



Examining Child-Teacher Relationships and Classroom Quality Across Racial Groups

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HighScope Educational Research Foundation

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The Early Learning Network aims to advance the understanding of *policies and practices* that narrow the achievement gap and *maintain early learning success* as children transition *from preschool to elementary school* and beyond.

Outline of Presentation



Take Home Points

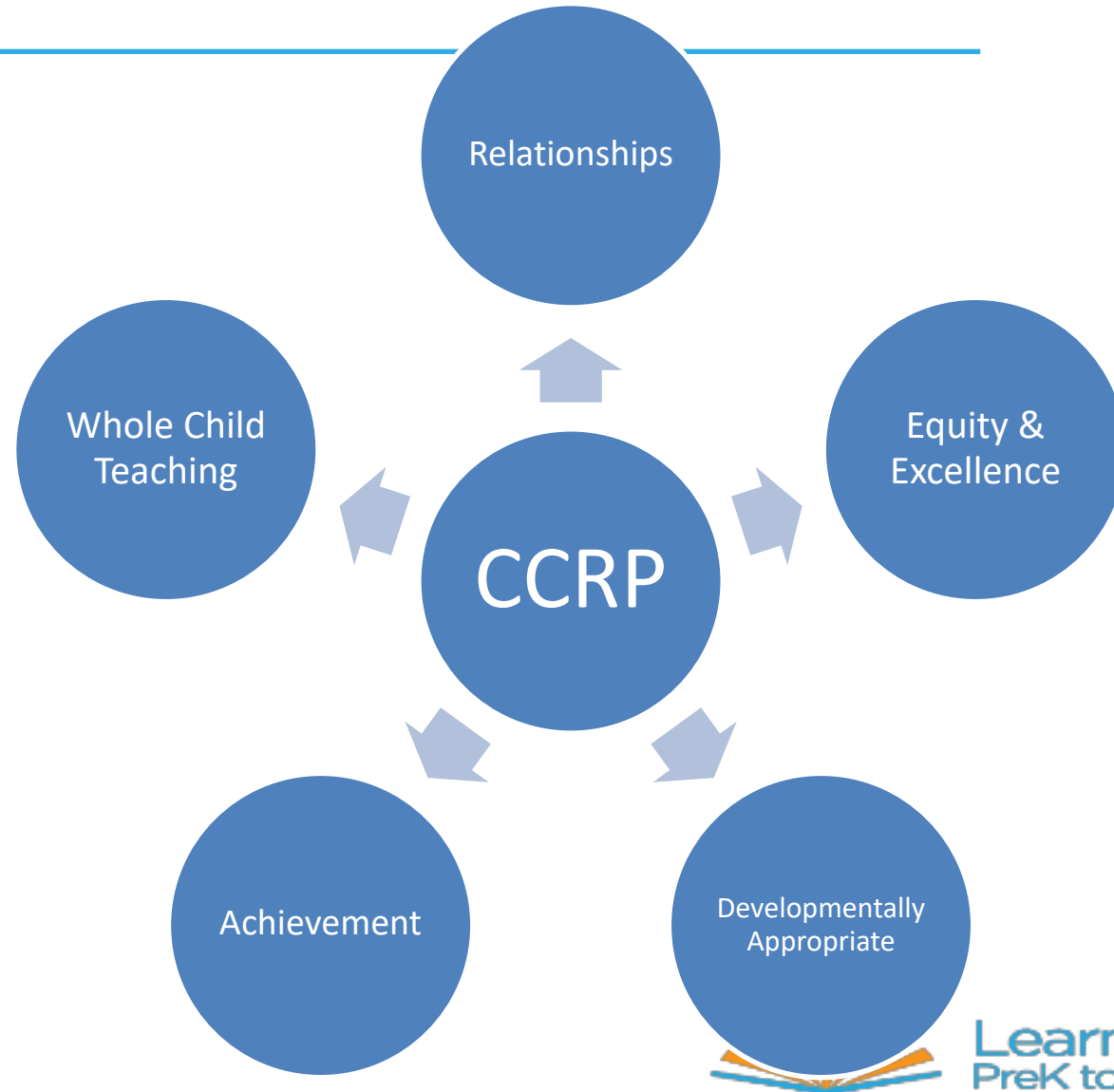
- **Conflict with teacher more negatively associated with Latinx children's problem behaviors than peers**
- **Black children less likely have close relationships with teachers and be in emotionally supportive classrooms compared to peers**
- **Universal and cultural relevance of specific teacher-child relationships and classroom quality on children's learning and behavior needs more attention.**
- **Deeper examination about bias and equity in early childhood experiences and opportunities to learn, especially for minoritized children**

Rationale for Study

- **Teacher-student relationships and interactions are critical factors in children's learning experiences and achievement (Crosnoe et al., 2010)**
- **Persistent social challenge of the racial achievement gap that start early**
- **Some indication that children of color likely to experience less enriched learning opportunities (Early, Iruka, et al. 2010; Gilliam et al., 2016)**
- **The extent of these racial differences in opportunities to learn on children's achievement have been underexplored in pre-K**

Theoretical Framework

- **Critical Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CCRP) framework**



Research Questions

- **What is the quality of teacher-child relationships and classroom quality experienced by children during the pre-K year?**
 - Do they differ across racial groups?
- **What is the link between teacher-child relationships, classroom quality, and children's achievement and social skills during pre-K?**
 - Do they differ across racial groups?
- **To what extent does race moderate the association between teacher-child relationships and classroom quality and children's achievement and social skills during pre-K?**

Sample

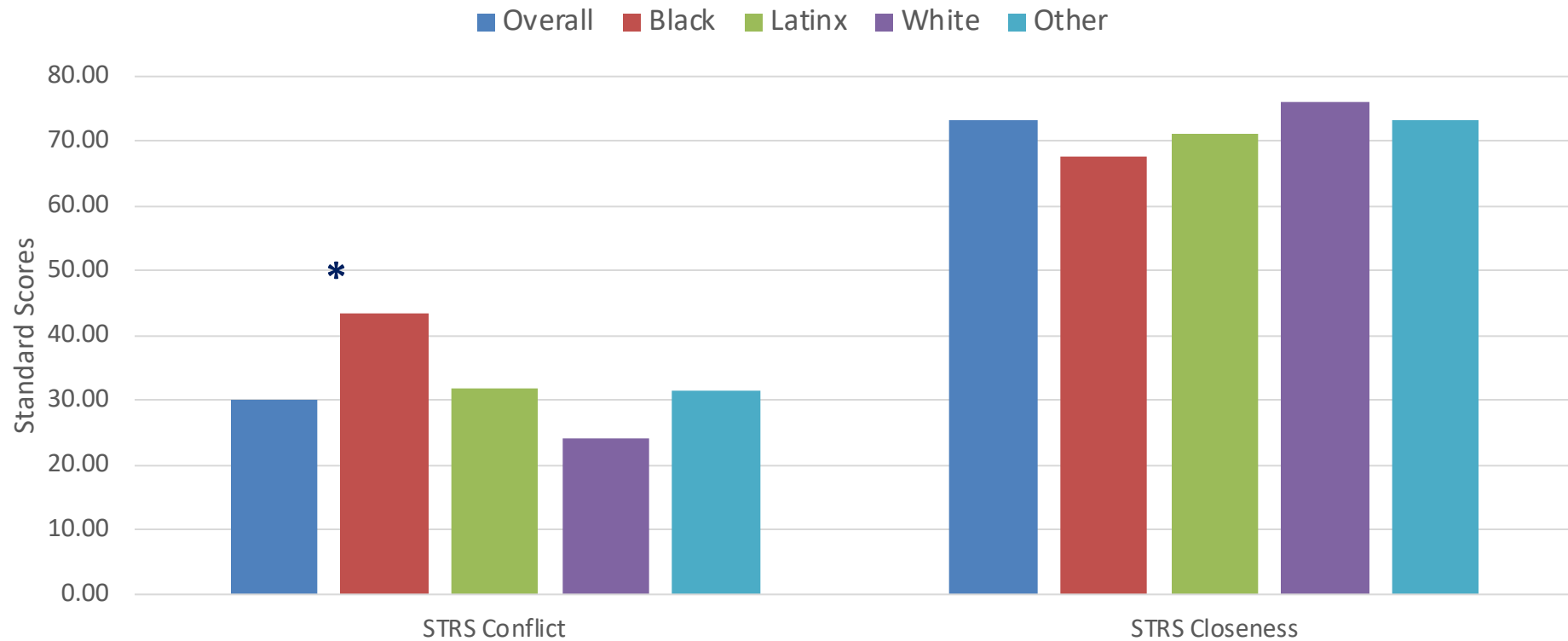
- **N = 252 pre-K attenders in Midwest state from 12 rural/urban school districts**
- **Age = 4.95 years old (*SD* = .27)**
- **43% White, 15% Black/African American, 28% Latinx, and 13% Other**
- **47% Male**
- **37% Dual Language Learner** (spoke or heard any other language other than English)
- **Parent Education: 43% High School Diploma/GED or Less and 22% BA or Higher** (majority of BA and higher group was White, majority of Black and Latinx parents had some college or less)

Measures

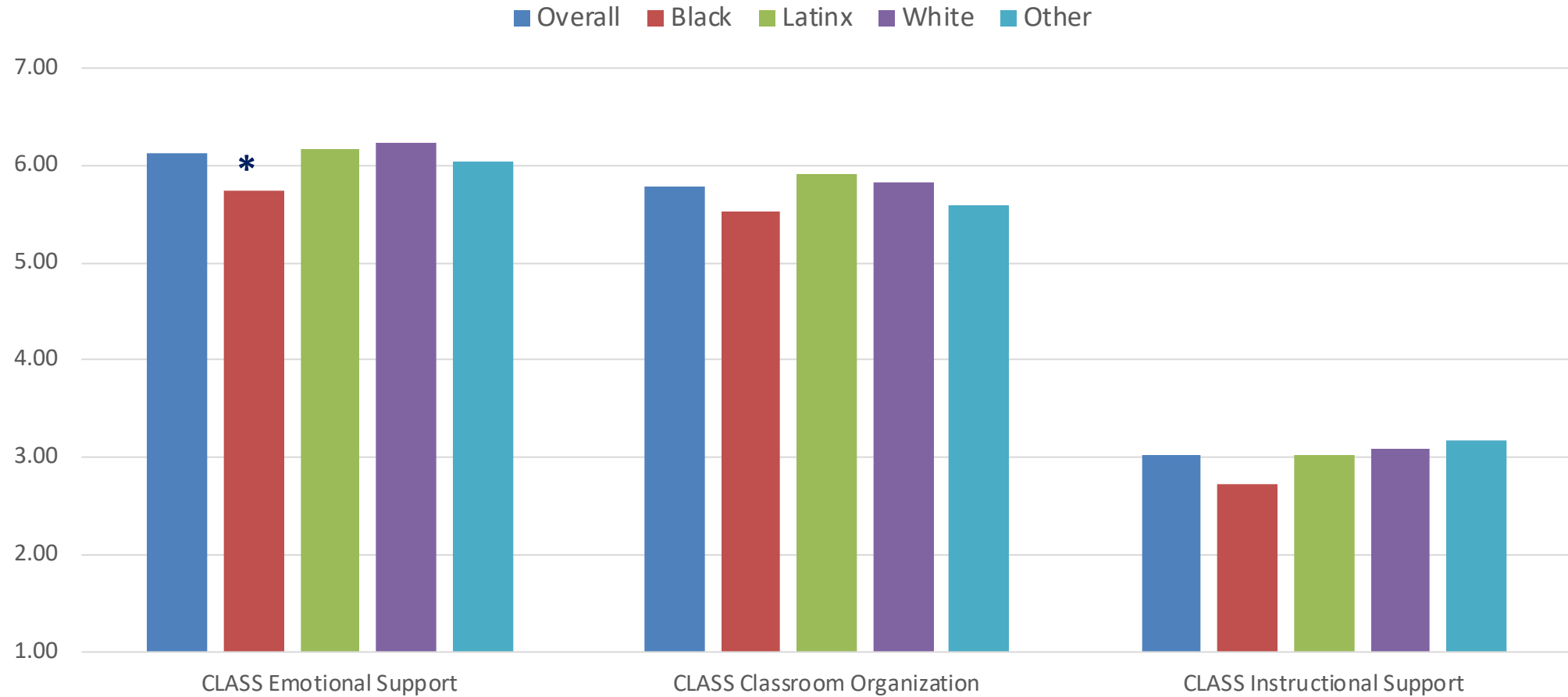
Construct	Measure
Teacher-Child Relationships	Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 2001): Closeness and Conflict
Classroom Quality	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008): Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support
Children's Achievement	Woodcock-Johnson Broad Reading and Broad Math
Children's Social Skills	Social Skills Inventory System: Social Skills and Problem Behaviors

Research Question #1

What is the quality of teacher-child relationships and classroom quality experienced by children during the pre-K year?



Research Question #1 (cont'd)



Research Question #2

What is the link between teacher-child relationships, classroom quality, and children's achievement and social skills during pre-K?

	STRS Conflict	STRS Closeness	CLASS Emotional Support	CLASS Classroom Organization	CLASS Instructional Support
Broad Reading	-0.09	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.07
WJ Broad Math	-0.11	0.24	0.01	-0.06	0.07
SSIS Social Skills	-0.66	0.58	0.17	0.07	0.03
SSIS Problem Behavior	0.79	-0.43	-0.26	-0.19	-0.06

Note. Bolded = significant at $p < .05$

Research Question #2

	STRS Conflict	STRS Closeness	CLASS Emotional Support	CLASS Classroom Organization	CLASS Instructional Support
Broad Reading	-0.09	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.07
WJ Broad Math	-0.11	0.24 .24/ .24	0.01	-0.06	0.07
SSIS Social Skills	-0.66 -.77 / -.64/ -.55	0.58 .75/ .54/ .53	0.17	0.07	0.03
SSIS Problem Behavior	0.79 .84/ .83/ .69	-0.43 -.73/ -.28/ -.39	-0.26 -.48/-.26	-0.19 -.38	-0.06

Note. Bolded = significant at $p < .05$

Red = Black children, Green = Latinx children, Blue = White children

Research Question #3

To what extent does race moderate the association between teacher-child relationships and classroom quality and children's achievement and social skills during pre-K?

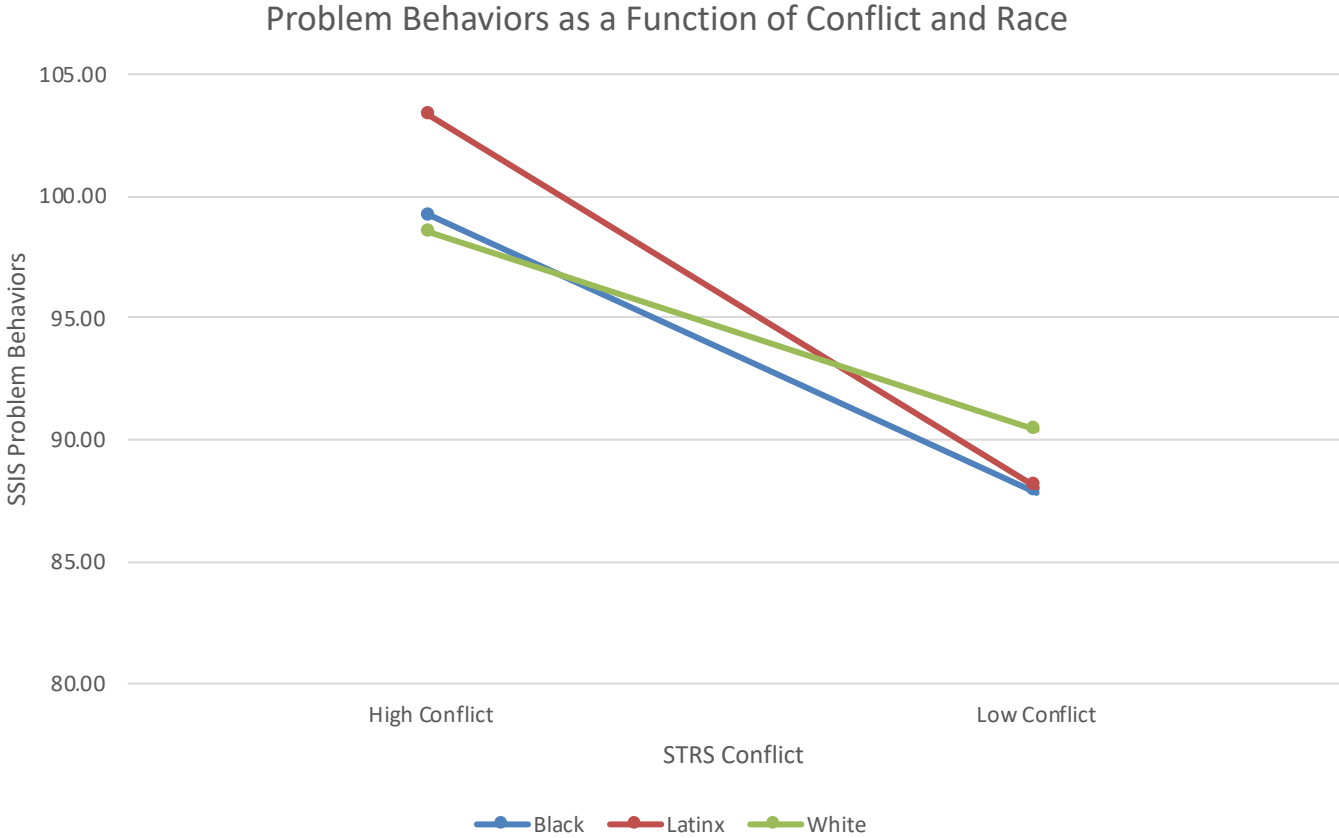
HLM analyses, fall scores, site, age, gender, and parental education controlled

Research Question #3 (cont'd)

- **WJ Broad Reading: No main effects or moderation by race**
- **WJ Broad Math: predicted by STRS Closeness ($d=.01$), no moderation effects**
- **SSIS Social Skills: predicted by STRS Closeness & Conflict ($d=.01$), no moderation effects**
- **SSIS Problem Behaviors: predicted by STRS Conflict ($d=.01$) and CLASS Classroom Organization ($d=.25$), moderation found**

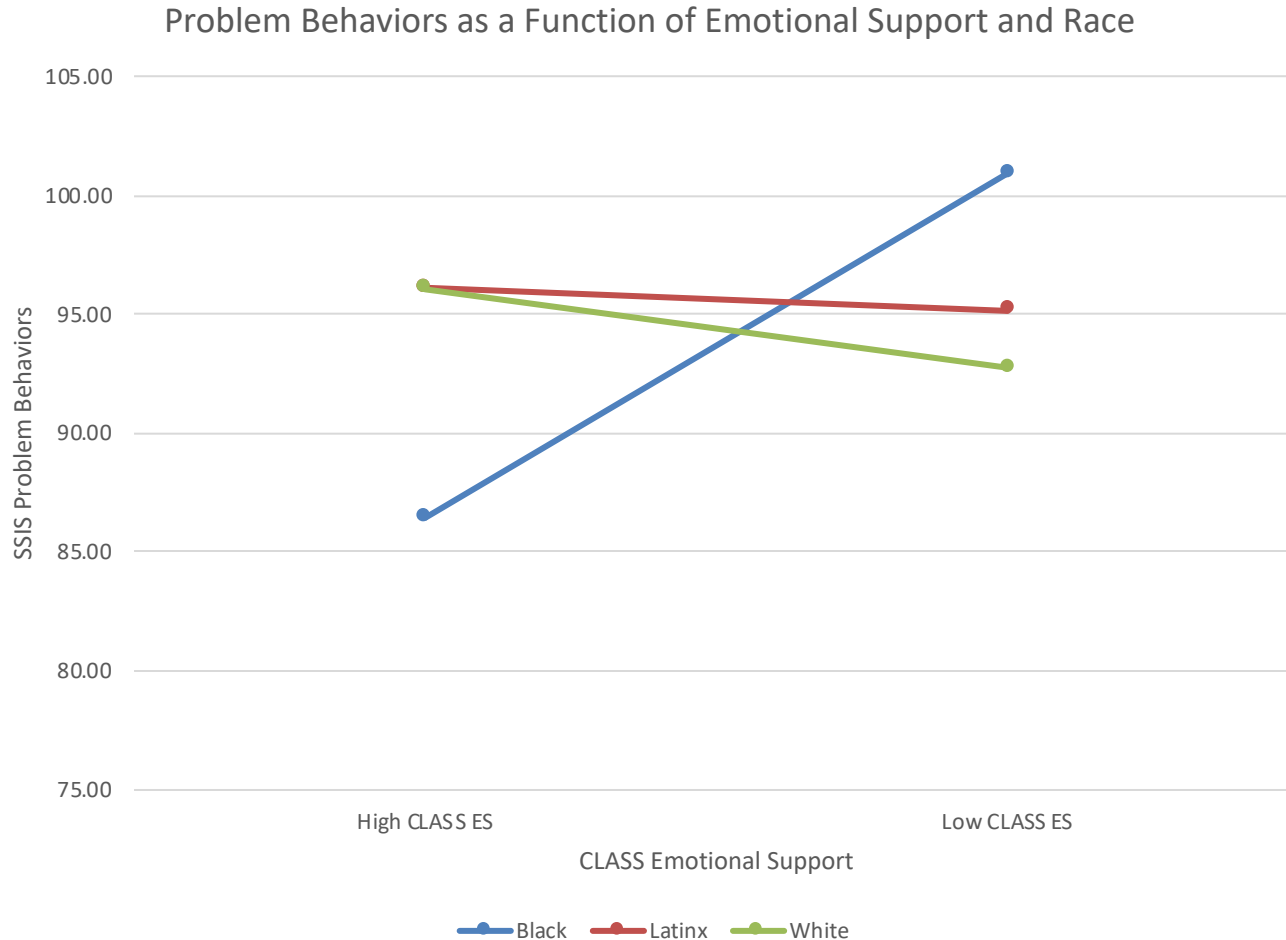


Research Question #3 (Interaction)



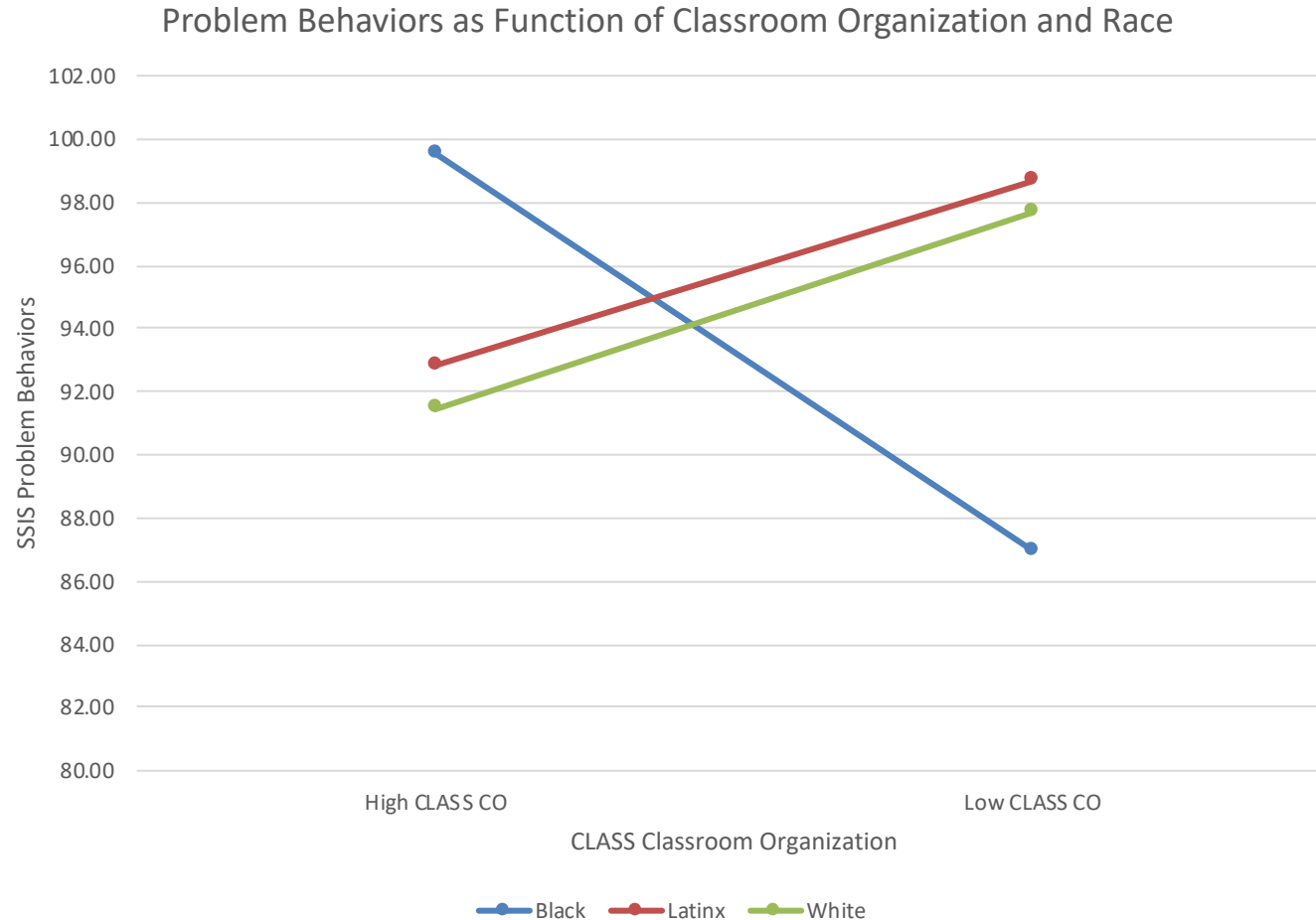
Increase in teacher-reported conflict associated with higher increase in Latinx children’s problem behaviors compared to their peers (effect size is $<.01$).

Research Question #3 (Interaction)



Increase in classroom emotional support associated with significant decrease in Black children's problem behaviors, and a reverse pattern with a decrease in emotional support (effect size = .96).

Research Question #3 (interaction)



Increase in classroom organization is associated with an increase in Black children's problem behaviors; decrease in classroom organization is associated with lower problem behavior for Black children. The effect size is about .75.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- **Conflict with teacher more negatively associated with Latinx children's problem behaviors than peers**
- **Black children less likely have close relationships with teachers and be in emotionally supportive classrooms compared to peers**
- **Universal and cultural relevance of specific teacher-child relationships and classroom quality on children's learning and behavior needs more attention.**



Conclusions and Next Steps

- **Self-regulation/externalizing problem found to be critical factor linking early childhood experiences and lifelong outcomes (Heckman et al., 2011)**
- **Examine the additive effects of environment and individual experiences**
- **Deeper examination about bias and equity in early childhood experiences and opportunities to learn, especially for minoritized children**

**Thank you!!
Questions??**

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