085
Total	147,096	79,257

The minority of Native American students (33.44%) were found to be enrolled in a public school. Slightly more than half of Asian students (53.33%) were enrolled in a public school. The majority of Hispanic students (68.80%) who were eligible to attend a public school in Louisiana did.

Slightly less than half of White students (42.54%) were enrolled in a public school while about half (49.53%) of Black students who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

Shreveport Metropolitan Area: Caddo Parish

As reflected in Table 2, upon reviewing the Caddo Parish (CP) student populations, it was determined that the majority of students (69.20%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 2

Caddo Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	44	20
Asian	157	145
Black	8,220	5,420
Hispanic	460	359
White	4,957	3,632
Total	13,838	9,576

Specifically, about half (45.45%) of Native American students, the majority of Asian students (92.36%), and the majority of Hispanic students (78.04%) who were eligible to attend public schools in Caddo Parish did attend. The majority of White students (73.27%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school while only little more than half (65.94%) of Black students who were eligible were enrolled.

Shreveport Metropolitan Area: Bordering Parishes

The data presented in Table 3 suggest that in Bossier Parish (BP) the student populations that had most students (74.66%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 3

Bossier Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	22	25
Asian	149	90
Black	2,481	1,938
Hispanic	605	506

White	5,306	3,834
Total	8,563	6,393

Interestingly, there was an over population of Native American students (113.64%) who were enrolled in a public school in comparison to the number of students eligible. The majority of Asian students (60.40%), and Hispanic students (83.64%) who were eligible to attend public school in Bossier Parish did. The majority of White students (72.26%) who were eligible to attend a public school did as well. The majority of Black students (78.11%) who were eligible were enrolled.

After reviewing the Desoto Parish (BP) student populations, as presented in Table 4, it was determined that many students (65.14%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 4

Desoto Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	**Eligible Students**	**Enrolled Students**
American Indian / Native American	0	4
Asian	5	7
Black	593	525
Hispanic	117	28
White	1,006	557
Total	1,721	1,121

Interestingly, there was an over population of Native American students (400%) and Asian students (140%) enrolled in a public school in comparison to the number of students eligible. In opposition, there was an overwhelming minority of Hispanic students (23.93%) enrolled in public schools who were eligible. A little more than half of White students (55.37%) who were eligible to attend a public school were enrolled. The majority of Black students (88.53%) who were eligible were enrolled.

As reported in Table 5, in Red River Parish (RRP) the majority of students (76.46%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were actually enrolled.

Table 5

Red River Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	0	0
Asian	2	3
Black	289	240
Hispanic	0	8
White	189	116
Total	480	367

There were no Native American students enrolled. Likewise, there was an over population of Asian students (150%) and Hispanic students (800%) enrolled in a public school in comparison to the number of students eligible. A little more than half of White students (61.38%) who were eligible to attend a public school were enrolled. The majority of Black students (83.04%) who were eligible were enrolled.

Overall, most students in the Shreveport metropolitan area who were eligible enrolled in a public school. In comparing the main parish to the outliers, there was no consistent trend throughout the region among Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans in the outlier parishes. This extends to Caddo Parish as well. Both Black and White students were consistently the most enrolled students throughout the metropolitan area.

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area: East Baton Rouge Parish

After examining the East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) student populations, it was determined that the minority of students (35.75%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were actually enrolled as reflected in Table 6.

Table 6

East Baton Rouge Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	92	15
Asian	884	473
Black	16,637	8,619
Hispanic	1,519	909

White	12,580	1,320
Total	31,712	11,336

The minority of Native American students (16.30%) were found to be enrolled in a public school. Slightly more than half of Asian students (53.51%) were enrolled in a public school. A little more than half of Hispanic students (59.84%) who were eligible to attend a public school in East Baton Rouge Parish did. The minority of White students (10.50%) were enrolled in a public school while slightly more than half (51.81%) of Black students who were eligible were enrolled.

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area: Bordering Parishes

As illustrated in Table 7, in Ascension Parish (AP) it was concluded that many students (73.32%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools enrolled.

Table 7

Ascension Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	0	15
Asian	117	105
Black	2,152	2,077
Hispanic	668	495
White	5,908	3,903
Total	8,845	6,486

There was an over-population of Native American students (150%) enrolled in public schools throughout the parish during this year. The majority of Asian students (89.74%) were enrolled in a public school. A majority of Hispanic students (74.10%) who were eligible to attend a public school in Ascension Parish did. A little more than half of White students (66.06%) were enrolled in a public school while an overwhelming majority of Black students (96.51%) who were eligible were enrolled.

As can be seen in Table 8, among the student populations of East Feliciana Parish (EFP), the minority of students (25.79%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were actually enrolled.

Table 8

East Feliciana Parish

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	8	0
Asian	0	0
Black	561	275
Hispanic	17	0
White	515	9
Total	1,101	284

While there was an eligible population of Native American and Hispanic students, there were none enrolled from either group in a public school. Likewise, there were no eligible nor enrolled Asian students. There was an overwhelming minority of White students (1.75%) who were enrolled in a public school while a little less than half of eligible Black students (49.02%) were enrolled.

As highlighted in Table 9, as it concerns Livingston Parish (LP) student populations, it was observed that many students (69.53%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 9

Livingston Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	52	11
Asian	20	51
Black	999	596
Hispanic	692	311
White	8,089	5,881
Total	9,852	6,850

There was a minority of Native American students (21.15%) enrolled in public schools throughout the parish. There was an overpopulation of Asian students (255%) who were enrolled. A little less than half of the Hispanic students (44.94%) who were eligible to attend a public school in Livingston Parish did. The majority of White students (72.70%) were enrolled in a public school. A little more than half of Black students (59.66%) who were eligible were enrolled.

As can be seen in Table 10, the West Baton Rouge Parish (WBRP) student populations had a majority of students (62.25%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools who did enroll.

Table 10

West Baton Rouge Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	0	1
Asian	0	7
Black	757	500
Hispanic	62	58
White	781	430
Total	1,600	996

There was an overpopulation of both Native American students (100%) and Asian students (700%). There was an overwhelming majority of Hispanic students (93.55%) who attended a public school in WBRP. The majority of White students (55.06%) were enrolled in a public school. More than half of Black students (66.05%) who were eligible were enrolled in public schools.

In total, most students in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area who were eligible enrolled in a public school. In East Baton Rouge parish, the majority of all eligible students were enrolled in public schools. There was an inconsistent trend of Native American, Hispanic, White, and Asian students. The majority of eligible Black students consistently attended public schools. In outlier parishes there was a consistent trend of the majority of White students attending public schools.

New Orleans Metropolitan Area: Orleans Parish

As outlined in Table 11, upon reviewing the Orleans Parish (OP) student populations, it was determined that the vast minority of students (6.95%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 11

Enrollment in Orleans High Schools, Oct 2018

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	16	0
Asian	715	2
Black	14,954	1,466

Hispanic	978	30
White	4,988	7
Total	21,651	1,505

Of the total eligible students, there were no enrolled Native American students. There was a significant minority of Asian students (0.28%) enrolled in a public school. There was a large minority of Hispanic students (3.07%) who were eligible to attend a public school and did. The minority of White students (0.14%) were enrolled in a public school. Likewise, the minority of Black students (9.80%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

New Orleans Metropolitan Area: Orleans Parish Bordering Parishes

As specified in Table 12, upon reviewing the Jefferson Parish (JP) student populations, it was determined that less than half of students (45.21%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 12

Jefferson Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	260	57
Asian	850	632
Black	8,238	5,165
Hispanic	3,431	3,150
White	12,742	2,535
Total	25,521	11,539

A large minority of Native American (21.92%) were enrolled students. The majority of Asian students (74.35%) and Hispanic (91.81%) were enrolled in a public school. The overwhelmingly minority of White students (19.90%) were enrolled in a public school. Likewise, a little more than half of Black students (62.70%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

As illustrated in Table 13, in St. Bernard Parish (SBP) the majority of students (60.99%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 13

St. Bernard Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	0	12
Asian	40	62
Black	983	614
Hispanic	337	256
White	1,760	959
Total	3,120	1,903

Of the total eligible students, there was an overpopulation of Native American students (120%) and Asian students (155%) enrolled. There was large minority of Hispanic students (75.96%) who were eligible to attend a public school and who did. A little more than half of White students (54.49%) were enrolled in a public school. Likewise, more than half of Black students (62.46%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

As shown in Table 14, upon reviewing the St. Tammany Parish (STP) student populations, it was determined that many students (58.53%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 14

St. Tammany Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	100	36
Asian	329	174
Black	2,951	2,181
Hispanic	955	591
White	13,262	7,317
Total	17,597	10,299

The minority of Native American students (36%) attended a public school. A little more than half of Asian students (52.89%) were enrolled in a public school. There was a majority of Hispanic students (61.88%) who were eligible to attend a public school and did. A little more than half of

White students (55.17%) were enrolled in a public school. Likewise, the majority of Black students (73.91%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

The data in Table 15 indicates that in Plaquemines Parish (PP) the majority of students (61.33%) who were eligible to enroll in public schools were enrolled.

Table 15

Plaquemines Parish Student Populations

Race / Ethnicity	Eligible Students	Enrolled Students
American Indian / Native American	7	5
Asian	77	33
Black	387	204
Hispanic	29	90
White	995	585
Total	1,495	917

Most Native American students (71.42%) attended a public school. A little less than half of Asian students (42.86%) were enrolled in a public school. There was an overpopulation of Hispanic students (310.34%) who were eligible to attend a public school and did. A little more than half of White students (52.71%) were enrolled in a public school. Likewise, the majority of Black students (58.79%) who were eligible were enrolled in a public school.

In looking at all data, most students in the Orleans metropolitan area who were eligible were enrolled in a public school. In looking at Orleans parish, the minority of all eligible populations attended public schools. In the outlying areas, there were multiple inconsistent trends among Asian, Native American, White, and Hispanic students. In some areas each group was the minority and in some they were among the majority. In each of the outlying areas Black students were the majority of students attending public schools.

Overall, throughout the State of Louisiana, there was a consistent trend of the majority of qualified Black students attending public schools. While in both outlying areas and the major cities there were instances of the minority of White students attending, in a large number of areas they were also the majority. Throughout all metropolitan areas there was an inconsistent trend among the number of eligible Asian, Hispanic, and Native American students attending public schools.

The following section will discuss the limitations and delimitations which affected the outcome of this study.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into the current state of desegregation efforts in education throughout the state of Louisiana. The researchers sought to answer if de facto segregation still existed in schools throughout the state by studying enrollment trends of race and ethnicity in the three most populous metropolitan areas: Shreveport, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans. In response to the proposed research questions, it was determined that de facto segregation continues to exist to a lesser but still significant degree throughout the education system in Louisiana.

The findings suggest that both Black and White students had enrollment percentages of less than half in public schools. White students were found to have a lower enrollment percentage in public schools than Black students overall. Thus, it can be concluded that while it is not as severe as in the immediate post-Brown era, White students in contemporary times are still segregating themselves by attending private schools, moving to bordering parishes, or alternative means. The trend can be seen among Black students as well. As suggested by Marcotte and Dalane (2019) modern private schools do not reflect their local neighborhood demographics as students of all races and more affluent socioeconomic backgrounds are being enrolled with the hopes of being afforded more socioeconomic opportunities upon graduation. It is therefore families without this option who are left to enroll their children in public schools that have less resources, higher disciplinary issues, and less qualified teachers. The authors suggest and the findings of this study support the argument that socioeconomic segregation has been increasing over time as racial segregation is decreasing in Louisiana.

Furthermore, the data from this study revealed that some degree of de facto segregation in relation to Hispanic, Asian, and Native American students does exist as there was an average percentage of 6.00% of students enrolled in public schools throughout the state of Louisiana. Asian students were found to be the only student population with more than half of their student population enrolled in Louisiana's public education system. Slightly less than half of Native American and Hispanic students received their education through alternative means. It is the researchers' contention that, in accordance with previous research (Delgado & Stephanic, 2012; Marcotte & Dalane, 2019), because education and the value of a school is a property right

associated with whiteness, to a certain degree socioeconomic status rather than race now plays a factor in what we term as "neo-de facto segregation". This can be seen in the findings that both the Black and White students together were less enrolled in public schools in comparison to the other racial groups included in the study.

Specifically speaking, in the Shreveport area, it was found that de facto segregation existed minimally among Black and White students. In all areas, the majority of eligible Black and White students were enrolled in public schools. Both Black and White students had no enrollment percentage lower than 55%. Desoto Parish was found to have the lowest enrollment percentage of Black and White students with 55.37% of eligible White students enrolled which is still more than half. Further, the data revealed that neo de facto segregation is present as Hispanic, Asian, and Native American students had 4.86% of students enrolled in Caddo and bordering parishes public schools.

In the Baton Rouge area, it was concluded that there was still de facto segregation. Although both Black and White students were found to have low enrollment percentages, 10.50% of eligible White students in East Baton Rouge Parish and 1.75% in East Feliciana Parish lead the researchers to this conclusion. Likewise, the high percentage of White students in Livingston, West Baton Rouge, and Ascension suggest that there was White flight from East Baton Rouge. The data also suggests neo de facto segregation among Black and White students from other minorities. The Hispanic, Asian, or Native American students had an average percentage of 4.61% students in the area.

In the Orleans area, it was found that there was not enough information to determine if de facto segregation existed. In the metropolitan area of Orleans Parish, all included racial groups had no enrollment percentage greater than 10% potentially linked to post Hurricane Katrina recovery and the influx of charter schools. This prevented the researchers from drawing conclusive evidence using comparative analysis of this parish against its bordering parishes. Of note, there was a small population of White students in Jefferson Parish public schools.

As identified in the existing literature (Blanchard, 1981; Baum-Snow & Lutz, 2011; Grady & Hoffman, 2018; Marcotte & Dalane, 2019; Stone, 1992; Wright, 2015), by 1960, because of the desegregation order, five percent of the White student population throughout the Deep South had transferred to private schools. The remainder had transferred to surrounding non-central parishes. The findings of this study suggest that this pattern was replicated in East Baton Rouge. It was

discovered that in the surrounding parishes a higher percentage of eligible White students were enrolled in a public school.

In looking at the student populations throughout the state of Louisiana, the majority of eligible students, regardless of race, attended a public school. While there was not much de facto segregation based on race found throughout the state of Louisiana, the findings do suggest that there is neo de facto segregation based on socioeconomics which caused both Black and White students to separate themselves from other minority groups in the public school system. However, more research is needed to further validate these findings and the aforementioned conclusion.

Limitations

There were a few limitations found while acquiring the data and setting perimeters that could hinder the study's results. Firstly, the use of data in the U.S. Census Age and Sex Table to determine the eligible student population was problematic because it does not include residents who did not complete the form, potentially includes resident input errors, and does not reflect individuals who moved in or out of their registered parish post-census collection. The researchers realized that the use of data from the LDOE statistics for the 2018-2019 school year and comparing this to the U.S census of 2018 may have discrepancies in population comparison. In addition, no data were available on the total population of students being bussed to neighboring parishes or student transfer information.

Delimitations

To conduct this study, only quantitative secondary data was used from the Louisiana Education Database and the U.S. Census for accurate racial demographic information. For the study's population, the researchers chose the three largest parishes as found by the U.S. Census in Louisiana: East Baton Rouge, Orleans, and Caddo. To ensure a large sample size, the bordering parishes of East Baton Rouge, Orleans, and Caddo Parish were included. A large sample size was studied to lower the margin of error, provide higher accuracy in mean collection, and identify outliers in the data set (Zamboni, 2018).

Of the available racial statistics provided by the LDOE, only information for Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian were included. The Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population was found to be too small to determine racial patterns as a sample, and a comparable racial group. Multiple Races (Non-Hispanic) was not available on the filtered U.S. Census Age and Sex Table.

These perimeters narrowed the scope of the study which created a controllable sample and aided in ensuring accuracy in the findings.

Suggestions for Future Study

For future study, the researchers suggest an integration of private school data as a further point of comparison of racial demographics in Louisiana's education system. Other areas of interest include integrating school academic performance scores, neighborhood racial demographics, and including EBR's newly proposed city of St. George. By including this information, researchers can further investigate the social relationships between schools, housing, and socioeconomics which are all factors related to segregation. Additionally, the researchers suggest a qualitative examination of the relationship of socioeconomics to public education to determine the contributing factors to this phenomenon. There is value in looking at both Black and White upper-class and middle-class families in comparison to others. Finally, a larger and more detailed replication of this study including more parishes such as Terrebonne, Lafayette, and Tangipahoa and/or other states in the Deep South would provide a more holistic perspective on contemporary de facto segregation.

Conclusion

This article sought to build on the existing research pertaining to de facto segregation in the Deep South's public education system. Grady and Hoffman (2018) suggested that de facto segregation existed within the Deep South, but that "White Flight" had expanded into alternative forms in contemporary education. Louisiana was chosen for this research as it is the home of the nation's longest lasting desegregation case and 29 open desegregation orders. Critical Race Theory was used to frame this study in an effort to not feed into the majoritarian narrative that diminishes and devalues the repercussions of unresolved systematic oppression experienced by the marginalized, in this case students of color in Louisiana schools (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Specifically, Whiteness as Property was the central focus as education is viewed as a property of Whiteness because individuals classified as White have rarely been academically disadvantaged due to their race explicitly or implicitly by the law (Harris, 1993). As was observed, a shift from race-based segregation to possible socioeconomically based segregation was concluded. We also see the expansion of the term "White" into realms of socioeconomics as well as it relates to

affluence (Delgado & Stephanic, 2012, pp. 61-75). Hence, Whiteness is a property to maintain and a level of socioeconomic equivalency to achieve for minority group.

This study determined that de facto segregation still exists in Louisiana although minimally. Likewise, there is a new emerging form of de facto segregation where both Black and White students separate themselves from others which the researchers have named "neo de facto segregation". These findings are significant as this means that 66 year's post the *Brown V. Board* (1954) decision, students of color are still struggling to receive the same education as their White and/or more affluent peers.

The findings of this study further suggest that segregation academies continue to exist and expand throughout the Deep South due to White flight from public school systems (Grady & Hoffman, 2018). In looking at Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Caddo Parish's public school system, the findings of this study confirmed that although the majority of eligible White and Black students were typically enrolled in public schooling, there was a wide range of variance among Hispanic, Native American, and Asian students. Moreover, for there to be a clear determination of de facto segregation, there would need to be consistent instances of White students not attending public school. That was not the case in this study. In many instances White students were the majority in both urban and outlying areas.

Contemporary de facto segregation can thus be seen more as a micro societal problem rather than macro as in the past. The larger societal problem is still the lack of educational opportunities which perpetuates opportunity gaps for students of color across the country (Grady & Hoffman, 2018). The data collected show that White students are still not attending public schools. However, a growing number of Black students are not as well. It is therefore vital that policymakers in Louisiana and throughout the Deep South continue to advance current desegregation efforts to further integrate their public education system. However, looking beyond race is needed to afford all students an equal and fair education. Every student is an anticipated contributor to the nation's future and when they are failed by the educational system, the advancement of their immediate community is therefore stifled.

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Appendix A

Table A.1

Sample population of schools

Region	Parish	Schools
North Louisiana	Bossier	Airline High School
		Benton High School
		Bossier High School
		Haughton High School
		Parkway High School
		Plain Dealing High School
	Caddo	C.E. Byrd High School
		Caddo Parish Magnet High School
		Captain Shreve High School
		North Caddo High School
		Northwood High School
		Southwood High School
		Booker T. Washington New Technology High School
		Woodlawn Leadership Academy
		Academic Recovery Ombudsman
		Magnolia School of Excellence
		Pathways in Education-Louisiana Inc.
		Pathways in Education - North market
		Caddo Virtual Academy
	DeSoto	Mansfield High School
		North DeSoto High School
	Red River	Red River High School
Central Louisiana	Ascension	Donaldsonville High School
		East Ascension High School
		St. Amant High School
		Dutchtown High School

	East Baton Rouge	Glen Oaks Senior High School
		Istrouma High School
		McKinley Senior High School
		Northdale Superintendent's Academy
		Northeast High School
		Scotlandville Magnet High School
		Tara High School
		Woodlawn High School
		Mentorship STEAM Academy
		Lee High School
	East Feliciana	East Feliciana High School
	Livingston	Albany High School
		Denham Springs High School
		Doyle High School
		Holden High School
		Live Oak High School
		Springfield High School
		Walker High School
		Walker Freshman High School
	West Baton Rouge	Brusly High School
		Port Allen High School
South Louisiana	Jefferson	Bonnabel Magnet Academy High School
		Helen Cox High School
		East Jefferson High School
		John Ehret High School
		L.W. Higgins High School
		Grace King High School
		Riverdale High School
		West Jefferson High School
		Thomas Jefferson High School for Advanced Studies

		Gretna No. 2 Academy for Advanced Studies
		Ray St. Pierre Academy for Advanced Studies
	Orleans	Warren Easton Senior High School
		McDonogh #35 College Preparatory School
		Rooted School
	Plaquemines	Belle Chasse High School
	St. Bernard	Chalmette High School
	St. Tammany	Covington High School
		Mandeville High School
		Salmen High School
		Slidell High School
		Northshore High School
		Fontainebleau High School
		Lakeshore High School