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Culturally Responsive School Leadership For Latino/a Students Success

by

Victor H. Vergara

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership: Administration

Dissertation Committee:
Deborah Peterson, Chair
Pat Burk
Dan Johnson
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Portland State University
2017

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Abstract

Historically, education in the United States has been tailored to fulfill the needs of White students. As the Latina/o population increases in the United States, we must prepare teachers and school administrators to provide opportunities for an equal education for minority students of all races, cultural backgrounds, or ethnicities. School leadership plays an important role in the effectiveness of educational access for minority students. Leaders must review and modify their practices to ensure that minority students have the opportunity to be productive citizens in our society. The purpose of this research was to evaluate the characteristics of effective high school Leaders of Color and White leaders for Latina/o students in secondary schools and to provide recommendations for further investigation. This study revealed findings related to culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o student success, with leaders of Color and White allies reporting different perspectives on equity leadership.

DEDICATION

For Lola with love,
I owe my achievements to her
enthusiasm, my concentration to her
assurance, and for that I am a
successful man…

This dissertation is dedicated to Nono and Nona, my grandparents who gave me strength, love and support during the most difficult times of my life; to my mother who always instilled the power of education in me; to my children Erica, Nicolas and Isabel who are the inspiration of everything I do in my life; to my wife, Lola, who is the pillar of my success and the person whose advice guides me and pushes me every day to do my best; and to all my students that motivate me to keep fighting to end the social injustice that exists in our country.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my committee members who were more than generous in sharing their expertise and time. Thank you Dr. Everett, Dr. Burke and Dr. Johnson for agreeing to be part of my committee.

A special thanks to Dr. Peterson, my committee chair for her countless hours of reflecting, reading, encouraging, and most of all patience throughout the entire process. I am grateful she saw something in me and encouraged me to enroll in the doctoral program. Her wealth of knowledge around social justice and equity benefited me immensely. She is one of the main reasons I have finished my dissertation and am more prepared to continue the movement against educational disparities that still exist in our schools.

I would like to thank my research partner and friend Ryan Richardson for his support, motivation, encouragement and the innumerable hours of work and reflection which helped me persevere and complete this work.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Woodburn school district, especially all my teachers from the Academy of International Studies for their continuous support and inspiration.

I would like to thank all my friends and mentors for their support and persuasion to keep going and not give up.

Finally I would like to thank all my school parents for sharing their experiences and helping me understand the complexity of their lives. Thank you Lesly, Leticia, Fidel,

Maricarmen, Jorge, Daisy, and all my students who are my daily inspiration. This dissertation is for you, to show you that we, the minority, can be successful in this country, we just need to believe in ourselves.

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FOREWORD

The Ed.D. program at Portland State University is a member of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). There are six CPED working principles agreed upon by member organizations. These principles are woven, to greater or lesser extent, throughout the Educational Leadership Ed.D. experience. They are as follows:

1. Is framed around the questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice.
2. Prepares leaders who can construct and apply knowledge to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, organizations, and communities.
3. Provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate collaboration and communication skills to work with diverse communities and to build partnerships.
4. Provides field-based opportunities to analyze complex problems of practice and use multiple frames to develop meaningful solutions.
5. Is grounded in and develops a professional knowledge base that integrates both practical and research knowledge, that links theory with systemic and systematic inquiry.
6. Emphasizes the generation, transformation, and use of professional knowledge and practice.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Introduction

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), the Latina/o population will more than double by 2060, rising to 128.8 million. Consequently, nearly one in three U.S. residents will be Latina/o, increasing from approximately one in six today. While the Latina/o population is growing in United States, Latina/o children historically have faced many challenges in obtaining a high quality education.

Recently, the American education system has been looking for ways that leaders can connect to and understand Latina/o culture and students. This is an increasing concern due to the expansion and advocacy of equal opportunities for Latina/o students. Murakami, Valle, and Mendez (2013) also assert that it is time for leaders to assume responsibility for Latina/o student success:

> We agree and assert that the days of ignoring the instructional needs of Latina/o students, segregating them, limiting their access to appropriate curriculum, using language as an excuse, maintaining low expectations, and maintaining a policy of non-interaction with Latina/o students and their families are no longer acceptable. The practice of blaming Latina/o students for institutional policies and structures that negatively affect their educational progress must be stopped (p.154).

In the above statement, Murakami, Valle, and Mendez urge us to stop blaming Latina/o immigrants for the difficulties they have encountered. We need to think of the immigrant Latina/o population as a group of people whose only desire is to have a better life in a

country full of opportunities. Offering Latina/o students multicultural opportunities in education (Gay, 2010) and respecting their cultural experiences are crucial to building a bright future for all Latina/o children in the United States.

Many agree that helping Latina/o students with multicultural opportunities is necessary. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is when the question is raised of who is going to lead this work and hold school leaders accountable for meeting Latina/o students' needs. Given the number of White administrators and teachers and lack of Latina/o role models, some are convinced that it is impossible to help our Latina/o students reach their maximum potential (Choy, 2001; Striplin, 1999; Thayer, 2000). Others maintain that it is possible to meet Latina/o student needs, but only if educational leaders play a role, particularly in the area of providing hope to students (Gullat & Jan, 2003). Others argue that in order for school leaders to play a role, they need to learn how to be more culturally responsive (Gay, 2002; Lyman & Villani, 2004). In her review of the principal's role in creating inclusive schools, Riehl (2000) states:

> Three tasks determine whether administrators are prepared to respond to diversity and demonstrate multicultural leadership. These include fostering new definitions of diversity; promoting inclusive instructional practices within schools by supporting, facilitating, or being a catalyst for change; and building connections between schools and communities (as cited in Johnson, 2007, p. 51).

Essentially, Riehl asserts that if we understand the definition of diversity and we target inclusive instructional practices—including good collaboration and communication with

families and communities—we will promote a culturally responsive climate in our educational community.

Helping Latina/o students succeed is about working together with educational leaders and paying attention to these children, by opening doors and offering them opportunities for success. Opportunities to support Latina/o students include helping them become aware of many opportunities available in higher education, such as scholarships, advantageous uses of their bilingual skills in the workforce, and Latina/o oriented advocacy groups to name a few (De la Peña, 1991; Krashen, 1999).

While we offer students these opportunities, it is also clear that current leadership in schools does not reflect the racial and ethnic demographics of students (Cummins, 2005; Gay, 2010; Singleton & Linton, 2006). Goldsmith (2004) similarly contends:

> Latino and Black students held more optimistic, more pro-school beliefs in schools with high numbers of minority students, especially when the school employed many minority teachers. Research shows that Black and Latino administrators are effective role models for minority students (p. 121).

In addition to having strong role models, when school leaders' ethnicities are a reflection of those of the students, they contribute to positive racial identity development. As Sanchez, Thornton, and Usinger (2008) state, "Having a role reflecting your race or ethnicity is significant to learners' identity development and future aspirations" (p. 4). Although they make a salient point, all school leaders must be able to effectively lead schools of children of all races. For example, White Leaders need to understand how to support minorities (Sanchez et al., 2008; Skrentny, 2009), and Latina/o leaders need to

know how to support Black students (Milem, Clayton, Hurtado & Allen, 1998; Phinney, 1989). Leaders need to be open-minded in order to learn and experience from other cultures. Working together for the benefit of all children is enriching, according to Cooper (2009):

> As the diversity of the United States increases, so does the challenge of meeting the needs of all public school students beyond raising academic test scores. School Leaders must embrace a new cultural stance of acceptance rather than indifference towards increased cultural diversity. This orientation is equity-driven, and it involves being a cultural leader who views demographic change and cultural difference as enriching and educative, not threatening or deviant (p. 27).

Cooper urges us to spend time and resources helping all leaders—including teacher leaders—to understand how to work effectively with Latina/o children without stigmatizing different races or ethnicities. This is the only way to reduce the racial disparities in education still in existence in the United States.

Background of the Problem

As the prominent philosopher, Dewey (1956/1990), argues, “What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other idea for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy” (p. 7). The American educational system has always tried to fulfill the needs of its students. The concern has been a lack of leadership in schools that ensured the existence of equal opportunity for minority students, especially Latinas/os. For a long time, the United States has wanted to provide bilingual education opportunities to its

immigrants. According to Ovando (2010), "during the second half of the 19th century, bilingual or non-English instruction was provided in some form in many public and private schools" (p. 4). For decades, many Latina/o immigrants from countries like Mexico, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba, have been trying to preserve their culture and would like to offer their children opportunities for bilingual educational.

At the same time, bilingual education has been present in some way in the history of American education with some success. In Ovando's (2010) view, the influx of Cuban immigrants contributed to the urgency of providing bilingual education in America:

> The rebirth of bilingual education also owes a great debt to Fidel Castro's Cuban revolution of 1959. Exiled Cubans who arrived in Florida envisioned that their sojourn in the United States would be short-lived. Thus, they wanted their children to retain their language and culture in preparation for their return home…the Cuban community in 1963 established a highly successful two-way bilingual education program at Coral Way Elementary School in Dade County, Florida (p. 7).

Ovando contends that many immigrants came to this country with the purpose of saving some money and returning to their countries. This is why it was extremely important for them to keep their native language and culture intact.

Multiple initiatives—such as investments in early education, funding for early education for migrant students, engagement of families as full partners in education, and a warm acceptance of a multicultural future—have aimed to reduce educational

disparities (Bishop, 2011; Bray, 1999; Fullan, 2002). While multiple opportunities for Latina/o students were developed through the years to fulfill the needs of those students across America, many of them failed. Currently, we still have an urgent need to figure out how to be more appropriate and effective in providing these opportunities to our students, because the Latina/o population is growing every day. We need to make sure that Latina/o students get the opportunity to be well educated in America, so that the existing gaps in academic achievement between White and Latina/o populations would be eliminated. More effective education initiatives aimed at improving the achievements of this large Latina/o population will ensure that they not only succeed, but also help to expand our country's economy. This could help us keep jobs in America, rather than outsourcing them to experts from countries such as China or India; instead, giving job opportunities to highly educated U.S. immigrants already living in America will continue to expand the American economy.

As previously discussed, the Latina/o consistency population will more than double to 128.8 million in 2060. In our state of Oregon, we are following the same trend in the growing Latina/o population. According to Lopez, Executive Director of CAUSA (2012), "Between 2000 and 2010, the Latino population grew 63%, from 275,314 to 450,052" (p. 8). As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), 11% of our population in Oregon is now Latina/o (Table 1).

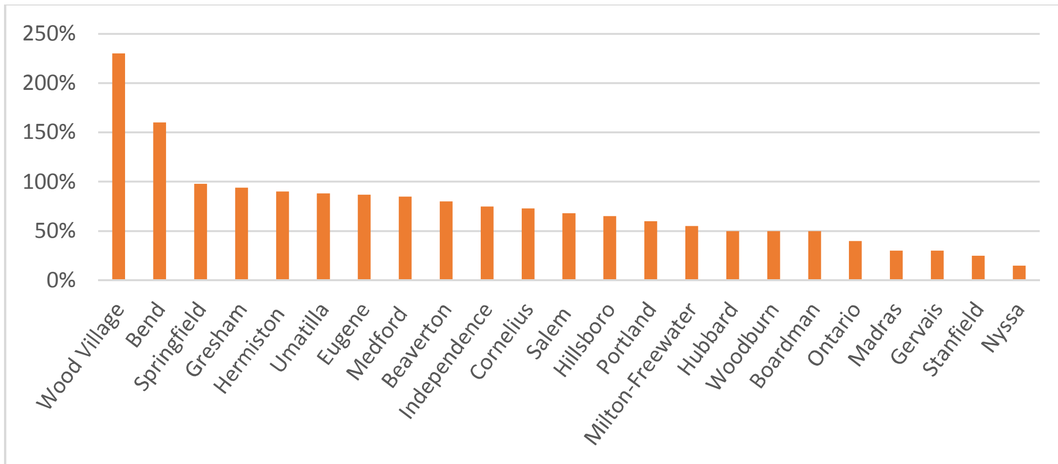
Table 1: Total and Latina/o population in Oregon

OREGON RESIDENTS BY RACE	Number	Percent
Total population – All Races	3,831,074	100.0
Hispanic or Latino	450,062	11.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), the Latina/o population in many cities across the state of Oregon is rapidly growing (Table 2).

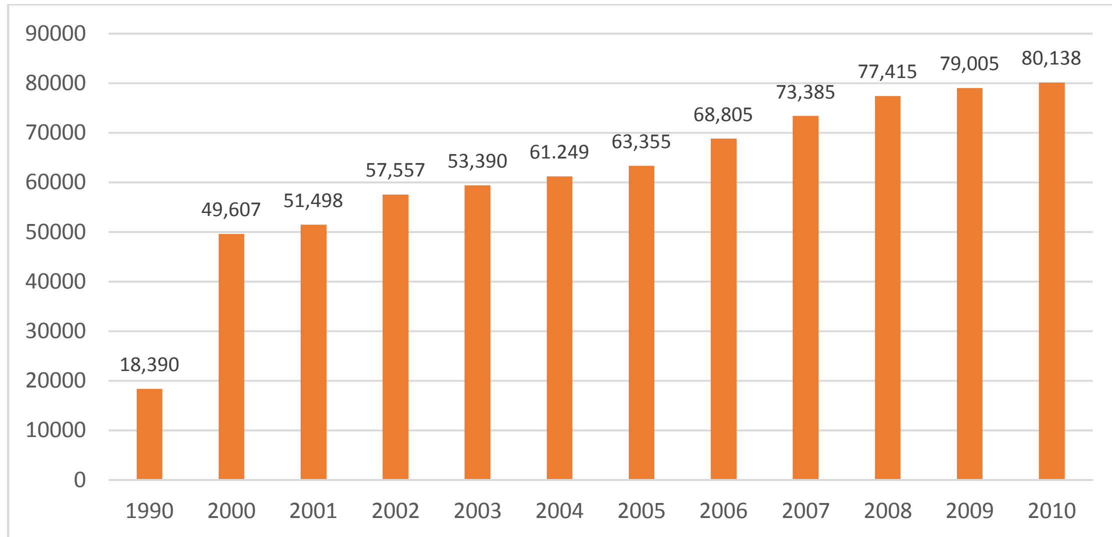
Table 2: Growth of the Latina/o Population in Oregon Cities Between 2000-2010



Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census

As the Latina/o population grows in Oregon, so does the number of Latina/o students. According to Lopez, (2012), "The Oregon Department of Education reports that Latino student population grew 113.1% between the 1999–2000 school year and the 2009–2010 school year" (p. 10). One example of such growth is in Multnomah County, where, according to the Coalition of Communities of Color (2010), the Latino population is growing in both the county population and in public school attendance. Table 3 presents the Latina/o population census data from 1990 to 2010 in Multnomah County.

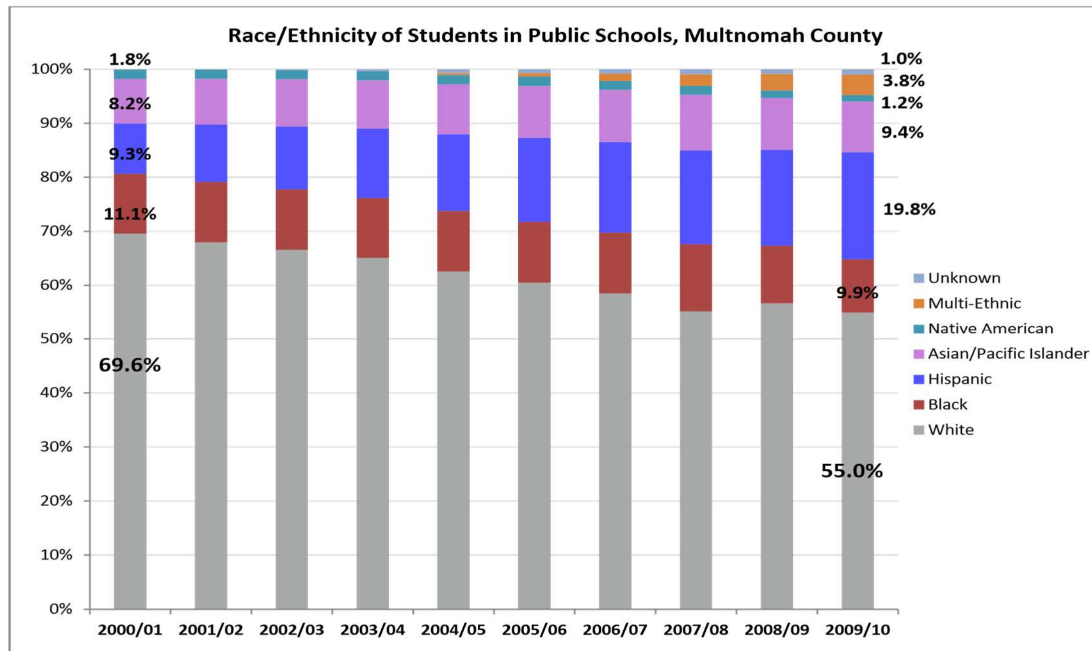
Table 3: Latino population, Multnomah County



Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census and American Community Survey, selected years.

Table 4 presents the race/ethnicity of students in Multnomah County from 2000 to 2010.

Table 4: Race/Ethnicity of Students in Public Schools, Multnomah County

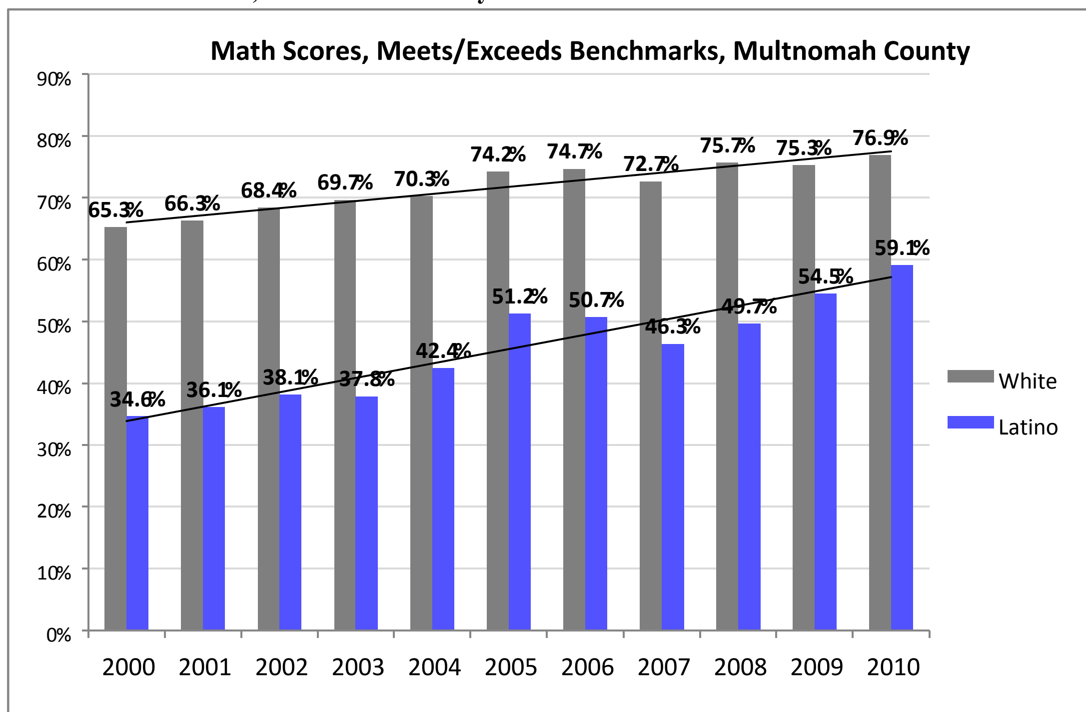


Source: Author's calculations from Oregon Department of Education enrollment figures for Multnomah County public school students

While the Latina/o population is rapidly increasing, we are still seeing a persistent gap between White and Latina/o students in academic achievement.

Table 5 presents the math scores of White and Latina/o children in Oregon. In 2000, 30% more White students than Latina/o students met math benchmarks. While the gap narrowed in 2010, still, 17% more White students than Latina/o students met math benchmarks (see table 5).

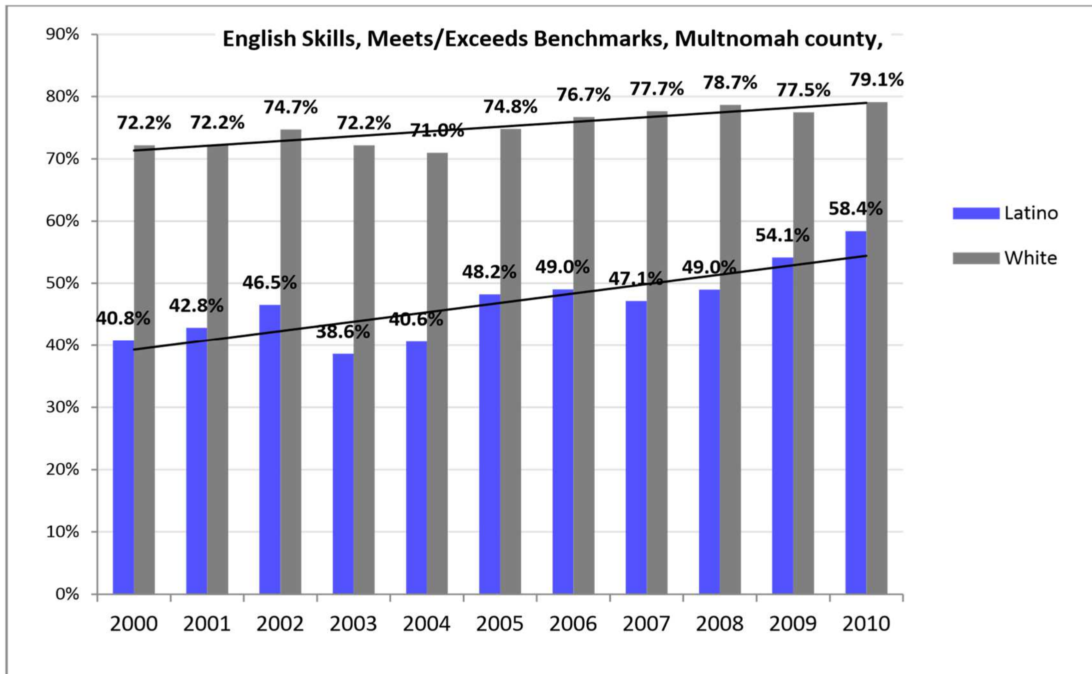
Table 5: Math Scores, Multnomah County



Source: Author's calculations from Oregon Department of Education data, tallied by Pat Burk for 2008, ODE website for 2009 and 2010.

Similarly, in 2000, 31% more White students than Latina/o students met benchmark in English. In 2010, the gap narrowed, however, 21% more White students than Latina/o students met benchmark in English (see table 6).

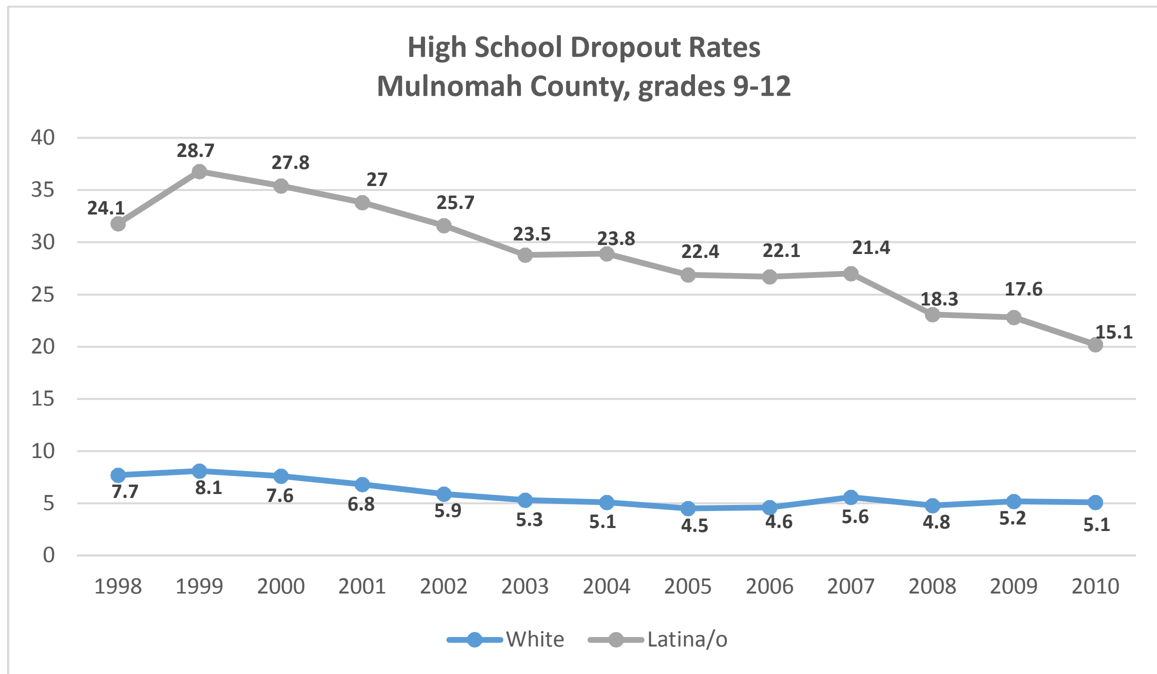
Table 6: English Skills, Multnomah County



Source: Author's calculations from Oregon Department of Education data, tallied by Pat Burk for 2008, ODE website for 2009 and 2010.

In addition, we see a significant discrepancy in terms of High School Dropout rates in Multnomah County, with Latina/o dropout rates disproportionately higher than those of the White group (Table 7).

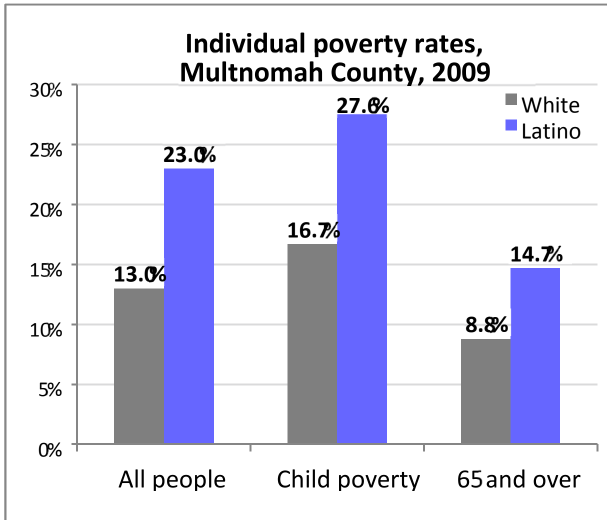
Table 7: High School Dropout Rates, Multnomah County



Source: Author's calculations from Oregon Department of Education, data tallied by Pat Burk.

The combination of low academic achievement and high dropout rates in Multnomah County contributes to a higher Latina/o poverty rate in comparison with that of White populations, as well, Latina/o adults earning substantially less than their White counterparts (Table 8).

Table 8: Individual Poverty Rates, Multnomah County



Source: American Community Survey, 2009.

According to the Oregon Department of Education (2016), the graduation gap between Hispanic/Latino and White students still exists. Looking at the four-year cohort we see a gap of 8.6% while the five-year cohort shows a gap of 6.7% (Table 9).

Table 9: 2014-2015 Graduation Rates for the State of Oregon.

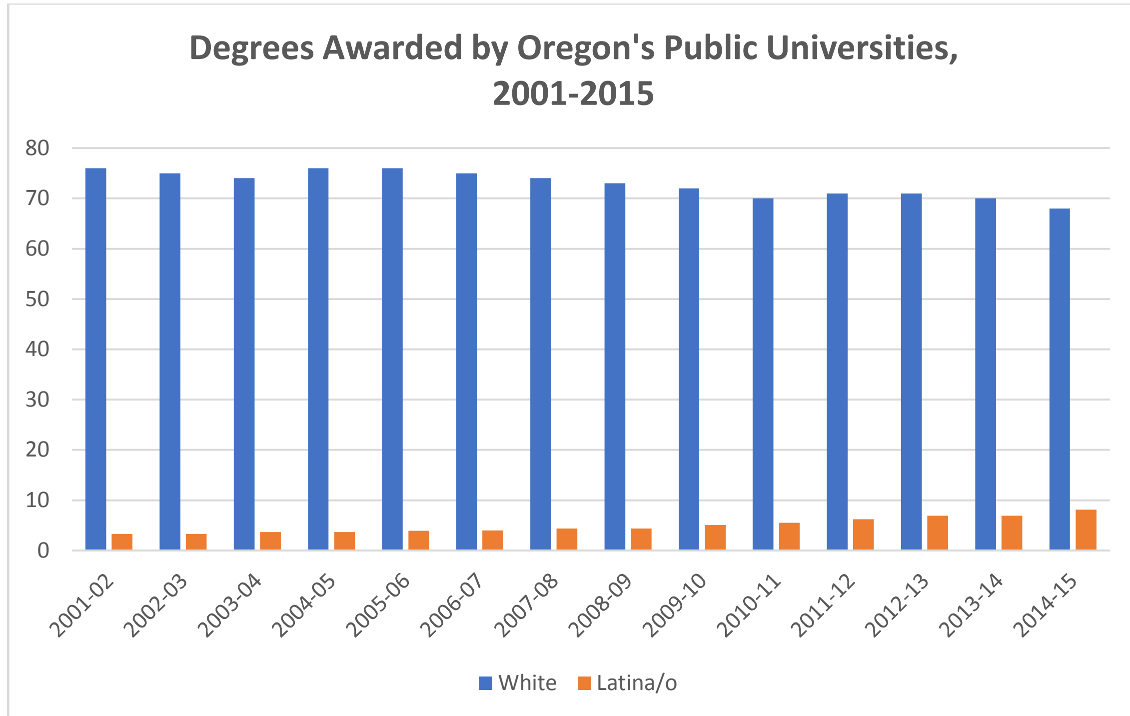
Graduation Details

Student Group	2014-15 Graduation Rates	
	Four-year Cohort	Five-year Cohort
All Students	73.8	76.5
Economically Disadvantaged	66.4	70.0
English Learners[1]	51.2	61.2
Students with Disabilities	52.7	58.4
Underserved Races/Ethnicities	65.9	70.0
American Indian/Alaska Native	55.0	59.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	63.2	72.4
Black/African American	62.6	67.2
Hispanic/Latino	67.4	71.4
Asian	87.5	90.0
White	76.0	78.1
Multi-Racial[2]	72.7	74.1

Source: Oregon Statewide Report Card, 2015-2016

In addition, the Oregon Educator Equity Report (2016), in 2015, only 8.1% of degrees awarded by Oregon's Public Universities were for Latina/o students (Table 10), despite the fact that Latinas/os made up 11.7% of the state population.

Table 10: Degrees Awarded by Oregon's Public Universities, 1998 to 2008



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2016.

Offering Latina/o students the opportunity to attend and graduate from college is essential and represents the only way to close this huge discrepancy in income levels and remedy the racial disparities that exist among these two groups. Oregon's Superintendent of Public Instruction, Rob Saxton, shared his strong equity focus in his "Education Update" (2012):

> Our students of color, students in poverty, students with special needs, and English Language Learners are not seeing the same levels of success as their peers. The results for our English Language Learners this year were particularly

concerning and raise real questions about how well we are serving these students…Only 50% of our Hispanic students read at grade level by 3rd grade…Reaching true equity in our state does not simply mean ensuring all kids have access to the same opportunities or the same level of education. Equity is not about access, it's about outcomes. If we are going to close the achievement gap in our state, we will have to do more to ensure equitable outcomes and that means really tackling how we provide services to kids and the systems we build to support student learning (p. 1).

In this statement, Saxton argues that we must pay attention to providing equal access, while simultaneously finding strong leaders (Carter, 2000; Lyman & Villani, 2004) who are capable of building those systems. These leaders must be able to advocate for underserved children so our students can achieve at high levels—levels comparative to that of White students.

Statement of the Research Problem

Equity is an important factor to consider when we think about school leaders and our students. Given the demographics of our teaching and leadership work force, our most successful approach may be to train all school leaders on how to serve all student races, cultures, and ethnicities. We must examine effective practices of school leaders who have been able to successfully reduce educational disparities. In addition, we must analyze tools for success in this endeavor that are culturally relevant: for example, culturally appropriate curriculum and materials, culturally relevant activities in our schools, and leadership training that emphasizes different cultural backgrounds. We need

to acknowledge the urgent and persistent need for change in school leadership, and take meaningful action to change the educational experience for minority children in the American educational system. There is little existing research about effective high school leadership for successful Latina/o students; thus it is imperative to perform comprehensive studies researching this topic in more depth.

Significance of the Research Problem

After so many years of trying to make education equitable in the US for all students, the gaps between minority and White students still exist. According to Sanchez et al. (2008), "despite the Brown [v. Board] decision and sustained efforts toward improvement, the gaps in educational attainment among racial and ethnic groups, in comparison to their White counterparts, are still present" (p. 2). This is the reason why school leaders need to work together and contribute to end these educational disparities.

Whereas some are convinced that the solution is to prepare only minority-identified school leaders, others maintain that the only way to address educational disparities is to train all leaders to be aware and take action (The Wallace Foundation, 2007). According to Sanchez et al. (2008), "Effective minority school leaders can greatly impact and contribute to school improvement and successful learning for all students. However, a critical first step is the preparation of more principal candidates who represent and reflect the culture and diversity of our schools" (p. 1). In terms of leader preparation, university programs play one of the most important roles in training future school leaders. Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, and Koschoreck (2002) argue:

> Leadership programs have failed to adequately prepare leaders who will be successful in
> serving the increasing numbers of poor and minority children. Thus, two questions are critical to a re-examination of our leadership preparation programs and their relevancy for today's society: Are current leadership programs theorized, designed, and intended to prepare leaders who will work toward successful outcomes for all children, including low income children of color? Or do these programs continue to emphasize models of leadership which rely more on traditional theories of educational leadership and fail to provide theories (social justice, spiritually based, cultural frameworks), practical application, and experiences that leaders will need in order to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of all children? (as cited in Tillman, 2013, p. 152).

Presentation of Research Methods and Research Questions

methods. This study used a qualitative approach to investigate the characteristics of Leaders of Color and White Leaders in successful schools with large populations of Latina/o students. For years, American education has been tailored to fulfill the needs of White students, asking minority students to simply adapt to their new educational reality. This study investigated the characteristics of high school leaders who have been most successful at ensuring Latina/o student achievement, and determine how those leaders built a framework for success and social justice. This qualitative study included the method of semi-structured interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) with ten high school leaders who have been successful in their work promoting Latina/o student achievement.

research questions. This study was guided by a central research question: What are the characteristics of secondary school leaders successful with Latina/o students? This study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of secondary school leaders successful with Latina/o students?
2. In what ways are principals enacting social justice in schools that have had successful Latina/o student achievement?

Definition of Key Concepts

Cultural proficiency is a description of a trait that a person must possess in order to address the differences among varied groups of students. We can claim to be culturally proficient by "honoring the differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups" (Lindsey et al., 2005, p. xviii).

Cultural responsiveness involves using prior experiences, cultural knowledge, frames of references, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students and teachers to make learning and teaching encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the vantage of the students (Gay, 2010).

Culturally responsive leadership in schools refers to those skills demonstrated by educational leaders to influence others to know how to respond to the needs of culturally diverse groups of students.

Effective leadership is an example of a type of activity engaged in by people who administer schools. We must accept the need for change in order to adequately serve our

Latino students across the United States. According to Peterson (2012), “School leadership must adopt effective practices that result in closing the achievement gap for Latino and ELL youth. Because school leadership makes a substantial difference in the performance of Latino and ELL students, it is critical that leadership practices be examined” (p. 16).

Equity is a description of fairness and justice in how people are treated. This is a main concept that I am going to use in my research. Latino and/or students of color must be part of an educational system that provides equity. In Nieto and Bode’s (2012) view, “equity is the process; equality is the result…Equity goes beyond equality: It means that all students must be given the real possibility of an equality of outcomes” (p. 9). Closing the academic achievement gap would represent a successful result of the actions that schools districts are taking to provide equity to their entire population of students.

ELL (English Language Learner) is an active learner of the English language, whose first language is not English. ELLs may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in America to describe K–12 students.

ESL (English as a Second Language) formerly used to designate ELL students; this term increasingly refers to a program of *instruction* designed to support ELL students.

First Language is one’s native language or mother tongue, often abbreviated as L1.

Human Spirit is a component of human philosophy and knowledge about the spiritual essence of the humans.

Latina/o students are an example of a sub-group of the American student population, who are defined by their culture, language, and ethnicity. I am going to focus on Latina/o students in my research. According to Passel and Taylor (2009), "the word Latino describes anybody who self identifies as Hispanic or Latino and traces their descent from a country or people who identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino, generally from Spanish-speaking nations of Latin America, Portugal, Brazil, or Spain" (p. 3). For this research project, I will refer to these people interchangeably as Latinas/os or Hispanics.

LEP (Limited English Proficiency) is a term employed by the U.S. Department of Education to refer to ELLs who lack sufficient mastery of English to meet state standards and excel in an English-language classroom. English Language Learner (ELL) is increasingly being used to describe this population, since it highlights the learning process rather than suggesting a deficiency.

Metalinguistic Awareness means understanding *what* language does rather than just *how* to use it.

Minority is a term used to describe a group of people. Nieto and Bode (2012) maintain that "the term people of color encompasses those who have been labeled *minority,* that is, American Indians, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans, and it emerged from these communities themselves. It also implies important connections among the groups and underlines some common experiences in the United States" (p. 10). Although I agree with Nieto's reference in describing people of color as minorities, I still insist on using the term minority students for my study. However, I will use this term

in reference to children with language and culture backgrounds different than the dominant White culture.

School Leaders are the people who help create, facilitate and embrace the vision and mission of every school. In Collins and Porras's view (1997), leaders "displayed high levels of persistence, overcame significant obstacles, attracted dedicated people, influenced groups of people toward the achievement of goals, and played key roles in guiding their companies through crucial episodes in their history" (p. 3).

Second Language is learned in addition to the first language, often abbreviated as L2.

Social Justice is a term that refers to the distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges within a society. According to Sensoy and DiAngelo (2009), this term "actively address[es] the dynamics of oppression, privilege, and isms, [and recognizes] that society is the product of historically rooted, institutionally sanctioned stratification along socially constructed group lines that include race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and ability [among others] (p.350).

White Privilege is defined by Rothenberg (2008) as "the other side of racism. Unless we name it, we are in danger of wallowing in guilt or moral outrage with no idea of how to move beyond them. It is often easier to deplore racism and its effects than to take responsibility for the privileges some of us receive as a result of it… Once we understand how White privilege operates, we can begin addressing it on an individual and institutional basis" (p. 1).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Although it has been over a century since Douglas (1886) stated, "where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe" (p. 1), we are still engaged in a struggle for equality. This struggle is manifested by the gap between White and Latina/o student achievement—hindering full participation in our democracy by denying all students equitable access to education. To address these challenges, many researchers over the last several decades have assessed the impact of diverse theories of learning on student outcomes.

In Chapter 1, I outlined the problem of educational disparities between White and Latina/o students and presented the methods and research questions of this study. In Chapter 2, I will analyze the most relevant theoretical frameworks associated with effective school leadership among Latina/o and White students, reviewing the literature I will apply to this research. Specifically, I will explore four theories of leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Burns, 1978; Bell, 1980) that inform the practices of leaders reducing educational disparities: 1) organizational leadership, 2) transformational leadership theory, 3) critical race theory, and 4) education policy and politics. It is important to examine different theoretical frameworks as these theories will help us better understand how culturally responsive school leadership affects Latina/o student success.

Organizational Leadership Theory

Organizations are continuously evolving and changing, which makes them difficult to lead, manage, and understand. One theoretical framework that applies to culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o students is Bolman and Deal's (2008) "Four Framework Approach to Leadership" (p.32). According to Bolman and Deal, "because organizations are complex, surprising, deceptive, and ambiguous, they are formidably difficult to comprehend and manage" (p. 41).

Bolman and Deal identify key characteristics of organizations, and the resulting challenges that leaders may face:

1. Organizations are complex—they are populated by people whose behavior is notoriously hard to predict.
2. Organizations are surprising. What you expect is often not what you get.
3. Organizations are deceptive. They can easily camouflage mistakes and surprises.
4. Organizations are ambiguous (p. 41).

Complexity, unpredictability, and deception generate rampant ambiguity, a dense fog that shrouds what happens from day to day (Bolman & Deal, 2008, pp. 30-32). Examining these characteristics through an educational lens, we can clearly see giving equal access to education to all children as one of the major challenges in leading school organizations. Bolman and Deal's framework approach to leadership looks at organizations from several points of view, including from Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic perspectives—helping managers and leaders respond to the

complexity, deceptiveness, ambiguity, and political pressure that many organizations are confronted with every day.

In terms of developing culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o students, the political lens of Bolman and Deal's (2008) framework can best explain how leaders can understand educational disparities in our schools. According to Bolman and Deal, five ideas summarize the political framework:

1. Organizations are coalitions of assorted individuals and interest groups;
2. Coalition members have enduring differences in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality;
3. Most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources—who gets what;
4. Scarce resources and enduring differences put conflict at the center of day-to-day
   dynamics and make power the most important asset;
5. Goals and decisions emerge from bargaining and negotiating among competing
   stakeholders, jockeying for their own interests (p. 194–195).

When examining the continued dearth of leaders who understand how to successfully work with Latina/o students in our schools, all five ideas contribute to the absence of culturally responsive leadership in our schools. Many groups of White teachers or administrators are the ones who are deciding the future of our education system. Some members of those groups are not interested in nurturing and promoting non-dominant culture leaders for our children (Henze, 2002; Tatum, 1999).

Bolman and Deal also explain the role of the political frame:

> [The political frame] views authority as only one among many forms of power. It recognizes the importance of individual (and group) needs but emphasizes that scarce resources and incompatible preferences cause needs to collide. The political issue is how competing groups articulate preferences and mobilize power to get what they want (p. 201).

In essence, Bolman and Deal are stating that many groups with power would rather compete for their own agendas than privilege the needs of Latina/o students and the resources they require for success.

The unique characteristics of school organizations make it truly crucial to analyze and transcend challenges in organizational behavior, transformational leadership, and the critical race lenses. Although these theories were initially conceived of from a business perspective, these theories inform school leaders who are negotiating the unique challenges that exist in how schools are organized and structured.

Transformational Leadership

Leithwood (1992), Burns (1978), and Bass (2010) were among the first researchers to talk about the idea of transformational leadership (TL) within organizations. However, while this was initially a business management theory, in the last two decades, transformational leadership has been increasingly applied to understanding and improving school leadership.

Leithwood defined transformational leadership as the "continuous pursuit of three fundamental goals: 1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative,

professional school culture; 2) fostering teacher development; and 3) helping them solve problems together more effectively" (p. 9). The transformational leadership theory is about having a clear vision and goals, with which to positively impact the culture of your organization and its members. A good transformational leader will take the organization to the next level, transforming the members who are willing to change and improve their practices.

Bass (2010) includes additional components of transformational leadership, specifically a culture of care. Bass describes transformational leadership as thus: "Transformational Leadership refers to the Leader moving the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual simulation, or individualized consideration" (p. 11). Essentially, Bass is saying that a transformational leader is the one who influences and inspires his staff members beyond their own individual interests. The influence is big enough to create a culture of caring about the organization as a whole.

When examining culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o student success, the goal is to influence and transform the thinking of school leaders—to prepare them for motivating their teachers and staff with a clear vision about how to give Latina/o students equal access to education. Marion and Gonzales (2014) state, "TL proponents like Wagner and his colleagues suggest that leaders need to engage in serious and deep reflection if they want to be able to convincingly persuade others to adopt and follow their vision" (p. 164). Marion and Gonzales are insisting that deep reflection within the organization is crucial if a school leader is to convince staff members to follow their

prescriptions for success. According to Marion and Gonzales (2014), leaders "are the salespersons, the preachers, the motivational speakers, the organizational cheerleaders, or the individuals who get others excited, committed, and motivated" (p. 169). Transformational Leaders must not only motivate and inspire their staff members, but also coach them and model a shared vision that inspires the work. According to Bass (2010), "individualized consideration is displayed when leaders pay attention to the developmental needs of followers and support and coach the development of their followers" (p. 11).

Being able to transform schools that are not offering adequate educational resources to Latina/o students is extremely difficult—requiring a transformational leader who can inspire, challenge, and envision a "new" future for its organization. At the same time, it requires a leader who can consistently model his or her beliefs.

The theory of transformational leadership is not without detractors. According to Hall, Johnson, Wysocki, and Kepner (2012), one of the weaknesses of this theory is that it seems "too broad, treat[ing] leadership more as a personality trait than as a learned behavior, and ha[s] the potential for abusing power" (p. 2). When thinking about transformational leaders, several challenging questions emerge for applying this theory to school settings. For example, what if the leader cannot wait for consensus and he or she needs to act immediately?; what if people on the staff are more capable of achieving an apparent goal and are actually impatient in waiting for others to "catch up" or "get it"?; what are the implications for minority students and recent immigrants who don't have the time for those who teach our children and lead our schools to "catch up"?

While many insist that school leaders should focus on instructional leadership, which focuses on improving the classroom practices of teachers as the direction for the school (Leithwood, 1992), TL draws attention to a broader array of problematic cultural school and classroom scenarios that will need to be changed if learning conditions are to improve.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latina/o Critical Race Theory

CRT theory was developed in the late 1980s as a critique to racism in the law and society (Bell, 1995). Years later it was applied to education (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Lerma, Linick, Warren, and Parker (2013), define CRT as a "framework, or set of basic perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural, cultural, and interpersonal aspects of education that maintain the subordination of student of color" (as cited in Tillman & Scheurich, 2013, p. 36). In this statement, the authors contend that this framework offers an opportunity for our society to examine the social imbalance in our country.

As stated by McLaren (2003), the objective of Critical Race Theory is "to empower the powerless and transform existing social inequalities and injustices" (p. 186). By this, McLaren means that Critical Race Theory (CRT) is about changing and transforming society as a whole, rather than changing only specific subgroups in our society.

After a few years of researchers applying CRT to education, scholars saw the necessity to develop a more direct theory specific to the Latina/o ethnicity in education to examine how theory, policy, and practices affect underserved Latina/o students and their

families in the U.S. (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). According to Yosso (2005), Latina/o Critical Race Theory helps us as a framework to examine “race and racism explicitly and implicitly on the educational structures, processes, and discourses that affect People of Color generally and Latinas/os specifically” (p.99). Solorzano & Bernal (2001) postulate five themes that form the basic perspectives in the research and pedagogy of Latina/o Critical Race Theory framework:

1. The Centrality of Race and Racism, specifically at the intersection of race, class, gender, language, and immigration status, which will provide answers to further the scholarship of class and racial scholarship specific to the resistance of Latinas/os.
2. The Challenge of Dominant Ideology, which claim objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity. This includes a challenge to the deficit framework of Latinas/os used to explain/camouflage – for self-interest of power, and privilege of dominant groups in U.S. society- the educational inequities in the systems of Latina/o students.
3. The Commitment to Social Justice, through a framework committed to a liberatory or transformative response (transformational resistance) to oppression through the empowering of underrepresented minority groups recognizing that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, yet have the potential to emancipate and empower communities.
4. The Centrality of Experiential Knowledge, affirming that students of color (and their families) are legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding,

analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination. This theme draws explicitly on the lived experiences of the students (and their families) by including storytelling, family history, biographies, scenarios, parables, testimonies, cuentos, consejos, chronicles, and narratives.

5. The Interdisciplinary Perspective, by placing both a historical and a contemporary context to empirically ground discussions of school resistance (p. 312).

I will apply the lens of Critical Race Theory to examine school leadership and educational disparities for Latina/o students in the United States.

For many years, education has been approached with a focus on dominant White culture. Only recently have educators started talking about culturally responsive education for all children. Racial consciousness is imperative in order to understand how to be a culturally responsive leader. According to Barnes (1989):

> Minority perspectives make explicit the need for fundamental change in the ways we think and construct knowledge…Exposing how minority cultural viewpoints differ from White cultural viewpoints requires a delineation of the complex set of social interactions through which minority consciousness has developed. Distinguishing the consciousness of racial minorities requires acknowledgement of the feelings and intangible modes of perception unique to those who have historically been social, structurally, and intellectually underserved in the United States. (p.1864)

Barnes is explaining that this is a complex issue, in which people must acknowledge the misperceptions of historically underserved populations in the United States. There is an urgent need to work towards a solution to this issue that affects multiple areas of our educational system. In the past century, leadership, curriculum, assessments, materials, instruction, and pedagogy have been tailored to match the needs of White students. With further progress to be made, we could, for example, create materials based on our children's backgrounds—and not just adopt materials that are tailored to only the White population. We could start being culturally sensitive to the backgrounds of all our children.

School leaders in the United States are the ones who have the potential to make the changes to support the success of minority students. According to Tillman and Scheurich (2013), "CRT offers one framework that addresses the politics of education by centering its focus in unison with other analysis, such as gender and social class, to help educational leaders become more aware of how important race and racism is regarding its impact on students" (p. 39). Essentially, Tillman and Scheurich are saying that the awareness of school leaders of racism in their schools is the first step towards equity in education.

Looking at our educational system through the lenses of the Critical Race Theory, Tate (1997) states that racism is an innate facet of our society:

> CRT recognizes that racism is endemic in U.S. society, deeply ingrained legally, culturally, and even psychologically. Thus, the question for the education scholar employing CRT is not so much whether or how racial discrimination can be

> eradicated while maintaining the vitality of other interests linked to the status quo such as federalism, traditional values, standards, established property interests, and choice. Rather, the new question would ask how these traditional interests and cultural artifacts serve as vehicles to limit and bind the educational opportunities of students of color (p. 234).

In this statement, Tate argues that the idea is not only to diminish racism, but to also understand how to assist those within the dominant culture in understanding how they perpetuate racist systems, policies and practices; only then can those from the dominant culture help to transform educational disparities.

For many decades, the White culture has been considered the "normal culture", which is supposed to show neutrality and objectivity in education. While inequities exist in our school system, I also believe the problem lies in our lack of ability to change the society. I insist that the underlying conditions of White privilege are endemic to our schools, businesses, and society and being so ingrained within our society it will take years or decades to get the desired equality in education. Generations of students and educators have lived under the impression that the only way to succeed in this culture was to follow what the White cultural norms and privileged class tells you to follow. Today, White educators have the opportunity to be more racially sensitive and pay more attention to how education has been developed for the advantages of the privileged White dominant culture.

Thinking about effective leadership for minority students using the Critical Race Theory lens and more specifically the Latina/o Critical Race Theory, I appreciate this

theoretical evaluation of the foundations of social inequalities and subsequent disparities for our Latina/o students. Deeply examining the issue of racism is what makes CRT significant and important for our future in education.

School Leadership is a multi-faceted role in an extremely complex system, surrounded by a multitude of daily tasks that must be overseen. School leaders must be able to understand, participate, and make decisions. At the same time, they have many constraints such as union contracts, NCLB law (No Child Left Behind), state laws, School Board regulations, and reduced resources in schools that make their work more difficult. Adding to this challenge is the daunting task of leading schools that are made up of large numbers of minority students, which greatly increases the difficulty. Integrating a thoughtful approach for these students—including considerations of their lives, their cultures, and their families—into everyday routines is challenging but necessary. Are current leadership programs in Universities preparing our future leaders to perform the above duties and also to be culturally competent? According to Skrla et al. (2002), two questions are critical to a reexamination of our leaders:

1. Are current leadership programs theorized, designed, and intended to prepare leaders who will work toward successful outcomes for all children, including low-income children and children of color?
2. Or do these programs continue to emphasize models of leadership that rely more on traditional theories, failing to provide theories (social justice, spiritually based, cultural frameworks), practical application, and experiences that leaders will need

in order to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of all children? (as cited in Tillman & Scheurich, 2013, p. 152).

Culturally Responsive Leadership

Leaders need to be open to change, while still understanding that change is challenging. Transforming organizations and reducing educational disparities in schools is extremely difficult.

Unless we create a racial consciousness among our school leaders, there is no quick fix to mend the disastrous achievement disparity stemming from a lack of cultural competence observed in our schools in Oregon. To be culturally proficient is a life-long process, in which people need to both be open to learn, and to learn from criticism in a constructive way. According to Leithwood et al. (2004), there is substantial research that examines good school and classroom conditions for minority students:

> This evidence suggests, for example, that economically disadvantaged primary students will learn more in relatively small schools (250 to 300 students) and classrooms (15 to 20 students) when their teachers engage in active forms of instruction focused on rich, meaningful, curricular content using heterogeneous student grouping strategies (p. 11).

Students need educators who are culturally proficient in order to learn under the conditions they need to succeed. It is the responsibility of the administration and teachers to work towards cultural proficiency, and to use culturally responsive practices. The

research discussed confirms that both teachers and leaders can be inspired to reach out to and help their students. Every effort must be made to do so.

Education Policy and Politics

The public education system in the United States is a complex social, cultural, political, and economic institution that is continuously changing—influenced by which political party is in power, the political agenda/will in our nation, and legal decisions being made about education. Segregation of students in schools has been a longstanding issue in our educational system in the United States. Many legal decisions over the last three centuries, from Horace Mann's efforts to desegregate schools in Massachusetts in the 1700s to Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, directed school districts in the United States with segregated schools to desegregate and stop racial discrimination in all programs receiving federal aid. Yet it has taken many years for districts to fully end *de facto* segregation of students on the basis of race. In practically all cases, this has been the segregation of Black, Latina/o, and White students.

One example is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, which proposed the following (Lee, 2006):

> [It] embodies President Bush's promise to end the "soft racism over low expectations" by closing racial achievement gaps and bringing all students to proficiency within the next eight years…Schools are required, under threat of strict sanctions, to raise achievement each year in math and reading and to eliminate the achievement gap by race, ethnicity, language, and special education status (p. 5).

Basically, Lee is saying that NCLB reaffirms the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), and that we must continue assisting the diverse populations of students in our schools to provide them with an equal opportunity for achievement and success.

Underperforming schools were awarded extra funding through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to accomplish all the requirements mandated by this law. However, the U.S. government and education leaders saw neither a significant rise in achievement nor closure of the racial achievement gap with any consistency. Decades later, the Department of Education gave states an option to apply for flexibility waivers, which provided an opportunity to create state-specific plans. In 2012, Oregon applied and received approval for a state flexibility waiver. One of the major objectives of Oregon's state plan is the improvement of support and evaluation for principals and teachers. School leaders will have the opportunity to seek mentorships and improve their leadership strategies while working with minority students to close the achievement gap.

Although the 1965 implementation of the ESEA Act guaranteed theoretical equal access to high quality education for minority students, the results have not been consistently successful. ESEA and NCLB have not provided adequate support to our teachers and students. Now is the time to examine the state of the American education system, and consider how we can train the right school leaders to serve all our children.

According to Peterson (2012), "as the student population in public schools in the United States becomes more increasingly diverse, the imperative to create schools that serve all youth becomes more urgent" (p. 1). Peterson is reaffirming that all stakeholders

at the federal, state, and local level need to ensure equal access to education for all children. City local School Board officials, for example, are the ones who can help make a difference by hiring properly trained school leaders for their students. Along the same lines, as our nation becomes increasingly diverse racially, ethnically, and linguistically, School Board officials should recognize the same trends in our student populations and the need for effective leaders from all ethnic backgrounds who can implement opportunities for these students to succeed.

This approach is based on the idea to prepare and create the right environment for our students to think critically, work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and possess social reasoning and social learning skills, resulting in a shared understanding of cultural differences. According to Zeichner (1995):

> In order for teacher and school leaders to implement the principle of cultural congruence, they must have knowledge of and respect for the various cultural traditions and language of students…Anything less ensures that many ethnic and language minority students will continue to fall short of meeting academic standards…They also need to become more aware of how their own cultural biases may influence their judgments about student performance and obstruct their students' ability to learn (p. 5).

In other words, classrooms and schools need to be culturally similar to the communities where students come from. This is why teachers and school leaders need to understand and embed the culture of its students.

In my consideration of Education Policy and Politics, I will analyze the effectiveness of culturally responsive leadership in high schools through the lenses of the theoretical frameworks of Competing Values, Theodore Lowis' Redistributive Policy, and Institutional Choice.

Competing Values

We frequently find ideas, beliefs, and values embedded in people's decisions about American educational policies. Instead of deciding what is best for our children, some decision makers enact policy based on their beliefs and agendas, without considering others. Fowler (2013) shared that "according to utilitarian philosophy, all human behavior is determined by self-interest; therefore, the only values operative in the policy environment are those that directly advance the interests of particular individuals or groups" (p. 92).

During the last 40 years, educational research has been criticized by utilitarian philosophy, contending that in reality, what drives human behavior is in fact a combination of self-interest and other values like religion and ideologies (Jackson & Kingdom, 1992; McDonnell, 1991; Perry, 2009).

Examining the problem of addressing student diversity in practice, the three primary contested values are equity, equality, and educational funding. Policy makers should have a deep knowledge of what these three competing values are before making any decisions about educational policies. Instead, we can conclude that many policymakers act according to their own beliefs and self-interests, making it more

difficult to close the achievement gap between minority and White students across the United States.

Policy stakeholders who utilize this framework often have strong beliefs concerning one or two values, which makes it difficult for them to get to a consensus on educational issues. They battle through debates with an agenda of elevating their values to the top priorities. How can we trust the future of our schools to people who view education through the limited lens of their own values, without considering others' points of view? When considering equity, equality, and educational funding values, we cannot accept policymakers prioritizing one of these values over the others.

Lowis' Redistributive Policy

Fowler (2013), defines Redistributive Policy as "one that shifts resources for power from one social group to another. By doing so, the government "seek(s) to control conduct…indirectly by altering the conditions of conduct or manipulating the environment" (p. 219). According to Fowler, the Redistributive Policy can influence the systems from the "economic resources and power shift" perspectives.

When examining the question of minority education practices through Lowis' Redistributive Policy lens, one can see that policymakers often intend to manipulate the allocation of wealth, property, and personal rights among the dominant social classes or racial groups, leaving minority students and their schools with less access to these resources.

For the last 40 years, the problem of equity and adequate leadership for schools with minority students has reached the national agenda, yet stakeholders have not arrived

at a unified approach to identifying a solution. Key actors—individuals with high influence—are the ones who can make a difference, if they concentrate on the main issue of creating equal opportunities for all children. Economic resources and power are important resources to allocate when deciding who is going to appropriately lead schools with large populations of minority students.

Using Lowis' Redistributive Policy to analyze effective leadership in schools does not provide a significant benefit in addressing the issue of minority education. Simply confronting a revolving system in which politicians shift their decisions about what is best with the changing political tides, creating an inconsistent system is not adequate. Our students—and especially our minority students—need to have access to consistent leadership and financial support at their schools, so they can have success.

Institutional choice

According to Clune (1987), "The theory of institutional choice can be summarized as follows: Policy decisions aimed at substantive goals frequently also involve a choice of decision maker" (p. 117). The question is, who is making those decisions? What type of decisions? Do they have enough knowledge to make those decisions? According to Kirp (as cited in Fowler, 2013), when legislators and policymakers decided to use the Institutional Framework, he argues that it is necessary "to examine the extent to which their organizations reflect five types of institutions: (1) bureaucracy, (2) legalization, (3) professionalism, (4) politics, and (5) the market. He suggests that few systems are purely of one form, but that most incorporate elements of all five" (p. 301).

Applying Kirp's understanding of this framework to the analysis of minority education in practice, we can conclude that when picking effective leadership in high schools, policymakers and educational authorities are turning to several institutions when making decisions (as cited in Fowler, 2013, p. 301). The existing lack of effective leadership for underserved students—as well as the dearth of opportunities for minorities to become school leaders—is due to the bureaucracy and the political institutions that stymie the educational field. After so many years of trying to resolve this issue, it is still difficult to find well-qualified school leaders who can excel in schools with low socio-economic and highly diverse student populations.

In the last decade, we have seen more universities offer comprehensive programs that include the examination of diversity and equity issues. School leadership in the 21st century should include a focus on institutional training of minority and minority-focused leaders, which will give our underserved children an opportunity to see role models in their schools who look like them, connecting with leaders who can empathize their struggles and are equipped to help.

If policymakers and legislators can concentrate on supporting the institutional professional development of school leaders with an eye to addressing inequality in minority student education, then we can implement effective leadership for minority students—creating a system that is equitable for all students, no matter their social status or race. The challenge is how to avoid spending time on bureaucracy and politics so we can concentrate on our children.

Throughout the history of Education in the United States, Federal and State Courts have been instrumental about trying to provide support for quality education of underserved students. Along the same lines, in the last three decades we have seen substantial research (Crawford, 2004; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Nieto, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 1997) concerning the importance of providing equal access to education for our minority students.

When it comes to the topic of equal education for all our children, most of us will readily agree that it is imperative. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is when we address the question of how, after so many years of studies, research, and laws, we still face such a disproportionately wide educational gap between the achievements of White and minority students. Whereas some are convinced that we must address this issue, others maintain that children coming from different countries or backgrounds should adapt to the White centric education system and that the United States should not spend extra funds on them.

Along the same lines, one of the big questions is how we can help school leaders change their thinking to focus more on harnessing professional institutions to create opportunities to serve our underserved students better. Perhaps an answer is educational stakeholders advocating for extra funding, in order to reduce the educational disparities in our schools by providing the appropriate professional development and education to those school leaders who are able and specialized to serve this population of underserved children.

As Rob Saxton, former Oregon Superintendent of Education, shared with us in his Education Update (2012), "If we are going to close the achievement gap in our state, we will have to provide services to kids and the systems we build to support student learning" (p.1). With a sizable gap between Latina/o and White students, it is urgent for us to take more effective action than we have in the past.

Despite the fact that our Latina/o population has been dramatically growing for the last 50 years and is adding more minority students to our schools, the American education system has always concentrated primarily on the needs of White students. The growing inequality gap between minority students and White students has required educational stakeholders to take a variety of actions—attempting to create systems that close the gap between the two groups. Yet sadly, these efforts have been met with little or no change in inequality.

The review of Literature covered four areas: organizational leadership, transformational leadership, critical race theory and educational policy. These encompassed how they played an important role when we looked at the effective characteristics of High school principals with successful Latina/o students. Using these frameworks, I can summarize my theoretical framework in the figure 1 below:

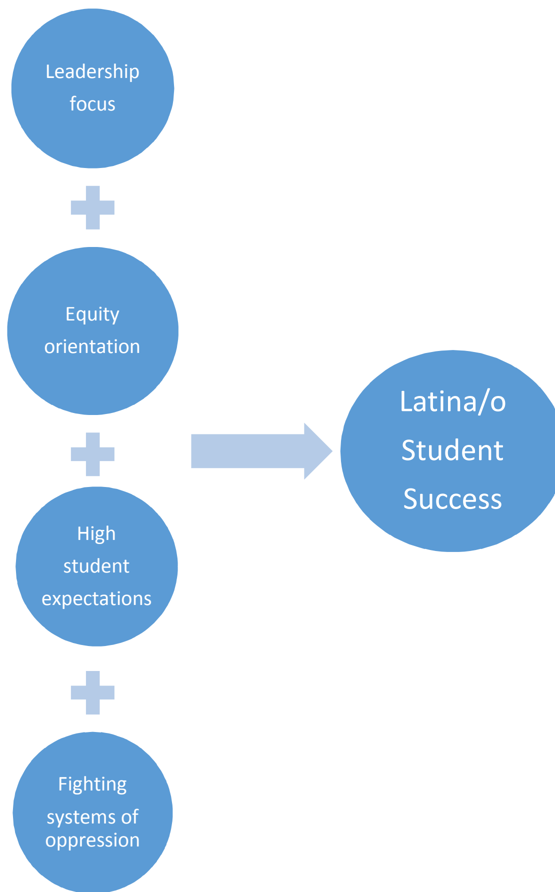


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

The education system is continually transforming due to the changing behaviors of its stakeholders. Examining this issue from these enriching perspectives makes it imperative to understand that the real problem is the difficulty in changing our social roots of society—in order to educational equity for all students in the United States.

I also examined the issue of culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o students through the educational policies and politics at work in the public education system. The lack of commitment and collaboration between politicians and educational stakeholders makes this issue impossible to solve. While some are in favor of more

opportunities and resources for minority students, others argue that students should be adapting to current American public school offerings without any extra support

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Victor Vergara and Ryan Richardson, Research Partners

Collaborative Dissertation Using a Common Data Set

Approved 1-15-13 GSE Doctoral Program Council

Introduction

In Chapter 1, I examined the background of the problem of educational disparities between White and Latina/o students, and I presented the methods and research questions of this study. In Chapter 2, I analyzed the theoretical framework related to effective school leadership among Latina/o and White students, and I reviewed the literature relevant to this study. In Chapter 3, I will explain the purpose of this study, which is to explore the characteristics of high school leaders who have been successful in promoting Latina/o student education. I will also describe the methods I employed to investigate and analyze the characteristics of these leaders. This chapter is organized into six sections: (a) research methods, (b) participants, (c) procedures, (d) instruments and measures, (e) role of researcher, and (f) data collection and analysis.

Research Methods

This study is a multiple-case, phenomenological qualitative study that investigates the phenomenon of how Leaders of Color and White Leaders can promote Latina/o high school student success (Creswell, 2013). This study purposively chose 10 successful school principals (Maxwell, 2012). Successful schools were identified as those with student four-year graduation rates higher than the state average of 72% and less than a

9.3% gap between their Latina/o graduation rates and White graduation rates, which is the average gap in Oregon for the 2014–2015 graduation year (ODE, 2015).

The essential questions of my research were as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of high school leaders who are successful with Latina/o students?

2. In what ways are these principals enacting social justice in schools successful with Latina/o students?

This study is a qualitative study that investigated the characteristics of Leaders of Color and White Leaders in successful high schools with a large population of Latina/o students. In this study, I compared data from Leaders of Color and their White colleagues using note writing (Saldaña, 2016), and subsequently used inductive coding to find themes, an approach that lends itself towards qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Qualitative research is “the kind of research that produces findings arrived from real-world settings where the phenomenon of interest unfold naturally" (Patton, 2002, p. 39). In this study, my phenomenon of interest was to explore and understand the characteristics of school leaders successful with Latina/o students and how they enact social justice in their schools, phenomena which are conducive to qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). Examining participants’ responses to questions regarding how they engage in a complex system within our world, and identifying themes common among the participants, fitting for a qualitative research study (Creswell, 2009).

Examining culturally responsive leadership for Latina/o students in high schools (Cummins, 2005; Gay, 2010) set into action an agenda for reform that impacts my life as

a research participant, the schools where I work, and the lives of Latina/o children in the State of Oregon. As a researcher who is deeply engrossed in the work of social justice leadership, I am what Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011) call a passionate participant. I will address researcher bias later in this paper.

For years, the world of education has been subjectively articulated and shaped by biased stakeholders. White educational leaders have traditionally tailoring education to White students, asking minority students to simply adapt to an unequitable environment (Barnes, 1989; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The findings of this study may provide evidence for improving this unbalanced approach. To recap, the purpose of the study was to examine the characteristics of high school leaders successful with Latina/o students by exploring these research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of high school leaders successful with Latina/o students?
2. In what ways are these principals enacting social justice in schools successful with Latina/o students?

Participants

My research partner Ryan Richardson and I used purposive selection to identify 10 high school principals who have been successful with Latina/o students (Maxwell, 2012). There are a variety of ways to identify success in schools (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). As some have argued, there is too high of an importance on standardized test scores and rigorous content (Nieto, 2009). Conversely for this research study, we identified successful school leaders as those who lead schools

with graduation rates higher than state averages and where the achievement gap that exists between Latina/o students and their White peers is nearly eliminated. While looking at achievement gaps across all traditionally underserved groups is important, it is estimated that the Latina/o population in the US will more than double in the next 50 years; thus, serving this critical population is imperative for the future of our nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Currently the State of Oregon's gap between White graduates and Latina/o graduates is at 9.3%. (ODE). We have found 10 leaders whose schools have less than a 3% gap in graduation rates between their White and Latina/o students. In several cases, the Latina/o students are outperforming their White peers. We also considered the length of the tenure of the principals at the selected schools. Studies indicate that it takes three to five years to make a significant impact on a school culture (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; The Wallace Foundation, 2007). Thus, to show examples of functional performance, we chose principals who have led their schools for a minimum of three years.

Table 11 presents the demographic data of participants. All participants are 18 years or older, hold an administrator license, and have obtained tenure as school administrators. To protect the identity of the participants, all data is presented in a range. Graduation rates range from 72%-98% and all schools were above the state average and have less than a 3% gap between graduation rates of the Latina/o and White students.

Table 11: Demographic Data of Participants

School Demographic Information				
Area	**Total**	**% Latina/o**	**Graduation Rate**	**Graduation Gap**
R	<400	20-50%	80-90%	No gap
R	<400	>75%	90-100%	No gap
R	<400	>75%	90-100%	No gap
R	400 - 700	20-50%	80-90%	No gap
R	400 - 700	50-75%	80-90%	No gap
R	700-1000	10-20%	80-90%	<3%
S	1100-1400	10-20%	80-90%	<3%
U	700-1000	20-50%	80-90%	No gap
U	1100-1400	10-20%	70-80%	<3%
U	>1500	50-75%	70-80%	<3%

Area: R = Rural; S = Suburban; U = Urban

Total = Total student body

Graduation Gap = White graduation rate – Latina/o graduation rate

Table 12 presents a synthesis of participants, with five participants identifying as White and five as Leaders of Color. Six participants are male and four are female. Five participants are bilingual.

Table 12 Synthesis of Participant Data by Race, Gender, Bilingual

	Female	Male	Bilingual
People of Color	2	3	1
White	2	3	2
Total	4	6	5

Table 13 presents the data regarding school location, with the majority of the schools in rural location.

Table 13: Location of Schools

Urban	Rural	Suburban
3	6	1

Table 14 presents the data regarding % of Latina/o students, with a range of three schools with more than 75% Latina/o, three schools with 20-50%, and three schools with 10-20% of the population identifying as Latina/o.

Table 14 Percentage of Latina/o Students

10-20%	20-50%	50-75%	>75%	
3	3	1	3	

The schools also represent a range of sizes, with three schools under 400 students and one school more than 1400 as shown in Table 15.

Table 15 Size of School

<400	400-700	700-1000	1000-1400	>1400
3	2	2	2	1

Table 16 shows that the majority of schools graduate more than 80% of the Latina/o students, well above the state average of 72% (Oregon Department of Education, 2016).

Table 16 Graduation rate

70-80	80-90	90-100
1	6	2

My research partner and I interviewed school administrators half of whom are White and half of whom are Leaders of Color in order to identify differences or similarities in their responses. All participants were 18 years or older, hold an administrator license, and have obtained tenure as school administrators.

Procedures

recruitment. We sent an invitation via email to leaders of schools who have been recognized as successful based on their higher than state average graduation rates and low graduation gaps between Latina/os and White students to request their participation in this study (see Appendix A & B for emails to participants and superintendents). We invited participants to take part in the study because they have demonstrated successful academic results. We did not share the specific reasons for being selected.

The participants were given the option of being interviewed outside their geographical area of work. The meetings were conducted in a private location agreed upon by the participants to maintain confidentiality. All information that could link the subject to the study (names of people, schools, districts, communities, years of service, demographic data, or other identifiers connecting a respondent to the data) were de-identified, presented in a range and confirmed with participants; confidentiality was

guaranteed to all subjects (see Appendix D for consent form). Additionally, a member check was conducted prior to publishing our findings to ensure confidentiality.

informed consent. Participation in this study was voluntary. A consent form was shared with participants prior to the interview via email (see Appendix D for consent form). Upon receipt of the form, the participants were requested to review the consent form and had the opportunity to contact the researcher in case of questions. When the participant decided to take part in the study, they signed the form and returned it to the researcher prior to the interview. The participant was given a copy of the consent form, which included information on how to contact the researcher should questions arise.

quantitative component. While this study is a multiple-case study, phenomenological qualitative study, my research partner and I have added an additional examination of data from the TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning) survey, a survey administered by the Oregon Education association, Confederation of School Administrators and Oregon Department of Education, regarding the working conditions in Oregon schools. Our hope was to identify any correlation between the TELL survey results and interview outcomes regarding school leadership. While this study is a qualitative study, we were curious about any correlations.

data collection. The data collection methods include individual semi-structured interviews with the 10 participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 9). According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interviews are best used when the researcher will not have another opportunity to interview the participant or when more than one interviewer collects data. We used open-ended questions in order to allow the interviewee to share

their perspective without any indication of our desired responses. In some cases we used additional prompts to gain more insight from participants. One researcher transcribed the data while the other conducted the interview; this avoided the distraction of note taking and the risk of missing out on vital information. In addition, the rapport between interviewer and interviewee was enhanced, an essential component of semi-structured interviews (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Data was analyzed by using inductive reasoning centered on grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). While we double coded all data and generated categories and themes to increase the trustworthiness of our finding, I will present the data and findings related to characteristics of the leaders and my research partner Ryan Richardson will present the data and findings related to the human spirit.

data confidentiality. Confidentiality was guaranteed to all study participants and data collected. Pseudonyms were used for any information that could identify participants. All names or characteristics that were potentially compromising to the confidentiality of the participant were immediately de-identified. All interview materials and notes collected in the course of this study were stored on a password protected computer stored in the locked office of the researcher. The records will be stored for a period of three years from the time of completion of the study.

risks. There was no expected physical or mental discomfort for participants. Corbin and Morse (2003) recommend several steps to ensure the emotional safety of those who exhibit discomfort during any type of data collection, which the researcher will apply to the study: 1. The researcher remains with participants until the participant reaches a stable emotional state; 2. The researcher assembles a list of local counselors to

give to participants should “distress arise during or after” the survey. Corbin and Morse (2003) found that volunteer participants react positively and are grateful for opportunities and are happy to discuss even unpleasant experiences. The researchers are Oregon Department of Education licensed administrators who have more than 30 years of combined experience teaching and leading schools, who have completed Institutional Review Board training, and who will follow all Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) expectations.

Instruments and Measures

For this study, the researchers were seeking to discover characteristics and beliefs regarding the leadership priorities and spiritual sustainment of the participants. These are matters that cannot be easily seen or observed in practice. Glesne (2006) states, “The opportunity to learn about what you cannot see and to explore alternative explanations of what you do see is a special strength of interviewing in qualitative inquiry” (p.81).

The interview is a prime method of studying complex individuals in the midst of complex social structures (Krathwol, 2009; Steiner, 2002). We prepared questions prior to interviewing the participants, and were prepared to develop new questions and follow unexpected leads that arose in the course of each interview. The main idea of using the interview instrument was to learn from each high school principal about their leadership practices that help Latina/o students to be successful in schools, reducing the educational disparities between White and Latina/o students and to seek to find a connection, if any, to their sense of meaning and purpose.

Some argue that structured interviews are best when comparing two or more groups of data, while unstructured interviews are the best for discovering a phenomenon (Maxwell, 2012). We planned to do both: comparing the experiences of successful principals of color and White principals. Glesne (2006) argues that "questions that emerge or change during the interview are more ideal in qualitative research" (p.85). That being said, we recognized the need to remain somewhat consistent in our interview practices, as we wanted to ensure a level of trustworthiness with the subject and consistency throughout our findings to rule out diversions that could compromise the trustworthiness of our study (Maxwell, 2012).

Role of Researcher

As researchers before me that have wrestled with prejudices and attitudes surrounding their data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), I also have biases that may have impacted the reliability of my study. According to Creswell (2013):

> An advocacy/participatory worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and political agenda. Thus, the research contains an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life (p. 9).

Throughout my life in the United States, I have been the target of racial injustices, which is what fuels my goal to make a difference in the lives of our Latina/o students across the state by empowering them to advocate for themselves and fight against the inequities they encounter. I am a Latino, bilingual, recent immigrant from Chile; I was the first generation to graduate from college, and am a middle class man who has

experienced micro-aggressions and outright racism as a new immigrant, teacher, member of our community, and now as a school principal. These experiences may contribute to researcher bias. My negative experiences with racial disparities could have guided me to be extremely biased in my research, throwing the validity of my study into question. According to the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) (1994), research is a human activity subject to the same kind of failings as the other human activities…There is not a single paradigm solution to the elimination of error and bias; it is difficult to judge the validity of a particular study (Patton, 2002). However, the data collection and analysis as described above were carefully thought through and conducted in a manner to ensure that any bias that I have is limited.

Additional steps such as double coding with my research partner who is a White, middle class, native English-speaking man and discussions regarding our independent analytic memo writing are designed to minimize the bias in my study. While research bias will always be present, these strategies were employed in an attempt to minimize my biases and, increase the study's trustworthiness by exposing my own assumptions and blind spots. My hope is to ensure that my audience would seriously consider my findings and support my interpretation of how these subjects effected racial disparities among our children while enacting social justice.

Data Collection and Analysis

Conducting interviews with 10 participants resulted in a comprehensive data set to analyze. While we double coded the data, I was focused on answering the research questions: What are the characteristics of high school leaders who are successful with Latina/o students? and In what ways are these principals enacting social justice in schools

successful with Latina/o students? My research partner focused on the human spirit of the leaders.

Because my research question elicited complicated responses that are heuristic in nature, my research was guided by grounded theory when coding and analyzing the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Saldaña, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Grounded theory was appropriate for this research study because its purpose is to demonstrate the relationship between conceptual categories and to specify the conditions under which theoretical relationships emerge, change or are maintained (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2002).

To analyze our data, my research partner and I first set out to find themes through a cycle of coding rounds interspersed with further data collection and thoughtful reflection, which Saldaña (2015) refers to as analytic memo writing. Figure 2 shows the framework of our coding methods, drawing on those of previous researchers (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Maxwell, 2012; Saldaña, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

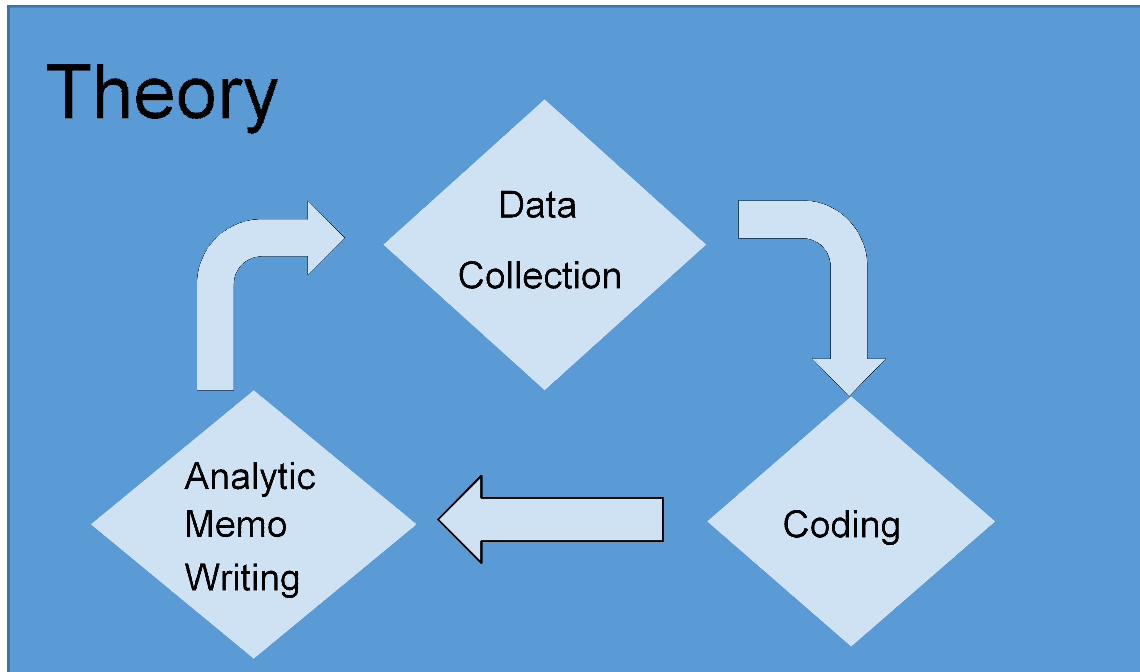


Figure 2. Elemental model for developing classic grounded theory

In the following paragraphs, I will describe the coding methods and procedures. The analytic memo writing and reflective dialogue between my research partner and I were key to interpreting the data and proposing a theory of action for the recruitment, retention and professional development of future leaders (Maxwell, 2012). As Saldaña (2015) says, “memo writing is the engine of grounded theory, not coding” (p. 164). Memo writing and subsequent conversations about our memos guided our next steps of interpretation of the data.

For this study, we collected the data from the first four participants, all of whom are leaders of color. We coded the data individually. In the first round, the technique of In Vivo and initial coding were combined (Saldaña, 2015). In Vivo coding allowed participants’ own words to be used as guides to potential themes, and initial coding was incorporated to categorize what was said. Each researcher coded each interview and then

reflected and compared one another's coding through analytic memo writing and dialogue. This technique let researchers acutely analyze their coding process and code choices; how the process of inquiry is taking shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in the data (Saldaña, 2015, p. 41). Double coding ensured a process that permits data to be segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation (Grbich, 2007). Next, we each wrote an analytic memo based on our coding of the data from the leaders of color and then discussed our memos prior to conducting additional coding. We then repeated the steps above with the White participant data.

The second round of coding combined focused coding and axial coding (Saldaña, 2015) in which categories were identified. In this round, themes were placed into categories, although it is important to note that some themes had varying levels to fit into each category (Dey, 1999). Axial coding was also used to help the researchers find similarities between themes that were initially split into different categories or questions during the first round of coding (Saldaña, 2015). Searching for synonyms and eliminating redundant themes helped the researchers understand and articulate the findings of this study.

Using analytic memo writing, discussions of the memos, a series of coding rounds, and double coding we found that themes emerged among principals of Color and White principals. This strategy allowed us to mitigate any possible bias and increase the trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

Introduction

In Chapter 3 I detailed the process of analyzing the interview data and the TELL survey data, following the Graduate School of Education's CPED-inspired dissertation process which develops doctoral candidates' collaboration and communication skills that are critical to our practice as professionals in education (CPED, 2017). For this dissertation, I collaborated with Ryan Richardson as my research partner on data collection and analysis. As previous chapters stated, my research questions are: What are the characteristics of high school leaders who are successful with Latina/o students and in what ways are these principles enacting social justice in schools successful with Latina/o students? In Chapter 4, I will re-state the purpose of this study, analyze and present the data, interpret the findings, and reveal limitations of this study and data analysis.

For this study, my research partner and I purposively selected 10 high school principals whose high school graduation rates were higher than state averages and who had eliminated the graduation achievement gap between White and Latina/o students. We decided to analyze our data by White leaders and leaders of color instead of gender, to protect the identity of our participants. Selected participants responded to 13 questions regarding their path to the principalship, the priorities and initiatives that they deemed to be important to the success of Latina/o students, and the barriers that impede their progress. The intention of these questions was to identify to what the principals attributed their success when working with Latina/o students and how principles of social justice were enacted in their schools. This study had 13 questions. To answer the research

questions, I first analyzed the data related to each interview question, synthesized the themes, wrote an analytic memo, and provided quotations to support each category and theme. After analyzing each individual question, I synthesized the results, leading to findings that are connected to the research question. Each question elicited themes from the participants which were identified through the process of double coding to ensure trustworthiness. Many of the themes were taken from the participants' own words, also known as In Vivo coding (Maxwell, 2012; Saldaña, 2015).

Analysis of Data

In Chapter 2, I examined the research on effective school leadership. In Chapter 3 I explained the purpose of the study, which is to explore the characteristics of high school leaders successful with Latina/o students. I also described the methods I utilize to analyze those characteristics. In this next section I will analyze the data, present, and interpret results of the six major findings of this study.

Subjects in this study revealed six categories related to their success with Latina/o students: 1) relationships, 2) leadership focus, 3) equity orientation, 4) work conditions, 5) high student expectations, and 6) fighting a system of oppression. I will provide an analysis of the data leading to these findings, providing a graphic of each finding and supporting quotes. (Appendix E includes charts explicating the data analysis.)

Relationships

All participants considered relationships an important characteristic for Latina/o student success in a high school setting. Throughout the interview, Participants of Color

spoke 47 times about relationships while White participants spoke about relationships 43 times (See Table 17).

Table 17: Responses that include the category of relationships

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	2	-	1	-	1	2	-	1	-	3	2	1	-	13
2 POC	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	6
3 POC	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	2	1	3	-	11
4 POC	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	1	2	-	8
5 POC	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	2	-	9
POC Total	6		1		1	6	1	8		8	6	10		47
6 W	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	2	-	3	-	9
7 W	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	-	1	1	2	-	9
8 W	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	2	-	8
9 W	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	1	-	1	-	2	-	8
10 W	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	2	-	9
W Total	1		0			6	6	7		8	4	11		43
Total	7	-	1	-	1	12	7	15	-	16	10	21	-	90

It is important to note that People of Color shared that positive relationships with other administrators or supervisors helped further career objectives and attain more

opportunities in their career trajectory. Additionally, when asked, POC stated forging relationships with school leaders was not among their most important priorities. Conversely, White participants shared that relationships with administrators and leadership were not crucial securing their leadership positions, but maintaining relationships is a priority for their role in school leadership.

Administrators of Color and White leaders emphasized positive, strong and loving relationships with students as essential component of the administrators' roles at schools with high Latina/o student populations. All participants interviewed shared their priority as being a leader who is "student centered." Other common phraseology identified included: knowing the "whole child," "be a good listener," "motivate them," and "spend time with them." These shared values are the articulation of an enacted policy to aid students to succeed not just in education but also in their future lives.

One male Person of Color stated,

> "We build on relationships. They get to know us. I spend hours and hours with students talking about transcripts, grades, scholarships, and plans for their future. Several of them I see out and about and they know I am part of the community and I think it is extremely important. I want to make sure they know we believe in them and they should believe in themselves. When kids say I don't think I can go to college we turned it around. It is personalized communication…students feel good about it and they believe in themselves" (male Person of Color).

Participants also shared an absolute view that, while caring for teachers holds import, their priority was the education and wellbeing of their students. For example, one

White female shared that "A teacher said all you care about are the kids and you don't care about us. I said call me guilty because kids are always first. I care about you but yes, kids are first." Another participant stated, "I hired and put people in places where they can be successful. They know I care about them, but kids are first" (White male).

At the same time, building strong relationships with staff and creating a culture of care for them, was also an emerging theme. Respondents noted it helps to have a positive culture at the school and this is transmitted to the students in their classrooms. When we asked a question about advice for future leaders, one participant shared that, "at my school we hire carefully. We hire teachers that care about our kids. Then my job is to take care of [the teachers] and make sure they feel comfortable in our school" (White male). Table 18 shows more specific responses from our participants regarding relationships.

Table 18. Relationships

Number of Responses **Main themes**	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Helping others	4	2
Someone saw something in me	4	0
Connection to Community	3	0
Whole child	0	4
Student success	1	4
Relationship with students	4	7
Care for teachers	3	3

Most of the participants expressed that building relationships with colleagues is vital, as one participant stated, “this is a lonely job” (male, Person of Color). A common theme from participants was that network building will not only provide a group of people to rely on in case of emergencies, but also to commiserate with throughout the year. In maintaining strong networks and established relationships, all respondents of Color noted that at some point in their career “someone saw something in me” which translated into support and encouragement to get their first job or enroll in an Administrative licensure program. No White respondents mentioned that “someone saw something in me.” As one of the participants of color shared. “I didn’t have any experience when I applied to my first VP job, but he saw something in me and gave an opportunity” (male, Person of Color).

“Support systems” are another prominent component connected to relationship building. Examples would include family and a community participation in education inside and outside of the school as well as open access to teachers and administrators. Administrators of Color expressed that specific connections to the community are also critical. For example, one participant stated, “To connect with the community is extremely important. I participated in many events because I wanted to help the community and, at the same time, I want to see my families and students outside the school so they know that I am like them” (male Person of Color). Another respondent told us,

> tapping into family and building community is important. That’s what we really try to do. I’m a building leader but trying to be a community leader, not like Jesse

Jackson out at churches but I try to do outreach to the community (Person of Color, male).

Figure 3 shows the relationships of these ideas.

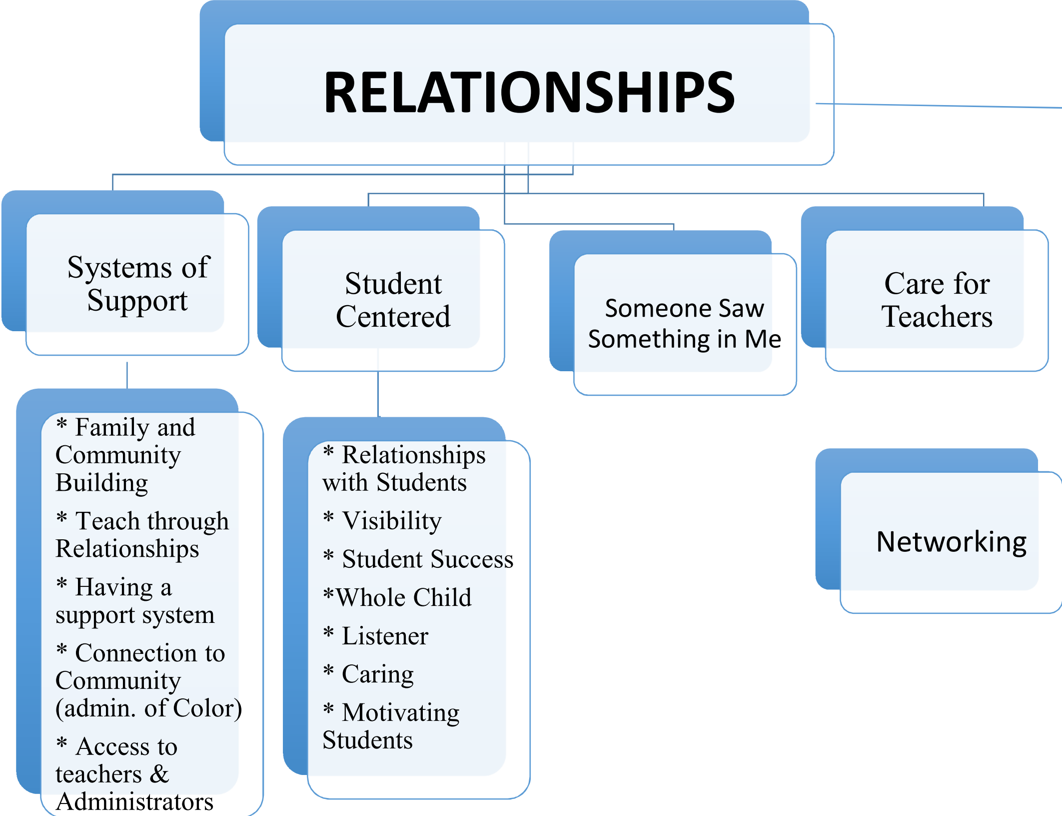


Figure 3. Relationships

Leadership

A second category which emerged among seven of 10 participants was having a collaborative leadership system that helps with the success of schools and their students. Collaborating with teachers, being authentic and genuine, accessible, and using data to make leadership decisions were key themes under the collaborative leadership category.

Throughout the interview, Participants of Color spoke 32 times about Leadership while White participants spoke only 13 times (See Table 19).

Table 19: Responses that include the category of Leadership

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	1	4	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	12
2 POC	-	-	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	7
3 POC	-	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	6
4 POC	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	4
5 POC	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
POC Total	1	9	5	2	1	3	1	-	5	-	4	1	-	32
6 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
7 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
8 W	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
9 W	-	2	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	7
10 W	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
W Total	-	4	-	1	1	-	2	1	2	1	1	-	-	13
Total	1	13	5	3	2	3	3	1	7	1	5	1	-	45

Q1 = Question 1…

POC = Principal of Color. W = White

It is of interest that in Question 2, regarding who helped them, inspired them, and motivated them throughout their career as a leader and how they did so, the category of leadership was revealed by the majority of Participants of Color. Additionally, in Question 3, regarding whether respondents were met with any resistance from anyone or anything, Participants of Color shared five instances where they experienced resistance

from another leader or regarding their promotion to a leadership role. However, White participants did not encounter any resistance from other leaders.

Throughout the research, collaborating with teachers was shown to be a dominant theme. Nine of 10 respondents noted the importance of collaborating with teachers. As one participant shared in terms of collaborative leadership, “I empower teachers to help students and families. I have a shared leadership model where teachers have the opportunity to give me input and recommendations” (White male).

Six respondents (four People of Color) noted the important of being authentic and genuine in their leadership. Authentic leaders are individuals who are aware of their strengths and limitations and their emotions. One participant shared, “Being a real person…I shared my cultural experiences and kids know I am real and not benevolent and I’ve been there before. They warm up to me as a resource and not a figure. …then I hold them accountable” (female Person of Color). Another participant expressed, “I need to be authentic with my staff, students and families. They need to get to know me, the real me” (Male Person of Color).

Four respondents (three White) noted that visibility and accessibility were important. The idea of being in hallways and classrooms provided them the opportunity to get to know the students. As one female Participant of Color stated, “It’s all about kids. Every day is a new day with my students. I might be mad one minute, but I’ll be high fiving you later. You (students) are loved every day and that’s why I need to spend time with them every day.” Another participant told us

> I am always in classes and hallways. I'd say, how are you? How you doing...kids may say not so well, then you turn around and walk with them. At that time they know you are invested in who they are and you can't fool them. We also played around. They understand we are in this together (White male).

In terms of the theme of data-driven, six participants (three of Color, three White) shared that authentic leaders are focused on results and success in their schools. Table 20 shows more specific responses from our participants.

Table 20. Leadership

Number of Responses **Main themes**	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Collaboration	5	4
Be authentic	4	2
Accessible & visible	1	3
Data-driven	3	3

As one participant shared, "My main goal is for students to succeed and graduate. This is why I must focus on data and results, to make sure we are doing things right" (male Person of Color). Figure 4 shows the relationships of these ideas.

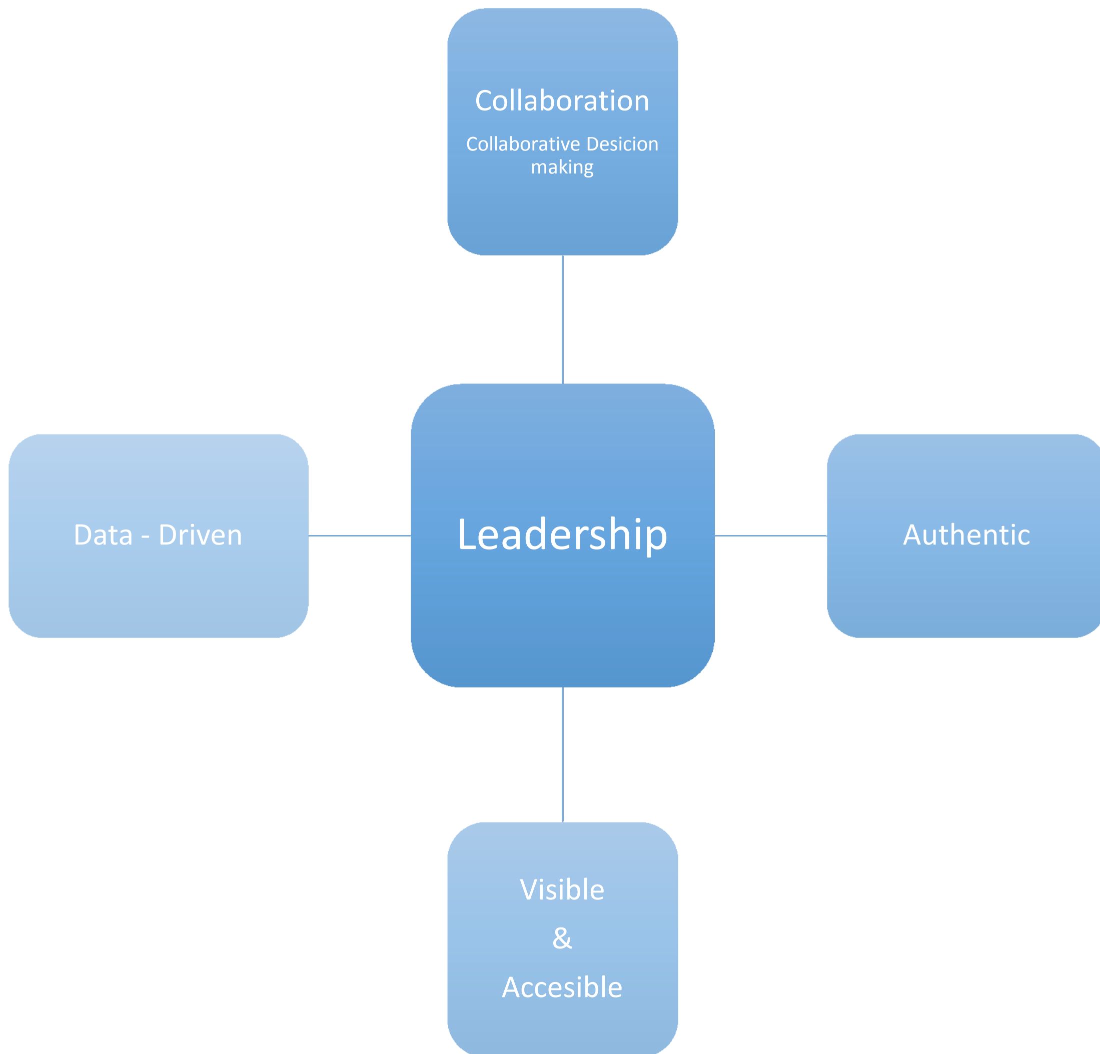


Figure 4. Leadership

Equity

All participants mentioned the category of equity throughout their responses. Principals of Color referred to equity 40 times while White principals referred to equity 30 times. Table 21 displays the number of times respondents referred to equity in a question.

Table 21: Responses that included the category of equity

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	1	1	-	1	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
2 POC	-	1	-	1	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	8
3 POC	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
4 POC	1	1	-	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	14
5 POC	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	5
POC Total	2	3	0	3	3	7	10	5	2	1	2	2	0	40
6 W	-	-	-	1	-	3	2	-	-	-	2	1	-	9
7 W	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	4
8 W	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	5
9 W	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	6
10 W	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	6
W Total	0	1	0	4	4	4	3	2	1	0	9	2	0	30
Total	2	4	-	7	7	11	13	7	3	1	11	4	-	70

Q1 = Question 1…

POC = Principal of Color. W = White

It is noteworthy that in Question 6, "What are your unique leadership characteristics that help Latina/o students be successful?" the category of equity was mentioned by the majority of participants. In Question 7, regarding the most important priorities and/or initiatives as a school leader, the category of equity was mentioned more from Principals of Color than White principals. In Question 11, "As a member of the White/Latina/ African American culture, what else should future leaders know about

becoming a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students," White principals stated that it is important for new leaders to know about equity, while their counterparts who are Principals of Color advised new leaders to work hard and be a role model for their students. Within the category of equity, our participants' highest priorities were centered upon being culturally sensitive, reducing barriers, conversations around equity, understanding White privilege, receiving and/or giving professional advice about equity, holding high expectations for Students of Color, and providing opportunities for them. Table 22 displays more detailed results regarding equity.

Table 22. Equity

Number of Responses Main themes	Administrators of Color	White Administrators
Equity	11	2
Culturally sensitive	4	1
Be culturally sensitive	6	5
I received professional advice	3	4
Underdog	3	1
Informal training	3	3
Student accountability	3	1
Taking risks with equity conversation	3	0
Understanding privilege	1	3

The theme of being culturally sensitive in terms of reducing educational disparities in schools was noted in conversations with seven participants, all five Leaders of Color and two White leaders. Being culturally sensitive was described as a concerted effort to understand the culture of those whose culture was different from the principals' culture. Cultural sensitivity can positively impact the connection of students with their schools, teachers and principals, as one respondent of Color noted, "My priority is to celebrate culture and diversity." A White male stated, "An important priority is building equity. Building equity not only from a policy standpoint but also in terms of awareness and paradigm." Another male person of color participant shared:

> If you want to work in our school, it is essential that you are culturally sensitive with your instruction, curriculum, the materials you use in classrooms and the way you communicate with our students and families. We need to appreciate and understand different cultures, and our students and families need to feel welcome.

Related to giving and/or receiving advice, the most common theme from these seven leaders (three Persons of Color and four White) was on the topic of cultural sensitivity as detailed in Table 22.

The majority of our participants felt that we must help reduce barriers in our high schools to be able to effectively close the Achievement Gap and reduce our educational disparities. Three participants (two of color, one White) highlighted the importance of hiring diverse staff to reduce barriers in their schools. One White male said, "Hiring staff that look like our students is important. Kids feel like they didn't relate to some of the

teachers. Now we have Black, Hispanic and Asian teachers. We see the difference [in student comfort].” Another female Person of Color noted “I always look into recruiting and diversifying my staff. [The Student] must see others in positions they aspire too. You can feel the difference. They have to see people that look like them.” A male Person of Color noted the importance of reducing barriers to communication and access, stating “Every day we are reducing barriers for our Latina/o students, opening doors for them. Scholarships, University applications, etc. We make sure they get every opportunity in the world. They deserve it.”

Three People of Color (but no White respondents) mentioned the importance of not fearing difficult conversations about equity. One participant shared, “Every time we see our minority students not performing like their White peers, I right away get ready to have difficult conversations with my staff so we can solve the issues. Now our Latinas/os are graduating at higher rates than our White students” (Male Leader of Color).

Four participants (one Person of Color and one White) shared the significance of understanding “White privilege.” As one of the Person of Color stated, “Sometimes I feel that my White colleagues don’t even know they have White privileges because they have not been in my shoes. I don’t think they are bad people, they just don’t get it.” Regarding professional development, one female Person of Color shared, “Our professional development is intentional around equity throughout the year. We must have this difficult conversation throughout the year. I don’t believe in doing equity in isolation and just in some occasions. I find myself conflicted with special months like Black History month. Why don’t we celebrate all year? Every culture contributes incredibly.”

Some leaders connected the idea of cultural sensitivity to understanding their own privilege while others talked about the importance of understanding other cultures. One White male stated, “You have to remove your biases, which is hard. Always use a lens of equity.” Another White male said, “We had teachers (when I first got here) try to ban students from speaking Spanish! We were in a different world (back then).” One Person of Color talked about overcoming an experience where others were not being culturally sensitive. Figure 5 shows the relationships of these ideas.

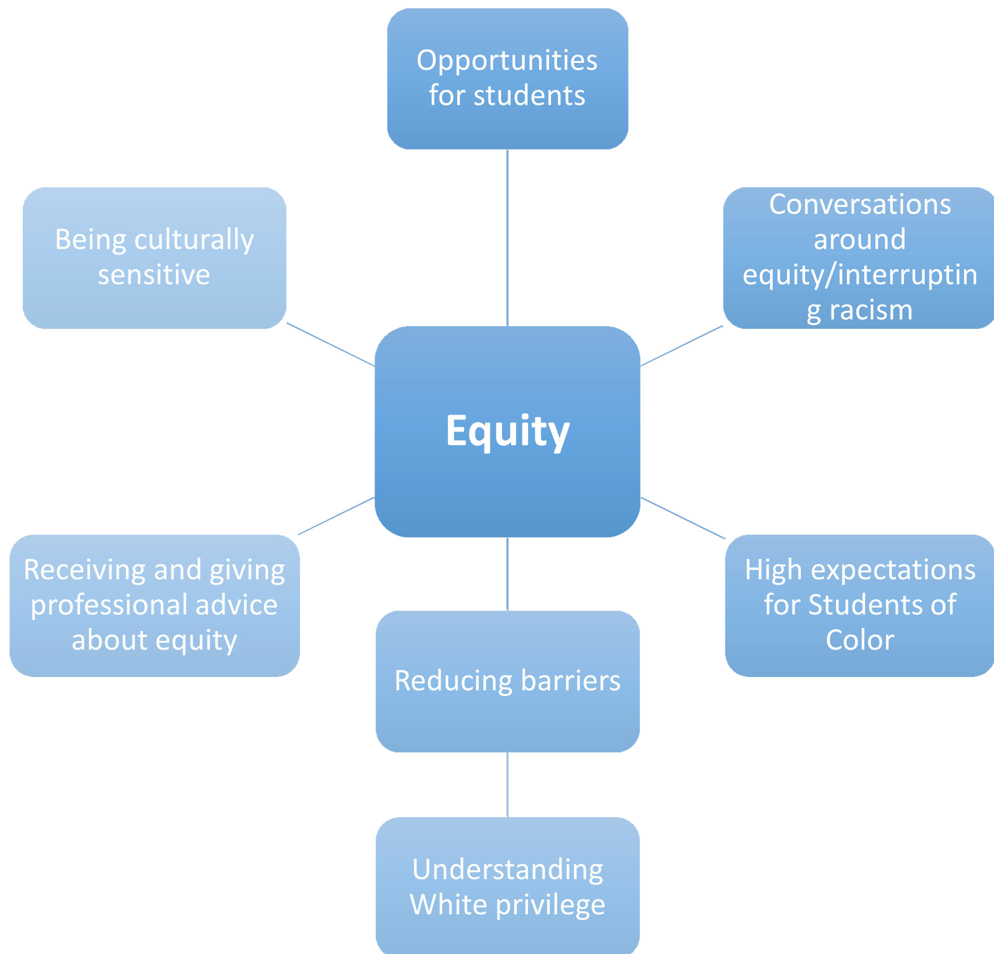


Figure 5. Equity

Working Conditions

Working conditions impacting respondents' success was another category revealed by all participants. Throughout the interview, Participants of Color spoke 12 times about the working condition, while White participants spoke 22 times (See Table 23). Specifically, question 13 examines what, if anything, encumbers respondents connecting to their sense of meaning and purpose. It was noted that working conditions hindering performance was mentioned by the all the White participants and three Leaders of Color.

Table 23: Responses that include the category of working conditions.

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	4
2 POC	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3
3 POC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	3
4 POC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
5 POC	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
POC Total	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	2	2	1	3	12
6 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	4
7 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	5
8 W	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	4
9 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	2	7
10W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
W Total	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	2	3	1	1	8	22
Total	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	3	4	5	3	2	11	34
Q1 = Question 1…POC = Principal of Color. W = White														

Poor working conditions, such a long hours, many managerial tasks and "busy work," high pressure from others, losing a connection to the bigger picture, and a disconnect between accountability and the authority (Superintendent and/or School Board) produced enhanced stress levels in school leaders impacting their performance and sense of purpose. Table 24 shows more specific responses from our participants.

Table 24. Working Conditions

Number of Responses **Main themes**	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Managerial work	3	4
Pressure	3	0
High expectations	3	3

Seven participants highlighted the "busyness, managerial duties" as one of the central obstacles for instituting success in their schools. The principal's role has increasingly become an instructional leader more than a manager, being responsible for promoting and developing effective teaching practices that promote positive student outcomes, putting the evolving role of leadership into conflict with traditional bureaucratic needs. In relation to managerial tasks, one participant stated, "Being asked to do things that are a waste of time," and went on to describe state required mandates and reports that had to be written (White male). Another participant said, "The basketball game, lunch duty, citations for truancy…the busyness of this job…you can find yourself in the deep end trying to swim back to the shallow end. It can be so overwhelming" (Male Person of Color).

Many participants referenced the idea of losing sight of the bigger picture, with some stated so explicitly. One put it this way, “I don’t want to get caught up in trivial matters.” Another talked about too many externally imposed initiatives and said, “If we can focus on one or two things, we’ll be great.” Another said, “getting bogged down with small things like when a parent says that a teacher said something about my child and you know it isn’t true and four hours later (the issue) is negotiated” (White male).

There are also other, less mentioned challenges which our sample group of participants faced. Long hours were discussed by three participants as another obstacle to performing well. As one participant shared, “Some weeks I hardly see my family because of all my night functions. I wish I had the opportunity to balance my hours with my outside school work. It would be a great stimulus for me.” Two respondents discussed the complexity of working with what we are calling “naysayers.” They discussed the difficulties of working with just a few people, people who are “really hard to get on board and motivate” or “people that do things in education that are really hard to defend.” Figure 6 shows the relationships of these ideas regarding working conditions.

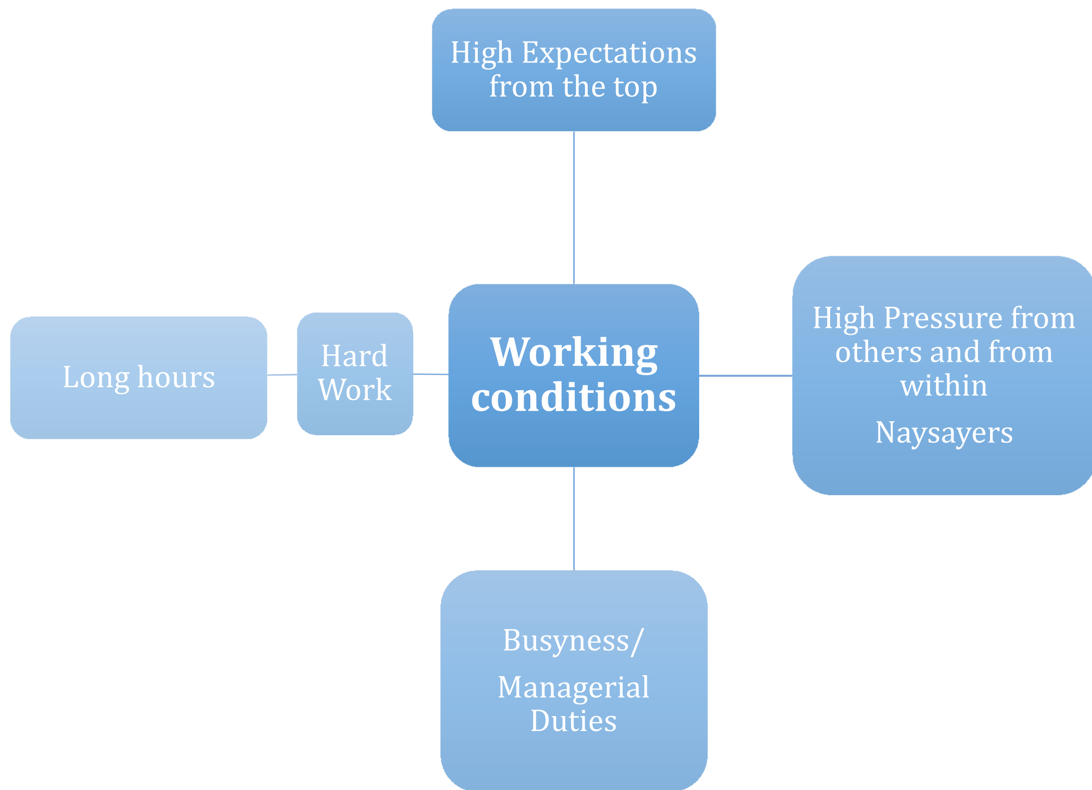


Figure 6. Working Conditions

Student Expectations

High student expectations were yet another category that all respondents chose to draw attention to during the course of the study. Both Participants of Color and White participants spoke about the importance of high student expectations, 23 and 22 times respectively, as displayed in Table 25.

Table 25: Responses that include the category of student expectations.

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	7
2 POC	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
3 POC	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	5
4 POC	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	4
5 POC	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
POC Total	-	-	-	1	-	6	4	1	2	6	-	3	-	23
6 W	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	2	-	1	-	1	-	8
7 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
8 W	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
9 W	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	5
10W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	3
W Total	-	-	-	2	1	2	4	4	1	4	1	3	-	22
Total	-	-	-	3	1	8	8	5	3	10	1	6	-	45

Q1 = Question 1…POC = Principal of Color. W = White

According to our participants, high student expectations with clear expectations around attendance, grades and working hard are essentials for leaders successful with Latina/o students. Repeatedly, these academic expectations are considered the foundation of the school where students are expected to follow them. As one White male tells students

> You can accomplish more than you can ever believe and there is not a secret pill…just work hard because I have high expectations for you. Just tread water every day and one day it'll make sense. And you'll look back and see your progress. Believe you can do anything.

Eight participants shared that teachers play a fundamental role in the success of the students, therefore it is imperative they provide all the tools possible for student success. As one participant shared:

> We have high expectations that students are successful, and if they aren't, we need to look at what we are doing as educators. We are in control when they are with us not when they are outside of school. We have them 7 hours a day and there is a lot we should be able to do while they are here so they can succeed in school (White male).

For school leaders to expect high achievement, five participants (three Persons of Color and two White) emphasized the importance of providing support for students. As one participant stated, "Provide Saturday school and make sure to get them here. They need to come and get the support" (White male). Similarly, another participant shared the worth of motivating students to accomplish those high expectations, especially those from immigrant background, "the majority of my students came from a different country so the message is about why are you here? Why did your parents bring you to the US? The obvious answer is they want a better life for me. So then we talk about that and talk about the opportunities we have here in this country and we have to take advantage of those opportunities" (Male Person of Color). Figure 7 shows the relationships of these ideas.

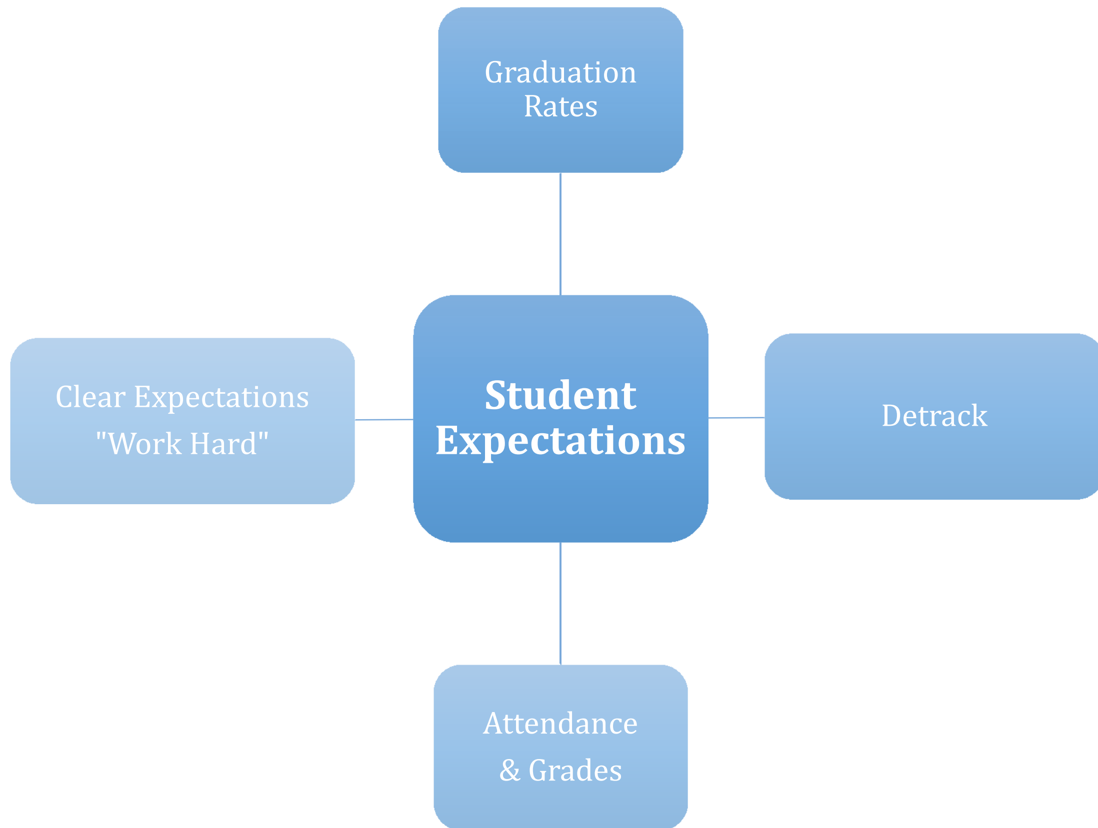


Figure 7. Student Expectations

System of Oppression

Microagressions, first impression judgments, and aggressive resistance were revealed as a major theme, which are grouped into the category of a systems of oppression for this study, with all five Participants of Color and one of two White women sharing these experiences when deciding to become educational leaders. Throughout the interview, Participants of Color spoke 26 times about systems of oppression while White participants only 1 time (See Table 26).

Table 26: Responses that include the category of systems of oppression.

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11	Q 12	Q 13	Total
1 POC	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
2 POC	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	7
3 POC	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	6
4 POC	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	7
5 POC	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
POC Total	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	1	26
6 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8 W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9 W	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
10W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	1	27

Q1 = Question 1…POC = Principal of Color. W = White

In question 3, which asked where participants met with resistance when considering leadership roles, the category of systems of oppression was mentioned by all Participants of Color multiple times while only one White participant mentioned this category. In question 11, “As a member of the White/Latina/ African American culture, what else should future leaders know about becoming a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students?”, three Participants of Color mentioned that new leaders should be knowledgeable about how to fight against systems of oppression.

The primary resistance our participants experienced, if they were female, was due to their gender. One participant stated, “At my first assignment as an Administrator I had

resistance being a woman. At the time I was young and [a leader of color.] They told me that this was the place [school] where all the [Principals of Color] were." It was noted that resistance for women and People of Color came from family members and from central office administrators. One male person of color recalled that when he sought out approval to apply for his first administrator job, his superintendent responded, "You are not ready. You shouldn't even think about this. You need more experience in your classroom and maybe someday there will be an opportunity." Another Participant of Color shared, "I get lots of microagressions. I get told I speak too academically. Somebody's way of saying you don't know your place. Then I get told I speak too informally." According to two Participants of Color, sometimes those resistances were "aggressive." Another Person of Color shared, "I remember going to my first principal meeting. I just walked in and people said no, this is just for principals. The Vice principal's meeting is down the hall, you are in the wrong meeting."

Having strategies to address systems of oppression was one way Participants of Color noted as a means to fight the resistance their inclusion into a leadership role. One participant shared that after a conversation with a teacher who was mistreating him, he responded, "You cannot let things get to you." Another male Person of Color shared, "the only way is to have a thick skin so you learn how to not pay attention to." Three participants of Color shared that they feel a constant pressure because they are People of Color, one specifying, "always needing to prove to others they can do the job" many times "24 hours a day, 7 days a week" and even if they are "more prepared than many other administrators." One female Person of Color stated, "I kept having to continue to

prove myself. I've been in education for [30+] years and just made it to the District Office while other White people I've mentored they get there after three years…facts are facts."

In terms of formal equity training, six participants did not have any formal training that was positive for their professional development as a leader. The only experience for almost all participants was a "multicultural class" that did not help them at all. One participant remembered being "appalled," while another shared they "never talked in this class about minority students, curriculum or classroom methodologies for minority students." Only one participant shared having a "positive experience" with a "multicultural class." It is worth stressing the fact that our participants got their administrator licenses at least 15 years ago when preparation programs with an equity lens were nonexistent. Table 27 shows more specific responses from our participants.

Table 27. Systems of Oppression

Number of Responses Main themes	Administrators of Color	White Administrators
Microagressions	4	1
First impression judgment	6	0
Aggressive resistance	3	1
No formal training	3	3
Managerial work	2	3
Distraction from big picture	3	2
Bureaucracy	1	3
Negative experience with Multicultural class	3	2
Follow expectations	3	0

Seven participants (four Persons of Color and three White) asserted that "informal training" helped prepared them for the experience of working with Latina/o students. There was a mix among respondents detailing other helpful programs. Two participants (one Persons of Color and one White) stated that "continuing classes" helped them be ready to work with minority students, a participant of Color shared that an "ethnic class" helped him, while two White participants found their "district offers good professional development." Finally, three (two Persons of Color and one White woman) participants

mentioned their "life experiences" as their best training. Figure 8 shows the relationships of these ideas.

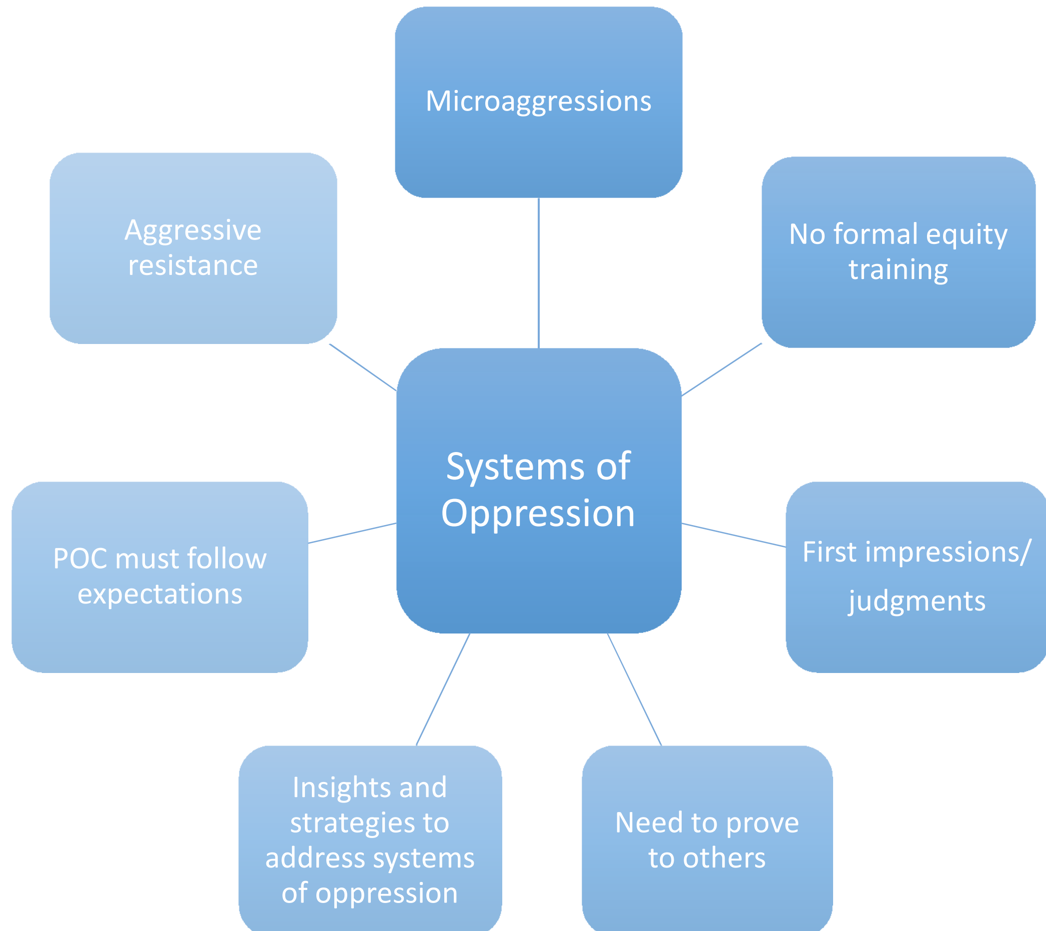


Figure 8. Systems of Oppression

The previous discussion presents, analyzes, and synthesizes the qualitative data leading to the finding that six categories are related to high school principals who are successful with Latina/o students: 1) relationships, 2) leadership focus, 3) equity orientation, 4) work conditions, 5) high student expectations, and 6) fighting a

system of oppression. Next, I will discuss the relationship of the findings of the Oregon TELL survey.

Analysis of the Tell Survey

The Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Oregon survey is an anonymous statewide survey of licensed school-based educators to assess teaching conditions at the school, district, and state level (Oregon Tell Survey, 2016). Results have been published from 2014 and 2016. The survey examined perceptions regarding eight constructs that have been linked to educator retention and student achievement (Oregon Tell Survey, 2016). For this study, my research partner Ryan Richardson and I worked with a statistician, similar to how superintendents and principals work with their Research Directors, and we designed tests hoping to ascertain the connection between the construct of school leadership for the 10 successful principals in this study and the state average for the same construct. We also looked at one additional data point from the TELL survey: teachers' response to the prompt, "overall my school is a good place to work and learn."

Data is available for schools that have at least a 50% response rate. It is for this reason that I have data from seven of the 10 schools in our study rather than all 10. The section on school leadership includes data from 13 themes. Teachers are asked if they agree or disagree with each prompt. The themes from the construct of school leadership are shown in Table 28. The numbers in the table represent the percentage of teachers that agreed to the theme. For example, the first theme is that teachers and leadership have a shared vision. The range in row two for the theme of shared vision shows that the school

in our sample with the lowest percentage of teachers that agreed to this theme is 27 percent while the school in our sample with the highest percentage of teachers agreeing to the shared vision theme is 94 percent. In addition to the range, the table includes the median, standard deviation, p-value, average of our sample size, and the state average for all high schools in the state of Oregon.

Table 28. TELL Survey Descriptives on Range, Median, Standard Deviation, Averages

Question #	Theme of Question	Range	Median	SD	Sig. (2-tailed) or *p* value	Subject Average	State HS Average
Q7.1a	Shared vision	27-94	66.7	22	.59	66	71
Q7.1b	Trust, mutual respect	45.6-94.1	69.2	18	.75	69	72
Q7.1c	Can raise concerns	45.5-94.1	68.4	15	.59	68	72
Q7.1d	Leadership supports teachers	54.5-100	73.7	17	.98	76	76
Q7.1e	High professional standards	54.5-100	92.3	16	.93	92	88
Q7.1f	Using data	72.7-96.8	88.9	9	.63	86	84
Q7.1g	Teacher performance assessed objectively	70-93	81	8	.41	83	81
Q7.1h	Helpful feedback for improvement	46-90	81	15	.63	77	74
Q7.1i	Ongoing teacher feedback	20-96	61	24	.64	58	63
Q7.1j	Evaluations consistent	60-94	76	10	.67	76	74
Q7.1k	Admin uses eval tool well	54-94	90	15	.78	80	79

Q7.1l	School improvement team leads	20-100	77	26	.98	70	70
Q7.1m	Recognition of accomplishments	63-90	75	11	.91	78	79
Q10.7	Good place to work and learn	64-100	90	14	.93	86	86

Limitations

As with all studies, there are limitations to my study. As mentioned earlier, I have implemented several strategies to mitigate limitations such as independent analytic memo writing, discussion of memos, and several rounds of double coding with my research partner. Limitations of the study included small samples, no teacher nor student input, and researcher bias.

In terms of the sample size, we were able to pick ten successful High School Principals from out of 235 High schools existing in Oregon. The main reasons for the small sample size is how we chose to define successful school leaders: those who led schools with graduation rates higher than the state average of 72% and where the achievement gap between Latinas/os and their White peers is nearly eliminated. We found ten principals of schools that have less than a 3% gap in graduation rates between their White and Latina/o students. Schools were located in the suburban, urban and rural areas of the State of Oregon. In half of these schools, the Latina/o students are outperforming their White peers. Another reason for the small sample size is that we limited participants to principals who had been in their roles three years or longer as studies indicate that it takes at least three to five years to make a significant impact on a

school culture (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; The Wallace Foundation, 2007).

Another limitation identified was not including students and/or teachers in this study. Instead of interviewing students and staff, we decided to use the TELL (Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning) survey to examine any correlation between staff survey responses and the interview outcomes regarding school leadership. However, the small sample size for the TELL survey resulted in data that was limited and it would also be inaccurate. Therefore, I think to directly interview or survey students and teachers within a randomly selected group would have been a significant addition to my research. Another strategy would have been to access the Accreditation Reports that are available on every high school through the AdvanceED organization. These reports include three domains, one of them being Leadership Capacity, specifically Standard 2 which refers to governance and school leadership.

The last limitation of this study is related to the researcher bias. As I shared in Chapter 3, throughout my life in the United States, I have been the target of racial injustices, which is what fuels my goal to make a difference in the lives of our Latina/o students across the state by empowering them to advocate for themselves and fight against the inequities they encounter. My negative experiences with racial disparities could have guided me to be biased in my research, impacting the trustworthiness of my interpretation of the data. According to the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) (1994), research is a human activity subject to the same kind of failings as the other human activities…There is not a single paradigm solution to

the elimination of error and bias; it is difficult to judge the validity of a particular study (Patton, 2002).

Despite these limitations, the detailed data collection and analysis were conducted to ensure that any bias that I have is limited. Steps such as double coding and discussions with my research partner regarding our independent analytic memo writing were designed to minimize the bias in my study. While these strategies may not have completely eliminated my biases, they increased the trustworthiness of my study by exposing my own assumptions and blind spots, ensuring that my audience would seriously consider my findings and support my interpretation of how they eliminated racial disparities among our children in schools while leading for social justice.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In Chapter 4, I analyzed and presented the data, interpreted the findings, and revealed limitations of this study and data analysis. In chapter 5, I will synthesize my findings and share my recommendations for further studies and implications for policy and practices.

The purpose of this study was to identify characteristics of principals successful with Latina/o students. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of secondary school leaders successful with Latina/o students?
2. In what ways are principals enacting social justice in schools that have had successful Latina/o student achievement?

For this study, my research partner Ryan Richardson and I selected 10 high school principals that have shown higher graduation rates than the state average in terms of their Latina/a student population. The same high school leaders have shown a minimal gap between Latina/o and White students' graduation rates. Ten participants were purposively selected for an interview with 13 questions regarding their path to principalship, barriers and resistances from other leaders, their characteristics as leaders of high schools with Latina/o students, principal preparation, messages they give to staff, students and their families, and advice for new leaders. The main purpose of the interview was to learn what their leadership characteristics are and how principles of

social justice were enacted at their schools. After interviews, I was able to analyze each interview question, synthesize the themes, write analytic memos, and provide quotations to support each category and themes. After the analysis, I was able to find specific characteristics that are connected to my research questions. With my research partner, Ryan Richardson, I double coded each question to ensure the trustworthiness of my findings.

Synthesis of Findings

In this section I will briefly discuss and summarize the findings of this study. After the analysis of my data, I identified six major findings related to the following: relationships, leadership focus, equity orientation, work conditions, high student expectations, and struggling against systems of oppression. These findings are supported by Sanchez et al. (2008) who found the following barriers that make it difficult to diversify leadership in our public educational system: (1) the status of the education pipeline (fewer minorities graduate from high school in general); (2) recruitment of minorities into other fields once they get to college; (3) barriers within the education pathways (for example, subtly biased testing, or being passed over for promotions); (4) inadequate salaries; (5) traditional leadership programs that do not often teach prospective principals about their ethnic influence as leaders; and (6) a lack of multicultural perspectives within a leadership program's curriculum (p. 12). My findings extend the work of Sanchez et al. by proposing additional characteristics of the high school principals we interviewed.

During interviews, participants shared the value of relationship building and that they believed student success depends on building those strong relationships with teachers and/or school leaders (Bass, 2010; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992). The notion of building connections with staff, students, their families (Riehl, 2000) and community members by fostering clear understanding around beliefs, practices and attitudes, helped participants of the study know their stakeholders which helped create a positive culture at their schools. According to our participants, building strong relationships with students, families and community members (Leithwood, 1992; Burns, 1978; Bass, 2010) is a priority at their schools. Positive relationships will make students feel connected to their school, attend classes regularly and have better academic results. At the same time, students who have positive relationships at school will work hard, complete homework and have confidence in their ability to succeed in high school (Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Many, 2006; Lambert, 2002). Related to this category was the importance of creating a culture of care for teachers and staff, which is transmitted to the students in the classrooms (Fullan, 2002; Noddings, 2005). The majority of the participants shared that if school leaders and staff build strong relationships, are happy and feel positive, then students will be happier and more motivated to succeed in school (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Finally our participants shared that a high school principal position is a lonely job (Rooney, 2000) and that is why it is extremely important to build relationships networking with colleagues and creating a strong supportive group around you that can help in case of emergencies, give you advice if necessary, or simply help you get your next opportunity in your professional career (Matthews, 2009).

In terms of leadership focus, all participants describe themselves as having a strong desire to keep progressing in their career and in their leadership skills. Along the same lines, the participants articulated a passion for leadership that will positively influence the lives of many students and teachers. In order to be an influential leader, all agreed that a leader must be collaborative, authentic, visible and accessible, and data-driven (Heifetz & Linsky 2004; Sanchez et al., 2008). According to our participants, leaders that want to succeed with Latina/o students must motivate their teachers and staff with a clear vision and goals. These leaders are transformational leaders (Bass, 2010; Leithwood, 1992; Marion & Gonzalez, 2014) that are able to create a culture of care among staff and students (Fullan, 2002; Noddings, 2005).

Another finding identified after the analysis of interviews was the equity orientation. Being culturally sensitive (DiAngelo, 2011; Theoharris, 2007), being able to reduce barriers, receive or give advice about equity and being able to understand white privilege (Theoharris, 2007) are the major themes. According to our participants, school leaders need to commit to social justice (Frattura & Capper, 2007; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001), they need to think about equity on a daily basis, to actively participate in discussions about race and equity (Goldsmith, 2004; Peterson, Petti & Carlile, 2013; Tate, 1997; Tillman & Scheurich, 2013), know when to stand up for others and demonstrate courage and take risks for the benefit of their students (Barnes, 1989; Tate, 1997). Along the same lines, they agree to the necessity of engaging all staff and students in creating this culture of equity (Gay, 2010; Leithwood et al., 2004; Tatum, 1999). Participants agreed on the notion of understanding White privilege and how it

operates, therefore, understanding the root causes of racial inequities in our schools (Carter, 2009; Henze, 2002; Peterson, 2012). This understanding could be the first step for school leaders to address inequities and social injustice in education (Dweck, 2010; Gay, 2002; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001).

During the interviews, participants shared that working conditions could be a determining factor of success for high school leaders. Poor working conditions such as long hours, pressure at work, and disconnection with central office administrators and board members can cause high levels of stress and, at the end, impact in their performance (Fuller, Hollingworth & Young, 2015). Participants agreed that being a successful principal is a difficult job that requires considerable concentration and effort. Several subjects reported that they have multiple and often conflicting priorities and not everything can be done well (Collay, 2006). They would love to have more autonomy so they can concentrate completely on their schools and be more fulfilled at their jobs (Leithwood et al., 2004). In most of the cases, the reality is that high school leaders are filled with busy work and have small amounts of time for students and staff.

Having high student expectation was another finding identified by our participants (Gay, 2010). High expectations for students around grades, attendance and good working habits were the main themes identified. Our participants shared that effective leadership begins with having clear expectations for students, which will help with the culture of the school and the success of students, staff and school leaders (Barnes, 1989; Bass, 2010).

Lastly, struggling within systems of oppression was another category identified by our participants of Color. Microagressions (Boske, Newcomb & Osanloo, 2016), first

impression judgments, and aggressive resistance were the major themes encountered by our participants as they decided to become educational leaders (Peterson & Vergara, 2015; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). All our Participants of Color shared that future leaders must be aware of the constant intense scrutiny and need to regularly prove to others that they can do the job. According to our participants, having a strategies in place to address systems of oppression is key in being able to pursue their dreams and keep fighting racial discrimination in our public educational system (Peterson & Vergara).

Implications for Practice

The continuously changing demographic profile of our country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) demonstrates the urgency of creating optimal conditions for Latina/o student success in our schools. According to Peterson and Vergara (2015), "most schools fail Latina/o Students, there is a minimal enrollment of Latina/o students in rigorous course work and the enrollment in college is significantly lower for Latina/o students than White students, which leads to fewer employment opportunities, extreme disparities in home ownership, high arrest rates and poverty" (p. 2). Thus, the findings of this study are important as the 10 subjects are successful with their Latina/o students and showing almost no gaps between subgroups in terms of attendance, grades and graduation rates. Based on the findings of this study, revealing that relationships, leadership focus, equity orientation, work conditions, high student expectations and addressing systems of oppression are the key characteristics of leaders successful with Latina/o students, I would like to propose implications for practice, specifically for district leadership and higher education preparation programs.

District leadership

This study suggests that District Leadership must review their practices around recruitment policy, retention strategies, and preparation of Leaders of Color and allies. Ideally, studies of this nature can lead to more effective recruiting of people of Color and White allies.

Recruitment and retention of culturally and linguistically diverse teachers and administrators is a focus of the Oregon Department of Education and for many years, the state has continued trying to identify as many potential opportunities as possible for recruiting minorities to our teaching force. In 1991, Oregon passed the Minority Teacher Act, since updated and now called "The Educator Equity Act" with the goal of reducing the gap between the number of educators of color and the minority students we serve. The successful recruitment and support of instructional assistants of Color and preparing them to go into teaching positions and later principalship positions is one approach helping underserved Latina/o students succeed in public schools.

Twenty-six years after the creation of the Minority Teacher Act and after one amendment in 2013, these efforts have a negligible impact on an achievement gap that continues to widen. According to the Oregon Educator Equity Report (2016), while a third of Oregon's students are people of Color, only 10% are teachers and administrators of Color (p.4).

According to the findings of this study, districts need to hire, support, and retain teachers and staff of color who can potentially become their future administrators.

Another recommendation would be to convene a team of stakeholders—such as teachers, administrators, community members, and school board members—to examine and revise the policies and practices around equity, hiring and retention practices for people of Color and White allies. They could present their findings to the school community, get feedback, take their recommendations to the School Board for final policy adoption, and share with Human Resources for implementation. In addition, school districts should collect annual data to share with all the community stakeholders.

Another strategy is to create mentoring programs for high school students who have the desire to become instructional assistants, teachers and leaders of schools. This study also suggested the preparation should include a student centered focus on relationships and collaboration. This practice will help our minority students discover opportunities that can guide them to be the future teachers and educational leaders of the State of Oregon and ensure someone "sees something in our Latina/o students.

Another important step is to create and maintain good mentoring programs that address ways to fight systems of oppression in school districts. Findings from this study suggest that quality mentors are essential to educational leader development and career success. For People of Color, formal mentoring programs have been shown to be particularly essential (Magdaleno, 2006; Nieto, 2006). Participants of Color in this study believed that they would have benefited from having mentors who could relate to them culturally and/or are prepared to talk about equity and diversity.

Another suggestion is to give People of Color the opportunity to network to further their careers. Considering the lack of administrators of Color in the State of

Oregon (Oregon Educator Equity Report, 2016), districts could assign them mentors who understand equity and White privilege. At the same time districts should develop opportunities for social networking events. These type of opportunities of establishing relationships and having direct connections with decision-making leaders are extremely important for the success of aspiring People of Color administrators who are unlikely to have the same opportunities as White administrators who may have networking circles outside of work.

When Leaders of Color have been successful in entry level administrative positions, the findings of this study suggest that Superintendents should consider promoting them to building level positions without the White-normed, traditional interview process. These processes, in which numerous stakeholders, some of whom may or may not have examined their implicit or explicit biases may inadvertently perpetuate systems of oppression through the hiring process.

Another important suggestion for District leadership is to offer quality professional

development for existing principals, White and/or Administrators of Color, especially those individuals who are not relationship-based, are not reducing educational disparities among Latina/o students in their schools, and don't understand White privilege. In a recent study by Peterson and Vergara (2015), ten Pacific Northwest Latina/o school leaders were interviewed, each of whom had reduced educational disparities dramatically in their schools, eliminating disparities between Latina/o and White students. When the

researchers asked what school leaders needed but did not find available in their preparation, these leaders provided the following answers:

1. Explicit conversations about how their race and ethnicity will impact their work.
2. Coaching on how to respond to racist comments and micro-aggressions.
3. Parents, students, community members, bosses make racist comments.
4. How to lead for equity and lead the change process.
5. Leaders of Color sharing their stories and strategies (p. 9).

This is a clear example of what should be the focus for professional development in school districts with a high population of Latina/o students.

Additionally, this study suggests District leadership should pay attention to the work conditions of their school leaders. Our participants have been working with district leaders that direct them to implement numerous initiatives, complete reports considered to be "busy work," referring district-created problems back to the building leadership, and offering little or no direction and purpose for their work. This study suggests superintendents should consult principals and what district initiatives add value to the principal's work, what is considered busy work, and how district leaders could give school leaders the opportunity to focus on leadership, collaboration and building relationships with their staff, students and parents. In addition, these administrators should feel complete support from districts to be able to successfully perform in their schools.

Related to working conditions of principals, additional research may be needed to examine the strategies of how successful White leaders and leaders of Color integrate the need to attend extra-curricular events and complete the “busy work”.

Higher Education and Preparation programs

This study proposes that Colleges and Universities should focus their school leadership programs on equity. Participants of Color admitted to having several obstacles in their careers such as culturally insensitive colleagues and acts of racism against them, which pushed them to the point of self-doubt in becoming school leaders and succeeding in their work.

The possibility of partnerships between educational organizations, school districts, and universities to collaborate around teachers and leadership preparation for working with underserved students that focus on equity is essential. One organization contributing to addressing this need is OALA (Oregon Association of Latino Administrators). This organization was created 14 years ago with a vision “to create a forum for Latino administrators and educational leaders that promotes equity in leadership positions throughout the state of Oregon” (OALA, 2005, “Vision,” para. 1). OALA’s general mission is “to promote Latino educators, both current and aspiring into positions of leadership through mentorship, networking, and professional development. OALA will affect the educational interests of all students in Oregon, particularly those of Latino heritage in order to ensure their educational success” (OALA, 2005, “Mission,” para. 1). OALA partners with institutes of higher education to prepare these future social justice leaders to fight inequalities that still exist in our schools.

OALA's vision and mission provides a clear message of support to minority Latina/o educators who want to become leaders in our schools and close the gap of racial disparities within our schools. OALA's emphasis is "to find Leaders for Equity…who value diversity, are culturally proficient, have a social justice orientation, recognize complex interplay of student differences, teacher bias, unfair school practices and policies, manage dynamics of differences, frame conflict and create processes for effecting change" (OALA, 2005, "About Us," para.1).

Another organization leading this cultural shift is the Chalkboard Project. This organization was created in Oregon 12 years ago with the mission "to help create systemic reform in the quality, accountability, and stable funding of Oregon's K-12 public schools" (Chalkboard Project Mission, 2006, para. 1). This organization's main goal has been to concentrate its efforts on the racial disparities among our students in our schools. Their racial equity policy shares their focus on "educational equity and working towards ensuring that all Oregon students have equitable opportunity and access to educational attainment (Chalkboard Project Focus, 2006, para. 1). During 2015, the Chalkboard Project launched two initiatives directly related to minimizing this issue of racial disparities. One of the initiatives, called "Leading for Learning: Aspiring Leaders," focused its efforts on preparing new school leaders in partnership with higher education agencies. Within them, two are clearly connected with the issue of racial disparities:

1. Increase and retain people of color, women, and individuals from historically underrepresented groups employed as Oregon school principals and district administrators.

2. To improve outcomes for all students and close the achievement and opportunity gap in schools impacted by these leaders.

The Chalkboard Project has clearly defined a strategy to support the opportunities for minority leaders. These type of organizations that focus on equity need to continue partnering with institutions of Higher Education and school districts to prepare our future leaders for successful recruitment opportunities in our state of Oregon.

In terms of University leadership preparation programs, one example is Portland State University who has adopted, for the last several years, a focus and a mission on equity in all their programs related to education preparation as stated in their Graduate School of Education webpage, "GSE Vision: Preparing professionals to lead life-long learning and development within our diverse communities" (www.pdx.edu/education). They partner with OALA and Chalkboard to make sure we have well rounded social justice administrators in our schools, especially those with strong presence of minority students.

In terms of White allies leading this work, the North Clackamas School District has implemented a model of training teachers and administrators to be equity leaders while also being culturally responsive. White allies are important in this work because we all need to understand how to work effectively with Latina/o children without stigmatizing races or ethnicities. This is an effective way to reduce educational disparities in our schools (Cooper, 2009). According to North Clackamas School District equity plan (2013), one of their objectives is to "increase and retain a racially and ethnically diverse classified, licensed, and administrative staff and advisory groups that reflect current

student demographics" (p. 13). This District is taking the initiative to recruit, prepare, and retain minority educators. Also important is spending time with White staff members to talk about equity and understand White privilege. This is an important choice that optimistically many other Districts will follow.

Another suggestion for higher education and preparation programs is to prepare Leaders of Color and women to address macroaggressions and how to respond to racist comments. Participants of Color shared the need for programs to train them on communication skills and handling difficult situations related to aggressive microagressions and/or racist comments from others inside and outside of school. White allies cannot be "bystanders"; instead they need to help reduce microagressions by acknowledging the problem and finding solutions with their Colleagues of Color.

Another suggestion is for higher education and preparation programs to teach about White privilege in their courses. According to our participants, it is imperative to teach topics such as how White privilege functions and is maintained within systems of inequity and ways that US culture, laws, economics and power have helped maintain advantages for White people. Furthermore, topics should offer tools to combat such racial injustices.

According to the findings of this study, higher education and preparation programs need to equip aspiring leaders with a collaborative leadership style. According to our participants, the idea of collaborating with all the school stakeholders when school leaders are engaged in instructional leadership, classroom instruction, data analysis will help with the culture of the school and minimize the old ideas of principals being able to

work only in isolation. Along the same lines, these preparation programs should send a consistent message to aspiring leaders around having clear expectations for students in regards to grades, attendance and hard work, which will help with the success of their students.

More often than not, the primary obstacle in terms of preparing school Leaders of Color and/or other leaders to work with underserved students is mainly the lack of support and continuous barriers presented by educational stakeholders. If educational organizations, school districts and universities focus their energy on preparing future leaders with an equity lens, then our Latina/o children will benefit and succeed in our schools.

Participants of this study expressed the need for not only Administrators of Color, but for all school leaders to value the importance of diverse leadership representation in schools with high numbers of minority student population and be willing to mentor the next generation.

Along the same lines the participants of the study suggests, based on their successful experiences with Latina/o students, to concentrate on the following themes:

1. Culturally relevant curriculum
2. Challenging curriculum for all students
3. Extra support for struggling students
4. Positive relationship with families, students and staff members
5. A positive and safe school culture
6. Culturally proficient teachers and staff

7. Professional development around equity and racism
8. High student expectations for ALL

Conclusion

All children of all races, origins, and genders, should have an equal educational opportunity. Schools should be the place where ALL students succeed, get an opportunity to further their education, and contribute to our society. Schools should be places for students to learn, be happy and get ready for their adult life. In order to reach that level of opportunity, they need us, their school leaders. This study has given me the opportunity to examine the characteristics of high school principals successful with Latina/o students. Using the findings from my research study, I propose the following conceptual framework for successfully working with Latina/o students (see figure 9).

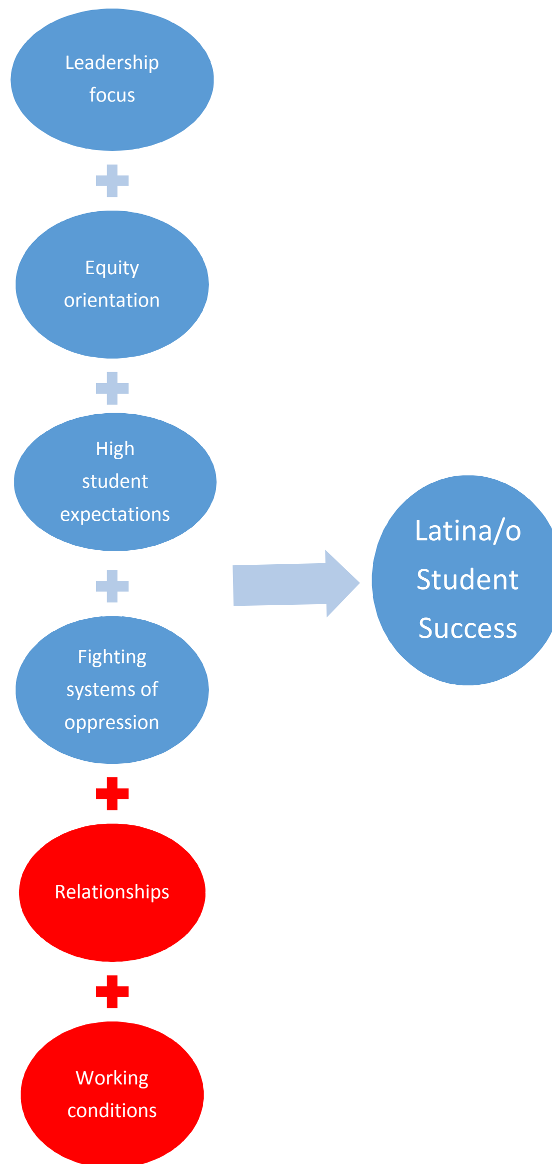


Figure 9. Conceptual Framework for successfully working with Latina/o Students

Today Oregon, like the rest of our country, is facing the incredible opportunity of having diverse children in its schools. School leaders need to understand that these changes in the student demographics are not a temporal event, but a reflection of what classrooms and schools will look like in the future. Leadership needs to understand our diverse student population. We must prepare ourselves to be culturally responsive to our

children in our schools. School leadership strategies need to evolve to be in agreement with our change in demographics at the schools of the communities we serve. Our children are the future of our nation and that is the critical reason why we need to immerse them in a culturally responsive education and teach them that diversity is an asset and should be celebrated and respected.

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Appendix A

Letter to Participants

Date:

Dear ____________________________,

Our names are Ryan Richardson, Assistant Principal at Rex Putnam High School in North Clackamas, and Victor Vergara, High School Principal at the Academy of International Studies, Woodburn High School in Woodburn. We are also Education Doctorate candidates at Portland State University, and it is for this purpose that we are reaching out to you. Our dissertation topic is about the sustainability of the human spirit of successful high school principals and how culturally responsive high school leaders successfully work with successful Latina/o students. The aggregate results of this study will be published in our final dissertations.

We are writing you to request your participation in our study. You are being asked to participate in this study because the school you lead has outperformed the state averages for Latina/o graduation rates and we hope to learn more about how you are achieving these remarkable results. We will use this data to identify characteristics of successful school leaders and how they sustain themselves in the midst of complex organizations.

All your answers would be confidential, and there will be no way to tie the responses to you or to your schools/districts. We will confirm with you, prior to publishing our study, that we have protected your confidentiality. We are contacting high school principals from different districts across Oregon to participate in this study.

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to participate, then let us thank you in advance for your assistance in our research. In addition, you may choose to stop your participation at any time during this study. If you have any questions whatsoever about this request or the research itself, please feel free to contact us, Ryan Richardson, at 503-

353-5864, richardsonr@nclack.k12.or.us, Victor Vergara at 503-980-6100, vvergara@woodburnsd.org or our Portland State University doctoral candidate supervisor, Deborah Peterson, at (503) 490 5504, dpeterson@pdx.edu.

If you are interested in participating in this study of successful leadership in Oregon please respond by September 30th, 2016.

Sincerely,

Ryan Richardson & Victor Vergara
Ed.D. Candidates
Portland State University

Appendix B

Letter to Superintendents to Request Permission to Study School Leaders

Date:

Dear ____________________________,

Our names are Ryan Richardson, Assistant Principal at Rex Putnam High School in North Clackamas, and Victor Vergara, High School Principal at the Academy of International Studies, Woodburn High School in Woodburn. We are also Education Doctorate candidates at Portland State University, and it is for this purpose that we are reaching out to you. Our dissertation topic is about the sustainability of the human spirit of successful high school principals and how culturally responsive high school leaders successfully work with Latina/o students. The aggregate results will be published in our final dissertations.

We are writing you to request permission to contact _____in order to ask him/her to participate in our study. We have chosen _____ because he/she has demonstrated successful leadership in a school with higher graduation rates of Latina/o students than what is expected according to state data. The participants will all be confidential, and there will be no way to tie the responses to individuals or to schools/districts included in the study.

We thank you for your assistance in our research and if allowable, the permission to contact your administrator about his/her participation. If you have any questions whatsoever about this request or the research itself, please feel free to contact us, Ryan Richardson, at 503-353-5864, richardsonr@nclack.k12.or.us, Victor Vergara at 503-980-6100, vvergara@woodburnsd.org or our Portland State University doctoral candidate supervisor, Deborah Peterson, at (503) 490 5504, dpeterson@pdx.edu.

We would appreciate your approval to include your successful principal's in our study. Please respond to this email with your approval by September 30th, 2016.

Sincerely,

Ryan Richardson & Victor Vergara
Ed.D. Candidates
Portland State University

Appendix C

Interview Questions

Culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o students

and

Principal Leadership, sustaining the Human Spirit of the Educational Leader for Social Justice

September 2016

Principal Investigators: Ryan Richardson & Victor Vergara

1. Describe your career pathway (role, what part of the country, how long): e.g., first I was an educational assistant for 3 years in California, then for 6 years a teacher in Portland, then a dean for one year in Portland, next a vice principal for 8 years in Hillsboro, and then a principal in Hillsboro for 3 years, etc.

2. Who helped you, inspired you, and motivated you along the way as a leader and how did they do so?

    a. Was this person from a non-dominant or dominant culture (Gender, race, sexual orientation, able-bodied)?

3. As you decided to become a leader in education, were you met with any resistance from anyone or anything?
    a. *If yes:* Who (in what role, group, or culture) or what held you back or tried to hold you back as you became a leader?

4. How did your formal training for administration prepare you to become a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students?

5. What was the best advice and support you received, as you became a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students?

6. What are *your* unique leadership characteristics that help Latina/o students be successful?

7. What are your most important priorities and/or initiatives as a school leader?
    a. Why are these the most important?

8. To what do you attribute your success with Latina/o students graduating high school or performing well on assessments?

9. What leadership expectations does your superintendent and school board have of you?
    a. What expectations do you think they *should* have for you?

10. What messages do you give teachers about their work? What about students and families?

11. As a member of the White/Latina/o culture, what else should future White/Latina/o leaders know about becoming a leader in schools with high populations of Latina/o students?

12. As a high school principal, what gives you a sense of meaning and purpose? In other words, what motivates you to do the work that you're doing?

13. As a high school principal, what, if anything, gets in the way of you connecting to your sense of meaning and purpose?

Appendix D

Consent for Participation in Research

Culturally responsive school leadership for Latina/o students

and

Principal Leadership, sustaining the Human Spirit of the Educational Leader for Social Justice

September 2016

Principal Investigators: Ryan Richardson & Victor Vergara

Introduction

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ryan Richardson and Victor Vergara, Doctoral Students, at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. This study is examining culturally responsive school leadership and the sustaining of the human spirit of these educational leaders for social justice from the dominant and the non-dominant culture.

You are being asked to participate in this study because the school you lead has a successful Latino/a student population as measured by higher than expected Latina/o graduation rates as compared to state averages. We will use interview data to identify conditions that support the retention of school leaders from the dominant and non-dominant culture and their work with Latina/o students.

We will protect your confidentiality, ensuring that no information you share can be attributed to you in any way. All information that could link you to this study will be de-identified and will remain confidential. We will confirm our findings with you prior to sharing our findings with others.

The information below explains the research study, the possible risks, and possible benefits to you. If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Richardson at 503.353.5864 and/or Victor Vergara at 503.980.6100 or at vvergara@woodburnsd.org

Your participation is voluntary. Your participation in this study includes at the maximum, a two-hour interview about your career and what motivates you to be a school leader who successfully ensures Latina/o student success.

The benefit of your participation is that you will contribute to the body of research regarding how to recruit, prepare, and retain school leaders to work successfully with

Latina/o students. The benefit of participation in this study is high, as the study could potentially provide an evidence-informed method of determining strategies to prepare and retain school leaders from the dominant and non-dominant cultures. The study could make a significant contribution to the literature on how to help with the recruitment of school leaders that are ready to work with Latina/o students.

The research presents minimal risk of harm to participants. The researchers, Doctoral students Ryan Richardson and Victor Vergara will de-identify all information that could link you to the data. While there is little risk of stress, emotional distress, inconvenience or loss of privacy and confidentiality associated with participating in this study, if you should experience any of these, please contact Ryan Richardson at richardsons@nclack.k12.or.us and/or Victor Vergara at vvergara@woodburnsd.org immediately and they will assist you with finding appropriate support and will discontinue your participation in the study. In addition, if at any time you would like to withdraw from the study, you may contact Doctoral students Ryan Richardson and/or Victor Vergara and they will withdraw your data from the study.

How will my information be kept confidential?

We will take measures to protect the security of all your personal information. Confidentiality is guaranteed for all study participants and data collected. Pseudonyms will be used for all participants. All names or identifying characteristics which could potentially compromise confidentiality will be de-identified. All information you share is confidential. All notes, transcripts, and materials collected in the course of this study will be stored in a locked office of the researcher. Materials stored digitally are accessible by the researcher on a password-protected computer in a locked office. The records will be stored in the researcher's locked office for a period of three years from the time of completion of the study.

Information contained in our study records will be used by study staff only. The Portland State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) that oversees human subject research and/or other entities may be permitted to access your records. There may be times when we are required by law to share your information, for example, it is the investigator's legal obligation to report child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, harm to self or others or any life-threatening situation to the appropriate authorities; in those cases, therefore, your confidentiality would not be maintained.

Your name will not be used in any published reports about this study.

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to choose not to participate or to withdraw your participation at any point in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints at any time about the research study, please contact Doctoral students Ryan Richardson at richardsonr@nclack.k12.or.us and/or Victor Vergara at vvergara@woodburnsd.org

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may call the PSU Office for Research Integrity at (503) 725-2227 or 1(877) 480-4400. The ORI is the office that supports the PSU Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is a group of people from PSU and the community who provide independent oversight of safety and ethical issues related to research involving human participants. For more information, you may also access the IRB website at https://sites.google.com/a/pdx.edu/research/integrity.

CONSENT

You are making a decision whether to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided (or the information was read to you). By signing this consent form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights as a research participant.

You have had an opportunity to ask questions and all questions have been answered to your satisfaction. By signing this consent form, you agree to participate in this study. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you.

______________________________ ______________________________ ____________

Name of Adult Subject (print)   Signature of Adult Subject   Date

INVESTIGATORS SIGNATURE

This research study has been explained to the participant and all of his/her questions have been answered. The participant understands the information described in this consent form and freely consents to participate.

Ryan Richardson/ Victor Vergara____
Name of Investigators/ Research Team Members (type or print)

(Signature of Investigator/ Research Team Member) Date

Appendix E

Analysis and Summary of Each Question

Question 1. Describe your career pathway (role, what part of the country, how long)?

Table three shows themes that emerged from the respondents. Themes are split apart according to the race of the respondent.

Table 3

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 1		
Themes for Question 1	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Was promoted to principal without an interview	5	1
I was encouraged by someone	5	0
Commitment to religion	1	1
Reference to an intrinsic goal	2	1
Adverse experiences in childhood	2	1
Teaching through relationship	1	0
Reference to equity	3	0
Barriers to getting licensure	2	0
Demanding job	2	1

Question 2. Who helped you, inspired you, and motivated you along the way as a leader and how did they do so?

a. Was this person from a non-dominant or dominant culture?

Table 4

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 2		
Themes for Question 2	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Needed grit to make it to where they are now.	3	1
Looking out for the underdog	3	1
They were a collaborative leader	2	2
Leaders that were deliberate decision maker	1	1
Made me want to respond to difficult situations that led to despondence	1	1
Helped me overcome adverse experiences in childhood	1	0

Instilled a desire to impact large groups	1	1
I was surprised that someone saw something in me	1	1
They gave me positive encouragement	1	3
They had a focus in equity	3	1

Question 3. As you decided to become a leader in education, were you met with any resistance from anyone or anything?

Table 5

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 3		
Themes for Question 3	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
I had to have thick skin/grit	5	0
Microaggressions	5	1
First impression/judgments	4	1
Aggressive resistance	3	1
I needed to prove to others I can do the job	3	0
None	0	2

Teacher resistance when I switched roles	1	0
Family resistance	0	1
Connection to the community helped overcome resistance	1	0
Institutional/Generational racism	1	0
I wanted to be a leader but they were used to a manager	1	0
I distrusted others or myself	1	0
I wasn’t sure I could do it	1	0

Question 4. We noted that your school has a higher population of Latina/o students than state averages. How did your formal training for administration prepare you to become a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students?

Table 6

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 4		
Themes for Question 4	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Informal/other training helped me (ethnic studies	4	3

major, doctoral program or district PD)		
No positive formal training	5	3
I had one multicultural class but it was a negative experience	4	0
My life experiences prepared me	2	3
I had a multicultural class and it helped me	0	1

Question 5. What was the best advice and support you received, as you became a leader in schools with a high population of Latina/o students?

Table 7

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 5		
Themes for Question 5	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
I received professional advice	3	4
I was warned about the pressures connected to the job	3	0
I didn't receive advice	2	1

Be a role model	1	1
Be authentic (be yourself)	1	1
I received personal advice	1	0

Question 6. What are *your* unique leadership characteristics that help Latina/o students be successful?

Table 8

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 6		
Themes for Question 6	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
I am authentic	4	3
I keep students accountable	4	1
I give encouragement	2	2
I provide opportunities for Latina/o students	2	1
I am a listener	2	1
I am a hard worker	1	2
I am caring	0	2
I promote family & community building	2	0
I am a role model	2	1
I try to recognize barriers	1	1
I am accessible	2	2

Question 7. What are your most important priorities and/or initiatives as a school leader?

a. Why are these the most important?

Table 9

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 7		
Themes for Question 7	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Equity	5	2
Be culturally sensitive	5	2
Care for the whole child	1	4
Provide clear student expectations	3	1
Detrack students	2	1
Promote collaborative decision making	2	1
Attendance / grades	1	2
Graduation rates	2	1
Be visible	0	2

Question 8. To what do you attribute your success with Latina/o students graduating high school or performing well on assessments?

Table 10

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 8		
Themes for Question 8	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Create relationships	2	5
Provide access to resources for students	4	1
Teachers	2	2
I’m not afraid of having difficult conversations about equity	4	0
We are data driven	2	2
We are connected to the community	2	1
ESL student support	1	1

Question 9. What leadership expectations do your superintendent and school board have of you?

Table 11

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 9		
Themes for Question 9	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
They have high expectations of me	4	3
They expect me to work hard	3	2
I follow their expectations	4	0
Make equity a priority	2	1
There are no clear expectations	1	3
Be a leader, not just a manager	2	1
Be an instructional leader	2	1
Be a visionary leader	1	0

I can challenge the expectations	0	1

Question 10. What messages do you give teachers about their work? What about students and families?

Table 12

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 10		
Themes for Question 10	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Teachers are valued and important	4	4
Collaboration is important	4	2
We need to motivate students	3	2
Be a data driven school	1	1
Relationships are important	0	3
Students need to work hard	2	1
Teachers need to take care of themselves	1	0

Use inclusive language	1	0

Question 11. As a member of the ______ (i.e. White, Latina/o, etc…) culture, what else should future ______ (i.e. White, Latina/o, etc…) leaders know about becoming a leader in schools with high populations of Latina/o students?

Table 13

Number of responses placed into each theme during question 11		
Themes for Question 11	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Be culturally sensitive	2	5
Have a support system	3	2
Prove yourself	3	1
Be prepared for judgments/first impressions	3	0
Build relationships	2	2
This is a lonely job	2	0
Networking is important	1	0
Pick your battles	1	0

Be an active community member	1	0

Question 12. As a high school principal, what gives you a sense of meaning and purpose? In other words, what motivates you to do the work that you're doing?

Table 14

Number of responses		
Themes for Question 12	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Helping others	5	2
Liking work	2	3
Relationship with students	3	3
Reference to a feeling or emotion	3	4
Student success	1	5
Being fulfilled	3	1
Reducing barriers	2	2
Respect from others	1	0

Question 13. As a high school principal, what, if anything, gets in the way of you connecting to your sense of meaning and purpose?

Table 15

Number of responses		
Themes for Question 13	**Administrators of Color**	**White Administrators**
Distraction from big picture	3	2
Managerial work	2	3
Bureaucracy	1	4
Lack of trust in others	2	1
Naysayers	0	3
Politics & social media	1	0
Self-doubt	1	0
My health & wellness are not a priority	0	1
Nothing will get in the way	1	0

Appendix F

SPSS TELL Survey Results

	One-Sample Statistics				
Question Number	**Theme of Question**	**N**	**Mean**	**St. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Q71a2016	Shared vision	7	66.086	21.8977	8.2765
Q71b2016	Trust, mutual respect	7	69.429	18.2148	6.8845
Q71c2016	Can raise concerns	7	68.700	15.4904	5.8548
Q71d2016	Leadership supports teachers	7	75.800	17.2477	6.5190
Q71e2016	High professional standards	7	87.414	16.0825	6.0786
Q71f2016	Using data	7	85.771	8.7838	3.3200
Q71g2016	Teacher performance assessed objectively	7	83.229	7.7783	2.9399
Q71h2016	Helpful feedback for improvement	7	77.257	14.9076	5.6345
Q71i2016	Ongoing teacher feedback	7	58.186	23.8725	9.0230
Q71j2016	Evaluations consistent	7	75.771	10.2972	3.8920
Q71k2016	Admin uses eval. tool well	7	80.271	15.0443	5.6862
Q71l2016	School improvement team leads	7	70.171	26.3231	9.9492
Q71m2016	Recognition of accomplishments	7	78.443	10.6075	4.0093
Q1072016	Good place to work and learn	7	86.371	14.0822	5.3226

	One-Sample Test						
						95% Confidence Interval of The Difference	
Question Number	**Theme of Question**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Lower**	**Upper**
Q71a2016	Shared vision	-.570	6	.590	-4.7143	-24.966	15.538
Q71b2016	Trust, mutual respect	-.330	6	.753	-2.2714	-19.117	14.574
Q71c2016	Can raise concerns	-.564	6	.593	-3.3000	-17.626	11.026
Q71d2016	Leadership supports teachers	.031	6	.977	.2000	-15.751	16.151
Q71e2016	High professional standards	-.096	6	.926	-.5857	-15.460	14.288
Q71f2016	Using data	.503	6	.633	1.6714	-6.452	9.795
Q71g2016	Teacher performance assessed objectively	.894	6	.406	2.6286	-4.565	9.822
Q71h2016	Helpful feedback for improvement	.507	6	.630	2.8571	-10.930	16.644
Q71i2016	Ongoing teacher feedback	-.500	6	.635	-4.5143	-26.593	17.564
Q71j2016	Evaluations consistent	.455	6	.665	1.7714	-7.752	11.295
Q71k2016	Admin uses eval. tool well	.294	6	.779	1.6714	-12.242	15.585
Q7112016	School improvement team leads	.027	6	.979	.2714	-24.073	24.616
Q71m2016	Recognition of accomplishments	-.114	6	.913	-.4571	-10.267	9.353

Q1072016	Good place to work and learn	.089	6	.932	.4714	-12.552	13.495