

Table 1.

Characteristics of the six included studies and their findings

Article Name	Year	Journal	Type of Article	Findings
Hart et al.	2010	Remedial and Special Education	Research Study	In this three-year ethnographic study of four case studies of African American children receiving special education services under ED, the authors identified seven explanatory qualitative themes, three were particularly notable to how children were qualifying for special education under ED. First, teacher skills/biases such as variability among classroom instructional practices and behavior management strategies. Second and of interest to this paper, errors/bias in psychological assessment, in which referral teams focused on home contexts and significantly ignored the role of school context on behavioral challenges. Particularly, results revealed that across the four cases there was contradicting information about the home environment and assumptions made by the school psychologists. Third, administrative policies, such that the referral and special education decisions were subjective and biased.
Scardamalia et al.	2019	Psychology in Schools	Research Study	This study revealed varying applications of the eligibility criteria by the 56 school psychologists who believed the student qualified for special education for ED and there was poor reliability in the eligibility decisions across all participants. The findings did not indicate whether the observed difference in eligibility determinations was related to student demographic factors, such as race and socioeconomic status although the authors changed the demographic information on reports.
Sullivan et al.	2019	Journal of School Psychology	Research Study	The first study in Sullivan et al. (2019) focused on ED and consisted of 60 school psychologists that were given three case reports of fifth-grade boys with externalizing behavior challenges. Results indicated that within this sample of 60 participants there were no racial biases among school psychologists' identification of ED eligibility despite the level of ambiguity of whether or not the student had a high or low probability of meeting criteria. Moreover, participants felt more comfortable ruling out ED than qualifying a student under the category which matched the current rate of ED eligibility across the nation.
Sciuchetti	2017	Psychology in Schools	Opinion Study	Identified contributing factors to inequities in special education eligibility with a focus on student emotional and behavior challenges.

				Though this article discussed various contributing factors within and outside of the school environment, the author highlighted the concerning use of assessment and referral process for special education eligibility for ED and specific learning disabilities among culturally and linguistically diverse students. Specifically, results suggested that the referral and evaluation process vary across states and districts. Thus, the teacher referral process is filled with bias that may confuse cultural diversity with student disability. Standardized assessments for assessing emotional and behavioral challenges also have validity issues because the child's background and experience may not match the normed sample of the assessment. Moreover, examiner factors such as their own race, cultural background, gender identity, and language may impact how assessment results are interpreted.
Hanchon & Allen	2018	Psychology in Schools	Opinion Study	Reviewed important issues that have arose in ED eligibility decisions over time, including unclear federal definitions of the category, inadequate and unfair assessment practices, and uncertainty in how to aptly support students in special education due to ED. In discussing procedures that can be used to curb the effects of such issues, Hanchon and Allen (2018) made a number of recommendations. The first of these suggestions calls for the use of "best" and ethical practices. That is, practitioners should heed the NASP and APA ethical standards throughout their practice and keep up with the practices recommended by experts in the field. As a second recommendation, they indicated that school psychologists should refrain from using subjectivity in the decision-making process and be conscious of biases or cognitive errors that may influence eligibility decisions. Third, school psychologists should use evidence-based practices and rely on scientific evidence to inform their practice. Additionally, school psychologists should work to collect data that will help inform eligibility decisions as well as effective intervention selection. Lastly, the authors posited that school psychology practitioners should look beyond the IDEA criteria for ED and consult with other classification manuals such as the <i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i> (DSM-5) to help inform and create more valid criteria for eligibility decisions under the category of ED.
Sullivan	2017	Behavioral Disorders	Opinion Study	In this paper, the author explicitly discusses the inequities in the identification process for ED. Specifically, this paper notes that ED identification practices have limited reliability and validity, as well as highly subjective. The author notes that the evidence of bias in identifying ED is sparse and further work is needed.