

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration

by

José Montaña

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,

Loyola Marymount University,

in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

2016

ProQuest Number: 10155613

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10155613

Published by ProQuest LLC (2016). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration

Copyright © 2016

by

José Montaña

**Loyola Marymount University
School of Education
Los Angeles, CA 90045**

This dissertation written by José Montaña, under the direction of the Dissertation Committee, is approved and accepted by all committee members, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

7-11-16
Date

Dissertation Committee

Elizabeth C. Reilly
Dr. Elizabeth Reilly, Committee Member

Franca Dell'Olio
Dr. Franca Dell'Olio, Committee Member

Maurice Ghysels
Dr. Maurice Ghysels, Committee Member

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to so many that words cannot begin to express my appreciation. First and foremost, I am truly blessed to have the opportunity to finally reach this milestone, and I am eternally grateful to God for providing me the means, wisdom, and energy to do so. Dr. Reilly, you have been a godsend and support that has made it possible for me to complete this work. There is absolutely no way that I could have completed this endeavor if it was not for your belief, encouragement, and support. I cannot begin to express how grateful and blessed I am to have crossed paths with you. I am also eternally grateful to Dr. Dell' Olio and Dr. Ghysels for your support, guidance, and advice through this process.

To my colleagues in education, my former school district, as well as my current one, I am truly honored to have been given the privilege of your support and inspiration. I could not have done this work without your voices and patience. To Richard and Brent, I am honored to call you my mentors and brothers, and I am blessed to have your leadership as a role model. To my Loyola Marymount University cohort classmates, it has been a privilege and honor to have shared many evenings in class discussions about how to change the narrative of education, and I feel truly blessed to finally join you all in completing this dissertation. You inspire me. To Amy, whose spirit and soul kept me moving forward throughout this work. I can hear your voice and cackle in my ear, girl! I miss you dearly.

I am truly blessed to have a family that instilled the importance of education in my soul, and for always supporting my dreams. To my father, who accepted nothing but the best from me and to my late mother who always told me, “Tu puedes hijo.” This work is the culmination of your efforts, support, and dedication to always provide me with everything I needed to succeed.

I can only hope to be half as great a parent as you both have been to me. To my siblings, Lilia, Luis, and “Tito,” who embody the true meaning of standing on giants so that I could find success. Thank you for your unconditional love and support. To all of those whom I crossed paths with during my short life and did not believe in me, thank you for igniting a fire and drive to prove that I could and did.

Finally, there is absolutely no way I would have been able to complete this work without the support, encouragement, and love of my wife, Bianca. You have been a true blessing from God and entered my life at just the right moment to make this work possible. Thank you for your patience, trust, and belief in me, and for your constant and unwavering admiration and validation. You have been the champion of my struggles and have been my pillar of hope and faith since the first day we met. You know how long this journey has been and I will eternally be grateful that you walked beside me. Now that this work is complete I will dedicate the rest of my short life to you and our growing family. You are next in this process and I hope I can support you as much as you have. I love you!

DEDICATION

One half of this dissertation is dedicated to my parents, José de Jesus and Maria Guadalupe, for inculcating the merit of education in my life, and for holding me to the highest standard possible. I also dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Bianca, for her love and belief in me, and to my children. May this serve as an inspiration to you that anything is possible as long as you have the love, support, and belief of your family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	v
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Statement	2
Purpose of the Study	6
Significance of the Study	6
Research Question	7
Research Design	7
Background of the Researcher	8
Definitions of Key Terms	9
Organization of the Study	12
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
Introduction	13
Theoretical Framework	13
Leadership for Diversity and Equity (Theme I)	20
The Leadership Of California Schools	27
Trends	28
Where Are The Latinos?	31
Moral Imperative Of Diverse Leadership	32
Career Cycle of Educators (Theme II)	33
Teacher-to-Administrator Pipeline	37
Latino and Latina Motivation To Leadership	39
Culturally Responsive Leadership (Theme III)	42
Summary: Implications and Discussion	44
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	46
Problem and Purpose	46
Research Question	47
Sampling	47
Data Collection Procedures	48
Protection of Human Subjects	48
Data Analysis	49
Institutional Review Board Requirements	51
Summary	52
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS	54
Population and Sample	55
Demographics	56

Participant Biographies	57
Camila Beltran.....	58
Elsa Calderon	62
Enrique Garcia.....	65
John Ochoa	69
Kathy Barrios	73
Nathaniel Martinez.....	77
Teresa Sanchez	80
Freire’s Banking, Conscientization, and Praxis Concepts	83
Banking Concept.....	84
Conscientization	89
Praxis	95
Literature Review: Leadership for Diversity and Equity, Career Cycle of Educators, Culturally Responsive Leadership.....	101
Leadership for Diversity And Equity	101
The Leadership of California Schools.....	102
Trends.....	102
Where Are the Latinos?.....	104
Moral Imperative of Diverse Leadership	105
Career Cycle of Educators.....	106
Administrative Credentials.....	108
Journeys to Administrative Positions	109
Mentoring and Recruitment.....	111
Teacher-to-Administrator Pipeline.....	113
Teacher Recruitment into Administrative Programs	113
Networking Support	115
Mentorships for Latinos	117
Latino and Latina Motivation to Leadership.....	118
Meaning for Becoming Administrators.....	118
Before They Became Administrators	120
Culturally Responsive Leadership.....	122
Other Emergent Themes.....	122
Leadership Preparation Programs	122
Language Learners	123
Gender	125
Immigrant	127
Politics	130
Support Systems and Networking	134
Dialogue (Race and Diversification).....	139
Cultural Connection with Students.....	139
Conversations about Race	141
Summary	145
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	147

Overview	147
Discussion	149
Emergent Themes	150
Preparation Programs	150
Gender	152
Race	154
Language And Culture	155
Social Justice	155
Implications	156
Freire	157
Banking	157
Conscientization	158
Praxis	158
Why Is This a Problem?	159
Lacking Latino Representation In School Leadership	160
Pipeline-to-School Administration Is Severely Limited	160
Implications for Students And Role Models in Leadership	161
Mentoring Programs Are Lacking.....	162
Dismal Recruitment Efforts.....	162
Conclusions	163
Increasing The Pipeline	163
Leadership Academy at the High School	164
Teaching And Leadership Component.....	164
Bachelor’s Degree with a Teaching Credential.....	165
Explicit Opportunities to Shadow and Teach.....	166
Schools of Education and School Districts	166
Recruitment and Education Organizations.....	167
Networking, Recruitment, and Mentorships	168
Recommendations for Practitioners	170
Recommendations for School Districts.....	171
Better Recruitment Efforts Explicitly Designed to Attract Latinos and Latinas.....	171
Effective Mentoring Programs for Latino and Latina Principals	171
Support Network Designed to Support Latino and Latina Principals	172
Recommendations for Schools Of Education	172
Recommendations for Future Research	175
Epilogue.....	176

APPENDICES

A: SOLICITATION FOR PARTICIPANTS	179
B: INFORMED CONSENT	180
C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL	181
D: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	184
E: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION IN GOLDEN STATE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	186

REFERENCES187

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Participating Principal Demographic Data.....	56
Table 2: <i>Participating Principal Education Level, School Name and School Type</i>	57

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. California student enrollment by ethnicity.....21

Figure 2. GSUSD student enrollment by ethnicity 2013–2014.....22

Figure 3. California teachers by ethnicity 2013–2014.....23

Figure 4. GSUSD teachers by ethnicity 2013–2014.....24

Figure 5. California admin staff by ethnicity 2013–2014.....25

Figure 6. GSUSD admin staff by ethnicity 2013–2014.....26

Figure 7. Comparison of GSUSD data: Student, teachers, and administrators.....27

Figure 8: Increasing the Pipeline.....169

ABSTRACT

Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration

by

José Montaña

As school enrollments across the United States include increasing numbers of students of color, the number of administrators of color remains disproportionate. In California school districts, where a large percentage of students are Latino and Latina, Latino and Latina principals remain rare. While studies have suggested why Latinos and Latinas do not enter educational leadership, fewer have examined why they do elect to enter the field. This ethnographic exploratory study examines factors that led Latino and Latina educators to enter administrative leadership preparation programs with the goal of becoming school principals. The sample includes interviews with seven Latino and Latina elementary school principals from a large urban school district in California. The study uses Freire's concepts of banking, conscientization, and praxis as a lens to synthesize the findings. The investigation provides insight regarding how school districts and colleges of education can consider targeted recruitment of Latino and Latina leaders to increase the candidate pool for educational leadership and close the disproportionate ethnic gap between who attends California public schools and who leads them. The research proposes a possible working model for the development, recruitment and growth of the leadership pipeline in California schools. Lastly, this study is a call to action for Latinos and Latinas to consider

becoming active participants in the narrative that defines them in the educational landscape of the United States. Issues of race, gender, socio-economic status, language, politics, and immigration are discussed as factors that contribute to the development of Latinos and Latinas in school leadership.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

In the United States today, one of the principle challenges facing education reform is the need for Latino and Latina educational leaders that can serve as principals (Fernandez, Bustamante, Combs, & Martinez-Garcia, 2015). Additionally, as schools have increasing numbers of students of color, the teachers' and administrators' ethnicity and race are not keeping proportional pace, as illustrated by Fernandez et al. (2015), when citing the work of Magdaleno (2006): "In one study, the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA) noted large statistical gaps when comparing the number of Latino/a school leaders to the numbers of Latino/a students in the state of California" (p. 61). In California districts where a large number of students are Latinos, there are few Latino or Latina principals. Trujillo and Cooper (2014) stated, "In contrast to the demographics of the students who populate California's urban schools, the vast majority of the state's teachers and school leaders are White females" (p. 145).

This study examines the factors that led Latino and Latina public elementary school principals to first enter administrative leadership preparation programs, and ultimately seek a principal position in a public elementary school. The district from which this research draws its sample will be known as Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD), a large urban school system whose demographics mirror California's trends in terms of student ethnicity. Through interviews with selected principals, I have gained insight into the cultural, environmental, familial, spiritual, and other factors that led the principals into leadership programs. The results might support school districts and university leadership credential programs in achieving greater success in attracting Latino and Latina educators into school leadership, as well as inspire Latino

and Latina educators to consider seeking an elementary school principal position. Finally, the results provide insight into the qualities that may then serve as encouragement for future leaders.

Problem Statement

From the literature it is clear that school leadership is critical to student success. Sanchez, Thornton, and Usinger (2008) stated, “Other researchers (e.g., Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Post, 2000) have established empirical relationships between principals’ behavior and student achievement. Effective principals do make a difference in student success” (p. 3).

Also, the literature points to a correlation between successful student performance and principals of color within schools, as will be highlighted in more detail to follow. This is not to say that White principals cannot serve their students of color effectively. However, there is a distinct difference in the degree of trust that is granted principals of color simply by virtue of the fact that they share the same ethnic background as their students. Khalifa (2012) cited, “In fact, White principals who serve Black or Latino students may need more ‘community face time’ to build trust than principals with shared cultural backgrounds” (p. 460). From this statement, one can make the assumption that White principals can predominantly lead schools with a majority of students of color. However, to truly succeed, White principals would need to make a concerted effort to connect to the school community in a way that principals of color already have afforded to them.

The emphasis on community seems to be another common factor from the literature that points to characteristics of principals of color and their success with student performance. Wiemelt and Welton (2015) stated, “This finding has important implications for developing and recruiting teachers and principals who are from the community and who understand the

sociopolitical context of the community firsthand” (p. 97). Both Lomotey (1987) and Wiemelt and Welton identified characteristics that point to the social capital that principals of color possess from simply belonging to an identified ethnic background.

Wiemelt and Welton (2015) as well as Sanchez et al. (2008) referred to the school’s principal of color as serving as a “role model” to students, a factor that again has contributed to student success. As far back as the 1980s, researchers such as Lomotey (1987) have inferred that students of color do better with teachers of their same ethnic background and that this can also be inferred as the case with the school’s principal. He stated, “There is an argument that Black and White leaders do lead differently” (Lomotey, 1987, p. 177). Lomotey (1987) also identified that factors such as “community involvement” (p. 177) and role modeling are important to the connection and relationship students have with their school principal. Khalifa (2012) also stated, “Moreover, this distinct Black school leadership style has a positive impact on the academic achievement of Black students because it is based on a unique understanding of, and connection to, the Black community” (p. 430). There remains little literature of Latino leaders as role models, and there needs to be further investigation about this problem.

One common factor and characteristic that arose from the literature around student success and principals of color points to the sharing of what researchers define as “sharing marginalized experiences” (Santamaría, 2014, p. 349; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2015, p. 24; Wiemelt & Welton, 2015, p. 97). The notion is that by sharing these marginalized experiences there is social capital that provides students and families the opportunity to connect to their principals and in turn allow them to find success in school.

One characteristic to keep in mind relates to what researchers such as Santamaría (2014) described as the “value-added approach” (p. 350). This characteristic or factor is directly related to Freire’s (1970) banking concept, which places the student or learner in the empty vessel status. Another crucial factor identified from the literature relates to additional innate characteristics, such as the ability to guide, that are shared by successful principals of color, and the impact on student achievement. Sanchez et al. (2008) cited that “Hispanic principals are highly significant because they provide guidance to students whose parents lack knowledge of the school system” (p. 3).

Finally, lower graduation rates from high school are producing a smaller pipeline into the field of education, according to Sanchez et al. (2008). This raises an important factor to consider as far as the student population of California is concerned. The increasing numbers of Latino students in California’s public schools exist in sharp contrast to the small number of principals who share these students’ background. There is little research available on the career paths of Latino and Latina principals that might support efforts to recruit them to schools with high Latino enrollments. In looking at California’s 6.2 million students overall, there is a significant disproportionate representation of students of color when compared to their school administrators’ ethnic or racial backgrounds. It warrants to clearly state at this point that the following data may not be completely certain that the term “administrator” refers only to school principals, since the California Department of Education (CDE) data might encompass all school administrators, which could include principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and directors. This research provides further clarification through a disaggregation of the GSUSD data.

According to the data from the California Department of Education in 2013–2014, in the State of California, over 50% of students were of Hispanic or Latino origin, and a quarter (25%) of the students were White. However, when comparing student enrollment to the makeup of their classroom teachers and administrators, the disparity gap is significant—over 60% of the teachers and administrators in the State of California are White. Essentially, teachers and school administrators do not look anything like the students they are serving, and when comparing the data among teachers and administrators of Hispanic origin and their White colleagues, the gap is quite significant again. In California, a mere 18% of classroom teachers and only 21% of school administrators are Hispanic. The disparity between both White teachers and administrators and their Hispanic colleagues is significant since the gap demonstrates about a 40% difference between both ethnic groupings.

When comparing the data from GSUSD, the data seem to reflect a slightly more diverse student population as well as a diverse teaching and administrative staff. However, there is a significant gap between students of color and their teachers and school administrators. Although the largest ethnic group of students in GSUSD are Asian students, when coupling with students of color they comprise over 70% of the student enrollment in the district. When comparing students of color in GSUSD with the 13% of White students, the difference between these groupings is quite significant. Again, the data for GSUSD reflect a more diverse population as compared to the state, but there still remains a clear difference in ethnic representation as it relates to Hispanic teachers and administrators and their White colleagues. Nearly 50% of the teachers in GSUSD are White while Hispanic teachers only constitute 12%, and 45% of administrators in the same district are White and their Hispanic colleagues only constitute 15%.

Again the data demonstrate that teachers and school administrators statewide as well as in GSUSD do not mirror their students, and the gap between students of color and their teachers and administrators of color is rather significant.

Purpose of the Study

This ethnographic exploratory study examines why Latino and Latina educators elected to enter administrative leadership preparation programs with the ultimate goal of securing a principal position. Through interviews conducted with elementary school principals in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD), I examine several aspects related to their experiences through an administrative leadership preparation program as well as the journey they may have taken to achieve their current principal position. This research also provides further insight into how school districts as well as schools and colleges of education can consider a targeted recruitment approach of Latino and Latina school leaders to increase the candidate pool for school principals and further close the disproportionate ethnic gap that between students attending California public schools and the figures who lead them. Finally, this research aims to inspire Latino and Latina educators to adopt the role of school principals so as to provide additional mentoring and role-modeling opportunities to the students they serve.

Significance of the Study

This study aims to contribute to an understanding of factors that have led elementary school Latino and Latina principals in urban settings into principalship roles. It should serve to support school districts in considering how to cultivate talent within their organizations. It should further support preparation programs for leadership in higher education to consider how to recruit candidates for such programs. Additionally, this research might contribute to a deeper examination of how educators of color can contribute to the leadership of schools in ways that

add to the diversity of voices, including those of its diverse student population. Finally, it should provide insight that schools and colleges of education can consider when targeting Latino and Latina leaders for recruitment to increase the candidate pool for educational principalships and close the disproportionate ethnic gap between who attends California public schools and who leads them.

Research Question

The following research question is used to guide this qualitative study:

1. What factors led Latino and Latina elementary school principals to enter educational administration?

Research Design

This research has one essential goal: to shed light on the current state of disproportionality between Latino and Latina principals and students in California schools, which can consequently identify possible strategies that would shift this current state toward a higher recruitment of Latinos and Latinas into administrative leadership positions. The interviews conducted in this research provided insight into the experiences of Latino and Latina principals as they underwent their journey through an administrative leadership preparation program, and the factors and barriers they might have faced during their journeys in securing a principalship.

Data for this study were gathered through participant interviews. Each interview lasted between one hour and one hour and a half, and was conducted at a location agreed to prior to the interview. Participants were contacted through email, a phone call, or personal contact, and each participant received in writing an outline of the study as well as a copy of the Human Subjects

Bill of Rights and informed consent letter. Participants were also informed of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and of their identity.

Background of the Researcher

My interest in this study results from my own experience as a Latino educator. I intended to be a classroom teacher for my entire career, but events propelled me into a school principalship role. Now I find myself grappling with the very challenges I did not want to face. My reasons for becoming a principal might be unique to my own career, but the longer I am in educational leadership, the more questions I have about who my Latino and Latina colleagues are and why they entered the field of school administration. We seem to be a rare breed, and some who attempt to find success in this very difficult leadership role find many obstacles and barriers to that success. Understanding what leadership is and how it operates is probably one of the most difficult topics to grapple with as a school principal. Good examples of leaders within our school or district are not always apparent, and when we find a leader after whom we can model ourselves, he or she does not always share our cultural background. This lack of a culturally shared background in mentors was made evidently clear in the Fernandez et al. (2015) study, which stated, “The remaining school leaders identified their mentors as older White males” (p. 68), and in this case only one principal had a Latino/a mentor. Furthermore, many of today’s school leadership preparation programs are outdated and do not prepare aspiring educators for a career in school leadership, leaving them to continue learning on the job with little guidance. Fernandez et al. (2015) cited the work of López, Magdaleno, and Mendoza Reis (2006), which stated:

 this lack of social justice preparation in leadership development programs can hinder leadership growth in a diverse world because the field of educational administration

traditionally has been based on a White male privileged perspective that does not address issues such as gender, race, ethnicity, and social status. (p. 72)

Finally, most educators enter the profession knowing the financial hardships they will likely face. Although educational leaders with more responsibility receive higher salaries, the increase in responsibility often far outpaces any increase in pay; principals may be earning more money, but some feel it is not enough given the challenges of the job. Linda Gifford's dissertation, "The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) (2006), reports in a fact sheet on the principal shortage that the top two factors discouraging candidates from applying for principal positions are compensation insufficient compared to responsibilities and too much time required" (2010, p. 5), which again demonstrates the challenges educators face as they decide to pursue a position as a school principal.

Definitions of Key Terms

This section provides definitions of the key terms used in this study.

Diversity: Silverman (2010) defined diversity as "differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area" (p. 295).

Educational Leadership: Educational leadership occurs in an academic setting, and is central to having educational outcomes to develop people with the appropriate knowledge and skills, as well as the managerial systems involved to provide the best possible environment for their learners (Bush, 2007).

Equity: Equity is defined in the following manner: "As a starting point, the term 'equity' may be broadly equated with 'fairness' and 'justice'" (Simkins, 1995, p. 222). "Defining equity

as access to the favourable conditions of learning has important ramifications for practicing teachers and school administrators” (Murphy, 2001, p. 149).

Latino and Latina: Defining the term Latino is a challenge. Contreras (2004) noted, “The term Latino is a new and ambiguous invention. It is a cultural category that has no precise racial significance. Indeed, Latinos are White, yellow, Black, indigenous, and every possible combination thereof” (p. 226). Gonzalez (2013) found that

in the field of political science, researchers have found that different groups of Latinos are classifying their ethnic identity according to how they perceive their political struggles in relation to other groups as well as their generational and immigration statuses. (p. 7)

Finally, Gonzalez and Gandara (2005) suggested:

Although “Latino” does not mean “Latin America,” it evokes Latin America, the place where the mixing of races that started in medieval Spain reached its highest point—the brownest part of the Hispanic world. Latin America is also much bigger and much closer to the United States than Spain is. Thus, this evocation points to proximity and size and, ultimately, to power. “Latino” looks to the future whereas “Hispanic” signifies the past. (p. 396)

Leadership: Lambert (2002) defined leadership by stating:

Critical social and intellectual transformation is achieved through reciprocal, purposeful learning in community. Leadership is about transformation of self, other, organizations, and society. Such changes are embedded in reciprocal, equitable relationships that enable participants in community to find purpose together. This is the essence of social and

intellectual growth and development; this is the essence of leadership—a concept that has found a new home within communities. (p. xviii)

Mentor: Fernandez et al. (2015) cited that “Mentors were best defined as significant persons in the respondents’ educational career that provided support, advice, and knowledge at no personal gain of their own” (p. 68).

Person of Color: Person of color (or people of color) “has become an umbrella for all groups that identify as racial/ethnic minorities” (Vidal-Ortiz, 2004, p. 183), and “educators, social scientists, and other researchers often refer to groups such as African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and American Indians as people of color rather than ethnic minorities” (Hughes-Hassell & Cox, 2010, p. 212).

Principal: Principal is defined as, “the chief academic and administrative officer of an elementary or secondary public school” (Gifford, 2010, p. 12).

Principal Pipeline: In a recent guide published by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), authors Anderson and Reynolds (2015) cited the work of Hitt, Tucker and Young (2012) to describe this term:

The developmental process that leaders engage in is often referred to as the principal pipeline. This pipeline is intended to increase leadership capacity by aligning recruitment and selection, preparation, licensure, induction, and continuing professional development of principals. This pipeline includes both pre-service and in-service preparation. (p. 15)

Recruitment: “The practices that are employed to train those professionals who are willing to work for or are chosen to have outstanding leadership qualities, to become principals” (Gifford, 2010, p. 12).

Retention: “Supports and practices that are used by a district for new principals to assist them with success in the principal position for an extended period of time” (Gifford, 2010, p. 12).

Students and Teachers of Color: Students and teachers of color consist of “everyone who is not White, including African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans” (Boser, 2012, p. 1).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced current research and included an introduction, problem statement, purpose of the study, significance of the study, conceptual framework, research questions, research design, definitions of key terms, and an organization of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of research on leadership for diversity and equity, career cycle of educators, and culturally responsive leadership. This chapter will also discuss the theoretical framework that guides this study.

Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology of this project including the context, participants, measures, and analytical plan; this will include the types of questions in the interview.

Chapter 4 will discuss the results from interviews.

Chapter 5 will conclude the study, discuss findings from the research, and offer implications for further study. References, appendices, and tables appear after Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I will begin by contextualizing this research using Freire's theoretical framework concepts of banking, conscientization, and praxis. The literature on educational leadership is quite extensive, and one of the commonalities that emerged relates to the type of leadership that yields the most effective student results. Including the voices and perspectives of leaders of color becomes crucial to the praxis that Freire's concept addresses. Santamaria (2014) suggested "when multicultural perspectives of leaders of color are realized, praxis occurs (movement from theory to practice) and leadership for social justice and educational equity ensues" (p. 350). If education is truly aiming to be socially just then there needs to be a systemic change in the manner in which leadership serves the majority of their students. Bishop et al. (2009); Horsford (2010, 2011); Santamaría, Webber, and Pearson (2014), suggested:

Related research suggests that leadership in the new century needs to come from the experience and knowledge base of the largest number of people in many parts of the United States and many parts of the world: Indigenous people and people of color. (As cited in Santamaría & Santamaría, 2015, p. 23).

Theoretical Framework

Paulo Freire's social philosophy of critical pedagogy served as the theoretical framework for this investigation into factors that have led to Latino and Latina elementary principals' decision to enter a formal administrative preparation program that would prepare them for positions in public schools requiring the California Administrative Services credential. Freire (1998) made the claim that educational practice "implies a theoretical stance on the educator's part" (p. 5). No work, therefore, is free of values and beliefs; rather it is situated in one's

understanding of the world. While many of Freire's themes are applicable to this research, I have selected three to propose a deeper understanding of the experiences of Latino and Latina educational leaders. The first theme is Freire's notion of *banking education*, or *banking concept*, which refers to the idea that students or learners are empty vessels that must be filled with the knowledge of those that are educated and privileged. Freire (1970) wrote, "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 72). The second theme is *conscientization*, the notion that developing an awareness of one's social reality comes through reflection and action. As Freire (1970) contended, "A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation" (p. 85). The final is that of *praxis*—the notion that although dialogue is important to gaining knowledge of reality, it becomes essential for action and reflection to take place in order to transform. Freire (1970) asserted, "Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action must be carried out with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation" (p. 65). This section will explain in greater detail these three themes and conclude with a discussion of their relevance to the proposed study and to leadership for social justice.

In framing this theoretical work, it becomes crucial to identify what seems to be the most logical manner in which these three Freirean concepts progress from oppression to liberation. The banking concept that Freire described is the notion that knowledge is a gift held by those who are "knowledgeable" and is bestowed upon those that know nothing. This is the empty vessel concept that underlies the educational enterprise. Freire (1970) explained, "Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is

the depositor” (p. 72). Again, this critical idea of the oppressed as not knowledgeable enough to contribute to their learning is similar to the slave mentality that must be recognized through critical reflection and action or praxis. He asserted, “The peasant feels inferior to the boss because the boss seems to be the only one who knows things and is able to run things” (Freire, 1970, p. 63).

Leadership, therefore, can become a tool to oppress or to liberate. At the forefront of this thought must be the critical theory that Freire’s concepts provide. Through conscientization and praxis the empty vessel notion can be addressed, but leaders of color must be mindful in appropriating too many of the oppressor’s identity and characteristics. For the purposes of this discussion, the term *oppressor* refers to the American education system under which leaders of color must function. Freire (1970) cautioned, “However, not even the best-intentioned leadership can bestow independence as a gift” (p. 66). A complex interplay of the relationship between those who have the power and those who are subject to it highlights how the concept of banking manifests in leadership.

Freire’s (1970) concept of conscientization refers to the notion of developing a critical awareness of one’s reality through reflection and action. Again it becomes essential to frame this thinking from the perspective of the master versus the slave mentality where the oppressive behavior wielded to keep others oppressed is a violent act used to exploit them. Freire stated, “Violence is initiated by those who oppress, who exploit, who fail to recognize others as persons—not by those who are oppressed, exploited, and unrecognized” (p. 55). This notion ascribes responsibility to those in power rather than to those with little or none. Next, the challenge in gaining freedom becomes how to avoid adopting the characteristics and traits of the

oppressor, a common phenomenon in slave mentality. “But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle,” Freire (1970) offered, “the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or ‘sub-oppressors’” (p. 45). Finally, to liberate oneself from the mental and physical slavery that exists in American education, one must remember that liberation comes through action and not resignation to fate. Freire (1998) wrote, “Liberation is a possibility, not fate nor destiny nor burden” (p. 44). In education, conscientization is relevant to the manner in which Latino and Latina students and educators may emulate identities of the oppressed, or slave, and that of the sub-oppressor, or master. Becoming conscious of one’s role and reality in education can provide an initial step in moving towards liberation.

Finally, Freire’s (1970) concept of praxis essentially states that dialogue is simply not enough to gain knowledge and freedom. Action and reflection must be part of this process, and those people that are oppressed must be trusted in their development process to gain this knowledge and freedom: “To achieve this praxis, however, it is necessary to trust in the oppressed and their ability to reason” (Freire, 1970, p. 66). Assuming that the oppressed are not knowledgeable or educated enough to transform their reality is a step back to the banking concept where, as empty vessels, the oppressed is provided what he or she believes is needed or necessary. Freire’s process for gaining knowledge and freedom calls for specific action through dialogue and reflection, but that this process must be transformed through the oppressed—regardless of their circumstance. Freire (1970) argued, “Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action, must be carried on with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation” (p. 65). Freire (1970) made very clear that critical reflection is necessary to bring action together: “To surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize

its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity” (p. 47).

The connection of this research to Freire’s concept of conscientization demonstrates the relationship between Latino and Latina students and the education system in which they are participants: in this arrangement, the oppressed are the Latino and Latina students in the traditional American education system, which as an entity and system represents the oppressor. When those Latino and Latina students later themselves become principals or teachers they might take on the role of the oppressor or sub-oppressor. This transition can represent a major struggle for many Latino and Latina school principals.

If identifying social justice is paramount to establishing the efficacy of this research, then identifying the lack of Latino and Latina principals becomes crucial to reflection, dialogue, and action for social justice in education. Freire (1970) summarized, “It is only the oppressed who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors” (p. 56). In this case the oppressor would be the educational system while the oppressed are students of color at the other end of the spectrum.

There is a critical need to recognize the disproportionate leadership of color in American schools compared to the number of Latino and Latina students in schools. To question the commitment and dedication leaders of color have in participating in the American education system is to operate on the belief that “if others do not have more, it is because they are incompetent and lazy, and worst of all is their unjustifiable ingratitude towards the ‘generous’ gestures of the dominant class” (Freire, 1970, p. 59). Again this notion points to Freire’s concept of banking as blaming those lacking knowledge as lazy and incompetent.

Becoming critically aware and recognizing one's own oppressed reality provides a framework with which to begin. Freire (1970) said, "The struggle begins with men's recognition that they have been destroyed" (p. 68). This reflective process must begin with accepting the reality of Latino and Latina school leaders, and it must be done through the identification of that struggle. The reality that school leaders consistently face is the struggle to themselves remain oppressed by the American education system as well as taking on the characteristics of the oppressor. Again, in revisiting the concept that Freire refers to in freeing one's oppressor by freeing oneself, he remarked, "A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice *co-intentional* education" (p. 69).

Freire's (1970) concepts are connected to this research through the identification of a social justice problem that persists in American education and the lack of Latino and Latina principals in proportion to the students being served. To make changes, we must be clear in identifying the stages of oppression and how that leads to liberation. Freire said:

The pedagogy of the oppressed, as a humanist and libertarian pedagogy, has two distinct stages. In the first, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation. In the second stage, in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation. In both stages, it is always through action in depth that the culture of domination is culturally confronted. (p. 54)

Although these concepts can be interpreted as revolutionary and even sobering, Freire (1998) did provide hope in the midst of this struggle: "Without a vision for tomorrow, hope is impossible"

(p. 45). This research presents a possible vision for tomorrow's educational leadership in the hope that it will change and create an impact that will revolutionize how we see leadership of color in public schools.

The literature on educational leadership is extensive, with recent research suggesting that effective principals, along with excellent teachers, are critical components of successful schools that support students' academic success; a recent RAND Corporation study stated "Many believe that a good principal is essential to a successful school. In fact, research has found that principals are second only to teachers as the most important factor affecting student achievement" (Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, Li, & Pierson, 2013, p. 1). However, there is far less literature on Latinos and Latinas' path to educational leadership and their success in careers as elementary school principals, despite the increasing numbers of Latino children enrolled in public schools. This research augments the extant literature by examining the reasons why Latino and Latina educators pursue principalships in the face of so many barriers (see, for example, Cardno & Auva'a, 2010; Grubb & Tredway, 2010; Sanchez et al. 2008). Considering the ever-changing landscape of education and how diverse the student population has become, and how homogenously White leadership is, the literature points to a disproportionality of educational leadership (see López et al., 2006; Sanchez et al., 2008).

This chapter examines the literature on three specific topics related to this study's focus: the influences on decisions made by Latinos and Latinas to pursue educational leadership positions as school principals, given the barriers to such a goal. The three topics included in this literature review are: (a) leadership for diversity and equity, (b) career cycle of educator, and (c) culturally responsive leadership.

Leadership for Diversity and Equity (Theme I)

Leadership implies a decision-making ability to address issues that affect a collective group. López et al. (2006) stated, “Leadership for equity refers to bold, courageous actions and behaviors on the part of school leaders to ensure that inequalities are addressed openly and directly” (p. 15). This section presents data gathered from the California Department of Education (CDE) and illustrates the ethnic disparity between students and teachers and administrators. The CDE data support and further showcase the gap in leadership representation in California schools and emphasizes the need to establish more diversity and equity in school leadership.

In California, student enrollment data provides a portrait of the students’ ethnic background, as visually demonstrated in Figure 1. According to the data compiled from the California Department of Education (CDE, 2015), from 2013–2014 the majority of students in California was of Hispanic or Latino origin. Overall, 53% (3,321,274) of the students identified as Hispanic. The next largest majority of California students was identified as White, not Hispanic at 25% (1,559,113). That is a difference of about 28% between these two large subgroups. Asian not Hispanic students followed these two large student subgroups at 9% (542,540) and African American not Hispanic students followed at 6% (384,291). The smallest subgroup in California was Pacific Islander not Hispanic students at 0% (32,821).

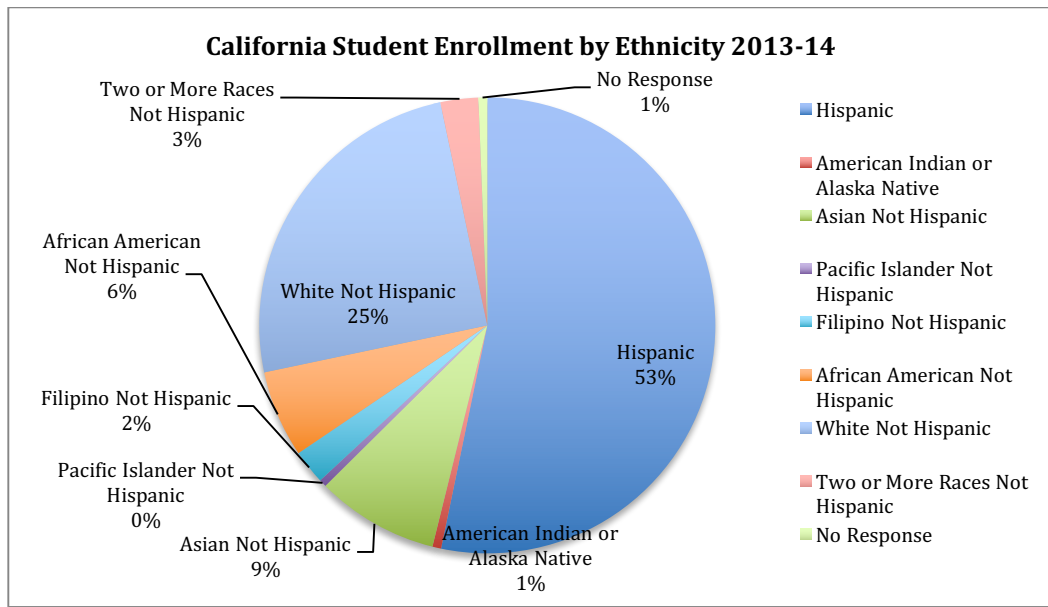


Figure 1. California student enrollment by ethnicity.

Student enrollment in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD) in California—which served as the focus of this investigation—was similar in subgroups, but there seemed to be slightly more diversity and more reflection of that city’s population, as illustrated in Figure 2. As the data compiled from the California Department of Education from 2013–2014 indicated, the majority of students in this district was of Asian not Hispanic descent at 36% (20,949). The next largest subgroup in the school district was Hispanic at 27% (15,971), followed by White not Hispanic students at 13% (7,542) and African American students at 10% (5,775). The smallest subgroup of students in this school district was American Indian or Alaska Native at 0% (273).

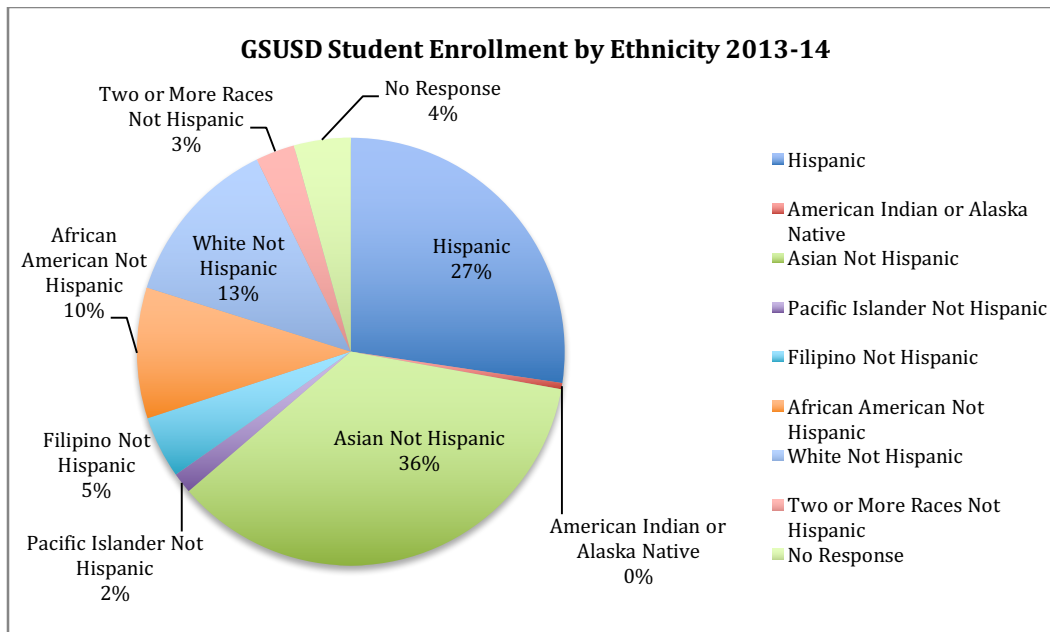


Figure 2. GSUSD student enrollment by ethnicity 2013–2014.

When comparing students' ethnicity or race to those of teachers, the California data for classroom teachers—according to the California Department of Education—began to demonstrate the significant disproportionality between students and teachers as shown in Figure 3. The California Department of Education data from 2013–2014 showed that 66% (188,892) of classroom teachers were White not Hispanic, followed by Hispanic teachers at 18% (52,992). This is a difference of about 48% between both subgroups. Asian not Hispanic made up about 5% (15,231) of classroom teachers and African American teachers made up about 4% (10,857).

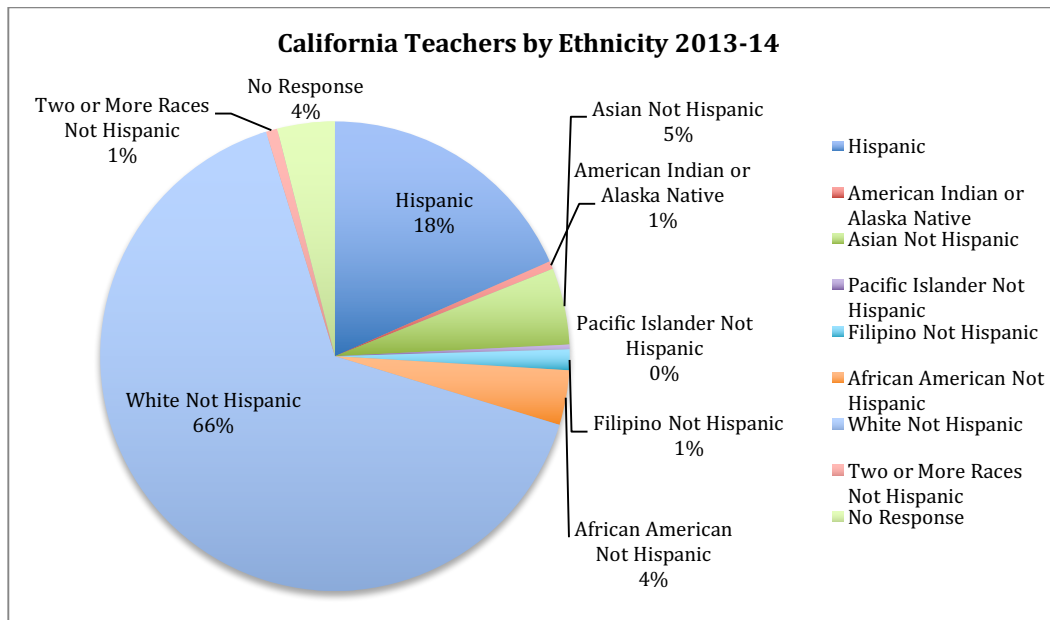


Figure 3. California teachers by ethnicity 2013–2014.

In GSUSD, the data for classroom teachers again closely mirrored the state’s statistics (Figure 4). This school district had approximately 3,421 classroom teachers, so although this is a rather large urban school district, the numbers are quite small in comparison to Los Angeles Unified School District with a student enrollment of about 1.5 million students and more than 71,000 classroom teachers. Data from 2013–2014 California Department of Education showed that 48% (1,640) was White not Hispanic classroom teachers, followed by Asian not Hispanic teachers at 18% (615). Hispanic teachers made up 12% (423) along with teachers that chose not to provide a response at 12% (423). The difference between White teachers and Hispanic teachers was about 36%. African American teachers in this district made up 5% (155), and Filipino not Hispanic teachers made up 3% (112).

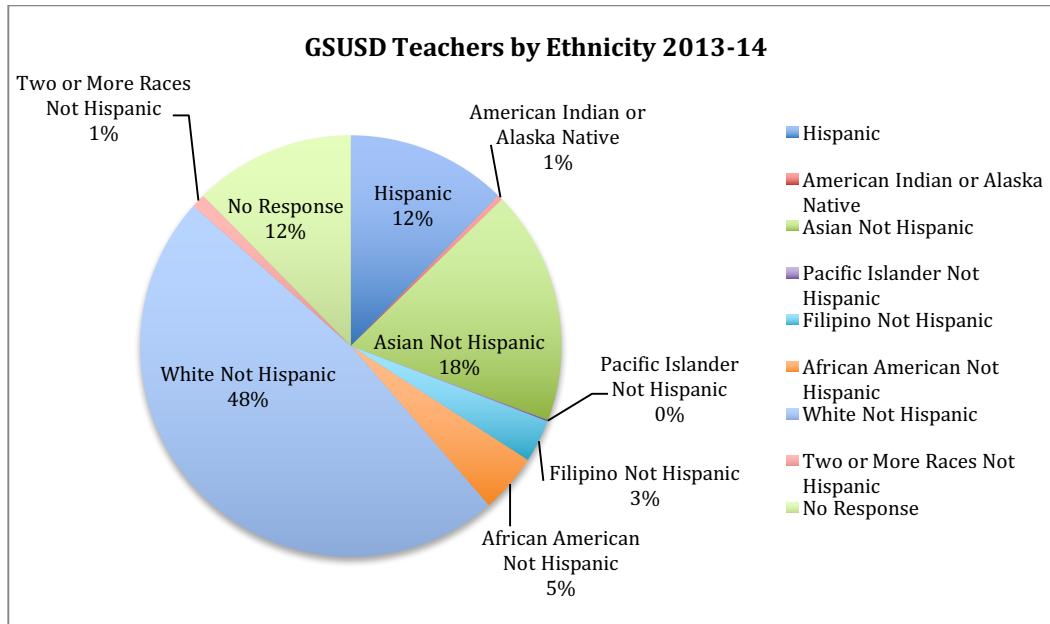


Figure 4. GSUSD teachers by ethnicity 2013–2014.

The disproportionality between school administrators and students was even more evident in the numbers of administrators of color and the students they serve. The California data for administrators continue to demonstrate a common thread of disproportionality in ethnic background (Figure 5). The California Department of Education showed that, in 2013–2014, White school administrators made up 62% (15,233) while the next largest subgroup of administrators was Hispanic at 21% (5,224). African American school administrators made up 7% (1,817), and Asian not Hispanic administrators comprised 4% (922).

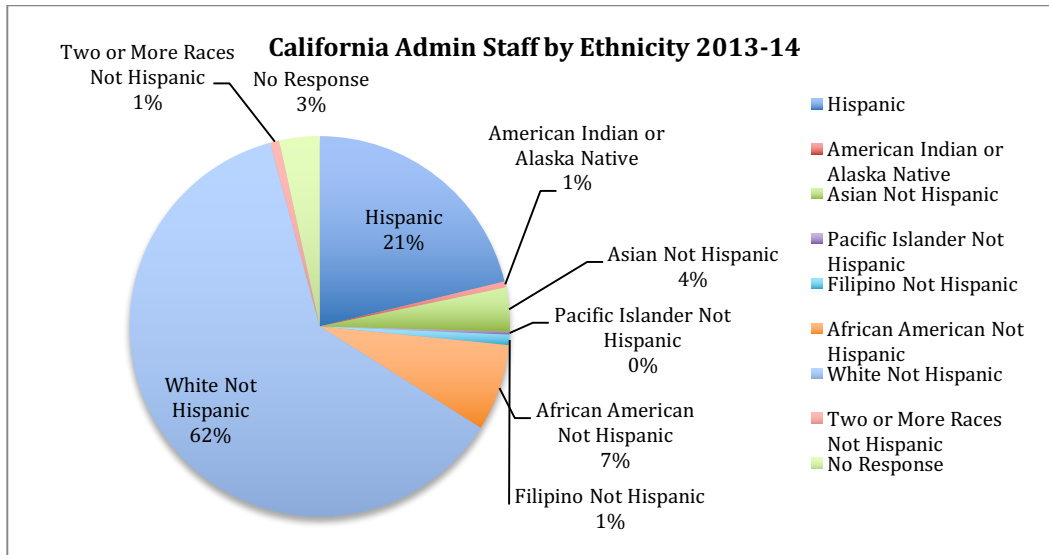


Figure 5. California admin staff by ethnicity 2013–2014.

The data in GSUSD again mirrored the state’s numbers as well as those of the city’s demographics (Figure 6). According to the California Department of Education, in 2013–2014, 45% (123) of the administrators was White not Hispanic, and both Hispanic and Asian not Hispanic made up 15% (42) each. African American administrators made up 10% (27) of GSUSD’s school administrators, and Filipino not Hispanic made up 5% (13).

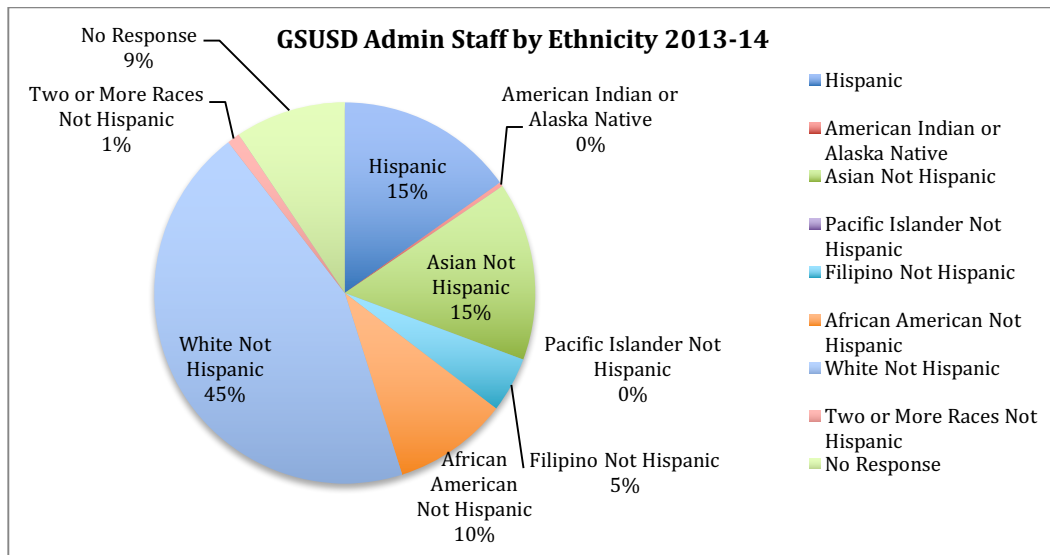


Figure 6. GSUSD admin staff by ethnicity 2013–2014.

The number of administrators of color did not match the student population of California and more specifically does not match the student population in GSUSD where this study took place. Statewide, the difference in numbers between school administrators of color and their White counterparts was about 41%. The difference in numbers between both school administrators of color and their White counterparts in GSUSD was 30% (Figure 7). While the majority of students in California are Hispanic (over 50%), the majority of their teachers and administrators are White (over 60%; CDE, 2015). The majority of California’s schoolteachers and administrators are White in a state where the majority of the students being served do not look like their teachers and administrators. It was similar with the data between students and teachers or administrators in Golden State Unified School District. Again, the educational staff as well as the leadership was disproportionate compared to the students being served.

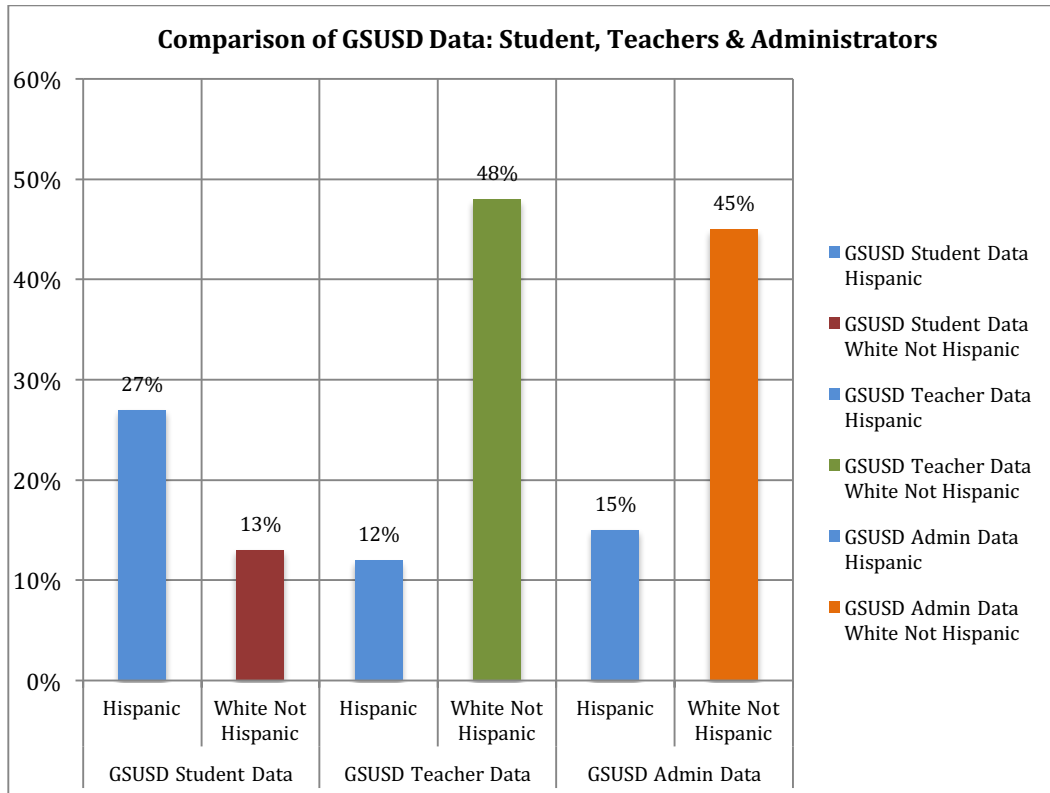


Figure 7. Comparison of GSUSD data: Student, teachers, and administrators.

The leadership of California schools. The data presented in the previous section clearly delineate the sizable representation gap that exists in California schools. However, it is important to consider what researchers and scholars have to say about leadership representation in American schools. In the United States, researchers have found a disproportionate gap of school educators of color in American schools compared to the student population they are serving. Boser (2011) found, “In California, 72 percent of students are of color. In contrast, only about 29 percent of teachers are of color, a gap of more than 43 percentage points” (p. 2). López et al. (2006) cited a RAND study (Gates, Ringe, Santibanez, Ross, & Chung, 2003) that reported “Only 17.8% of all school leaders in the U.S. represent culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds” (p. 14). Additionally, Sanchez et al. (2008) cited the work of Tourkin

(2007), which stated, “82.4 percent of the public school principals in the United States were White” (p. 2). To put into perspective how these numbers are disproportionate in terms of educators or colors versus the students of color in the United States, we can closely look at the data offered in the *Teacher Diversity Matters: A state-by-state analysis of teachers of color* report by Boser. Boser stated:

The makeup of the nation’s teacher workforce force has not kept up with these changing demographics. At the national level, students of color make up more than 40 percent of the public school population. In contrast, teachers of color—teachers of who are not non-Hispanic white—are only 17 percent of the teaching force. (p. 1)

Sanchez et al. also stated,

In nearly half of the states in the nation, 90 percent of the principals are White. Thus, it is safe to say that there are not enough principals of color, and the enrollment of prospective, minority principal candidates in educational preparation programs must become a high priority. (p. 2)

Sanchez et al. (2008) stated, “On a national basis, 10.6 percent (of principals) were Black and 5.3 percent were Hispanic” (p. 2). Given research suggesting that student achievement is higher in schools where pupils have teachers and other school leaders who share a common ethnic background, correcting this wide imbalance should be a goal of national education policy.

Trends. Scholars and researchers are beginning to identify the need to recruit and sustain principals of color to help address the need for leadership representation reflective of the student population they are serving. This representation need is best illustrated by Fernandez et al. (2015), who cited the work of Aleman (2009a) and Mendez-Morse (2000): “Moreover, the need

for more Latino/a/Latino administrators to serve as role models and advocate for the educational needs Latino/a students is a goal often associated with quality educational reform” (p. 73). There needs to be a concerted effort to recruit additional principals of color to address the needs of the communities they serve—and forecasting the needs of those communities becomes crucial to the success of the recruitment process. Manna (2015) advised that we “Forecast future trends in anticipated principal vacancies to direct recruitment toward meeting specific state needs for principals” (p. 9). The students that are being served in American public schools hardly ever have an opportunity to identify racially with educators in a leadership position, and recruiting more principals of color can have a tremendous impact on their experience in schools.

Hernandez, Murakami, and Cerecer (2014) related a personal experience that demonstrates this point:

Because many of her students had not seen a Latina/o in a leadership position, whether male or female, before entering her school, she was very proud that she was also a role model for her students—a model that she had lacked in her student experiences in school. (p. 584)

Researchers have noted:

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 (Sanchez et al., 2008, p. 1). Elsewhere, López et al. (2006) raised the question of student performance and leadership representation, asking, “If we improve our leadership programs by infusing ‘leadership for equity,’ will we see the achievement gap narrow or

disappear?” (p. 14). López et al. further cited the California Legislative Analyst’s Office (2005), which noted that “of all students entering ninth grade, 30% will not graduate from high school” (p. 13). Sanchez et al. (2008) stated:

Despite the Brown 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. For certain racial and ethnic groups, the educational pipeline often ends during the high school years. (p. 2)

Gooden and Dantley (2012) stated, “Although discrepancies, inequities, and discriminatory practices may be historical, they may also be a product of how we structure school systems and educate children in the country differently based on race” (p. 239). American education must recognize that race is an important factor in the education of its children, and this must be at the center of discussions related to improving and reshaping leadership preparation programs.

Gooden and Dantley illustrated the impact of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and how resources tend to follow White students: “Despite goals and hopes of *Brown v. Board of Education* and its intent to equalize resources, resources still tend to follow White students” (p. 240). The resources to which Gooden and Dantley referred are not ever questioned as they do not appear to harm people of color. However, when large urban cities begin to experience “White flight” for suburban areas where home ownership may be more affordable, it becomes evident that the racial makeup of these new communities is not reflective of an urban city or neighborhood. Sanchez et al. (2008) highlighted the work of Tillman (2004), in which Tillman pointed to the consequences of the *Brown* (1954) decision and how it negatively affected many African American principals, resulting in many of them being “fired and demoted” (p. 3).

Sanchez et al. (2008) also cited Tillman's statement, which lamented a "loss of a tradition of excellence, a loss of Black leadership as a cultural symbol in the Black community, and a loss of the expertise of educators who were committed to the education of Black children" (p. 3). Even with all of the mounting evidence pointing to the need for additional research in understanding the reasons behind Latino/a principals' career choices, very little has been done about it, as mentioned by Fernandez, et al. (2015) in their citation of DeAngelis and Kawakyu O'Connor (2012) and Magadaleno (2009): "Overall, despite demographic trends reflecting increasing Latino/a student enrollment, few studies have been conducted on the career choices of Latino/a educational leaders and what contributes to the retention and success of these school leaders" (p. 62).

Where are the Latinos? California's student population is very diverse, as about two-thirds of California students are of color. López et al. (2006) stated, "California schools are becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. In 2004-2005, students who were identified as White made up less than one third of the state's students" (p. 12). However, school leaders of color remain severely underrepresented in California. According to Sanchez et al. (2008), "Schools have increasingly become more ethnically and culturally diverse. Unfortunately, the diversity among school leaders does not reflect the schools' changing demographics" (p. 1). Is there a connection between leadership of color and student performance? Berta-Ávila (2004) stated that "the lack of an ethnically diverse teaching pool is detrimental since statistics indicate that the current public school student population is ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse, where the teaching force is not" (p. 67). Sanchez, Thornton, and Usinger (2009) argued that "leadership that represents the cultural and ethnic groups that make up U.S. society is important

for all students because the world students will join as adults is richly diverse” (p. 1). This statement could not be truer, considering how technology and social media bring society closer to the forefront of these racial and cultural matters. As adults and school leaders, it is our responsibility to ensure that we are proactive in the recruitment of leaders of color. We cannot afford to continue along the current educational path, as the current gap will only continue to widen.

As we begin to analyze the impact that school principalship has on the student population of schools in California, not only does the CDE data need to be evaluated, but also one must take into consideration what scholars are saying about the matter. Fernandez et al. (2015) cited the work of Magdaleno (2006), which stated that “In one study, the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA) noted large statistical gaps when comparing the number of Latino/a school leaders to the numbers of Latino/a students served in the state of California” (p. 61). Fernandez et al. (2015), cited the work of Tallerico (2000), which “suggested that gatekeepers were often a barrier in the hiring of school leaders of color because these gatekeeping district employees had valuable information regarding the hiring process that often gave preferred White candidates substantial advantages over Latino/a candidates” (p. 62).

Moral imperative of diverse leadership. Principals play a major role in the positive outcome and performance of students, and it has already been emphasized that principals are second to teacher effectiveness as it relates to student performance. Manna (2015) stated, “A growing research base documents the key role principals play in helping their schools succeed. Excellent principals make important contributions to school culture and climate, and have detectable and substantial impacts on student achievement” (p. 8). Fernandez et al. (2015) cited

the work of Padilla (2003) and Tresslar (2012), who urged that “Furthermore, researchers suggest that student engagement and academic performance might be influenced by the presence or absence of adult role models, both teachers and principals, who students identify with ethnically or racially” (p. 61). Recruitment practices related to targeting principals of color is a moral imperative to diversify school leadership. Manna (2015) stressed:

Additionally, more attention to strategic recruitment can increase the number of principals from underrepresented communities. This is important because research has shown that the race and ethnic identity of principals is associated with having more diverse teaching staffs, which in turn is associated with improved student outcomes for minority students. These outcomes include more frequent placement in gifted classes, less frequent placement in special needs classes, lower dropout rates, and fewer disciplinary infractions. (p. 27)

The success of minority students depends greatly on the diversity of not only the teaching staff of a school, but also that of the racial and ethnic identity of the principal.

Career Cycle of Educators (Theme II)

Generally, principals begin as classroom teachers and go through a leadership preparation program that can last an average of one to two years, with a preliminary administrative license issued at the end of the program. Later, principals or administrators have up to five years to “clear” their credential through an additional set of courses that would allow for their administrative credential to be renewed. However, formerly the opportunity existed for a teacher to earn a preliminary administrative credential simply by successfully passing the administrative services credential exam if he/she had earned a master’s degree. These days, the administrative

services credential process resembles that of an induction program. This research mainly focuses on principals that have arrived at their principalships through the traditional administrative services path; therefore, it becomes critical to understand the challenges that principals must endure as they choose this profession. School principals tend to be low on the priority list when it comes to the state policy agenda, and a great deal of focus is directed toward classroom teachers. Manna (2015) stated, “Teachers receive more agenda attention than principals in popular discussions and research. Further, investments in professional development also tend to prioritize teachers rather than principals” (p. 8). The fact that there are larger numbers of teachers compared to school principals may contribute to this focus. However, the literature reveals an even smaller focus on principals of color, which reduces the principal pipeline even further.

Once school leaders of color have entered the field of educational leadership, it is often a challenge to maintain their positions. In “The Role of Leadership in the Promotion of Knowledge Management in Schools,” Fullan (2002) noted, “Because little attention has been paid to sustainability and because the 1990s represented a decade of neglect of supporting, developing and nurturing new leaders, the dearth of leadership has reached crisis proportions” (p. 416). He continued to speak about what he sees as the components of leadership sustainability in schools, identifying four: “(1) leadership and the (social) environment, (2) learning in context, (3) leaders at many levels and leadership succession, and finally (4) the development of the teaching profession” (p. 416). The four components listed by Fullan suggest that leaders must concern themselves with the development of the moral environment; they must learn within the context of their profession; leadership must be developed from within for succession to be

successful; and, finally, there must be quality teachers to provide a pool of quality leaders for our school systems. All of these point to the reality that for sustainability to succeed, we need to have a large pool of highly qualified individuals that have been given enough opportunity and encouragement to take on leadership roles in education. We need to have on-the-job learning opportunities to allow future leaders to develop knowledge and the confidence that they are capable of leading schools. They must be able to concern themselves with the social and moral environment and not ignore the need for an increase in leadership capacity or issues pertaining to closing the achievement gap. Again, one interesting piece of information that Fullan found in the literature is that there is really not a great deal of effort behind explicitly recruiting principals of color. A recent RAND study (2013) cited some major recruitment activities, such as:

working with a university or other organization to develop an aspiring principal program, reaching out beyond the district to attract principals from other parts of the country, and targeting teachers or educators within the district who have demonstrated strong leadership skills for principal training. (Burkhauser et al., p. 3)

However, this study is representative of many articles that do not include a specific discussion of outreach to minorities (e.g., University Council for Educational Administration, 2010) while noting activities that could support minority success, such as mentoring: “The quality of the mentoring relationship can reduce aspirants’ feelings of isolation and increase their confidence. The mentoring relationship has reciprocal benefits; mentors learn and grow just as their mentees do” (Barnett, Shoho, & Copland. p. 2).

Mentoring and recruitment play a major role in placing principals into schools, but efforts must also be made to retain them if districts are to diversify educational leadership in schools.

This can be difficult; Burkhauser et al. (2012) suggested:

Overall higher principal turnover has been associated with schools that are low performing, schools that have a higher percentage of students from low-income families, and schools that have higher percentage of minority students. It has also been linked to lower student achievement gains and even to teacher turnover. (p. 4)

This would suggest that student demographics (including race) are major factors affecting the retention of principals in schools, yet this search located few articles on these issues. The RAND study noted above did not include numbers for the amount of first-year principals who left the profession or their school after their first year and were also principals of color. This could have shed light on another issue associated with student achievement and principal longevity. If, as noted in LaPointe and Davis (2006) and The Wallace Foundation (2013), the leader of the school is second only to the teachers' effectiveness in ensuring positive growth and outcomes related to academics, it seems that the racial and ethnic background of those leaders might be a relevant factor in the statistics presented. According to Burkhauser et al., "Over one-fifth of new principals leave within two years, and those placed in schools that failed to meet adequate yearly progress targets are more likely to leave" (p. xii). As noted above, research suggests that ethnic similarities between principals and their students can have a positive impact on student achievement. If the school leader affects school culture, student performance, and teacher collaboration, it would be useful to have this information along with the data provided by these authors. This would permit additional research on what went wrong with the placements that are

cited and help districts to recruit leaders who are more likely to succeed and who are a good fit for these “poor” and “low-performing” schools. The data from Burkhauser et al. have demonstrated that “schools that lose a principal after one year underperform in the subsequent year” (p. xiii), suggesting that the placement process is flawed and should be re-examined.

The recruitment of minority leaders needs to be addressed using a more creative context. If recruiting and retaining principals of color is difficult, many new principals leave after only a few years of service, and the pool for recruiting principals of color is small, then we need to begin looking at other areas of education to recruit. Sanchez et al. (2008) suggested, “Minority teacher recruitment efforts can be fostered by tapping into the paraeducational work force” (p. 7). Many paraeducators or teacher’s aides may be excellent teaching recruits; Sanchez et al. (2008) cited results from their colleagues, showing that “in many schools, paraeducators mirrored the students’ cultural and socioeconomic status” (p. 7). This should be a well-coordinated and thought-out effort in order to be effective, but could work to increase the ranks of teachers and principals of color.

Teacher-to-administrator pipeline. As has been noted in this literature review, school principals are crucial to the success of schools and little to no attention is paid to policies and preparation programs that support the explicit recruitment of qualified candidates. In a recent policy report published by the UCEA intended as a guide for policymakers, Anderson and Reynolds (2015) cited the work of Finnigan (2010) and Mintrop (2012), which stated, “While the recognition of a principal’s importance is welcomed and necessary, state policies still pay little consideration to the ways in which candidates are recruited, selected, prepared, and licensed for these important roles” (p. 12). In the policymaker’s guide provided by Anderson

and Reynolds, an evaluation rubric is proposed, with two specific criteria used to evaluate principal preparation programs by state, including a plan for targeted recruitment and performance-based assessments. This is one of the few literature review writings highlighted by Anderson and Reynolds (2015) that explicitly states the recruitment of “teachers of color” as part of the targeted recruitment process to increase the robustness of the principal pipeline (p. 20). Anderson and Reynolds go on to state that “The majority of the states (90%) do not have well-developed policy for recruitment and selection of candidates” (p. 20), which lead them to make the assumption that the majority of the American educational system is not explicitly addressing the need to create a representative school system reflective of the students they serve.

One of the themes that emerged from scholars as far as how to increase and support a pipeline for principals was to focus on recruitment, mentoring programs and networking support. Fernandez, et al. (2015) stressed, “Therefore, districts might benefit from acknowledging a need to provide their communities with culturally representative leadership and developing focused recruitment strategies” (p. 71). Mentorship programs for aspiring principals or current Latino and Latina principals would continue to support school leadership by providing positive leadership examples from which to draw. This research does not dismiss White leaders as possible great examples for Latino and Latina principals, but as Fernandez et al. (2015) emphasized, “In fact, all participants indicated that the White mentors they encountered were pivotal to their career success” (p. 71). This researcher has been lead to assume that the lack of Latino and Latina representation in school leadership does not only hinder mentorship programs, but also affects the possibility of having a productive networking strategy to help build and foster

additional opportunities for Latino and Latina principals. Fernandez et al. cited that “Considering the lack of Latino/a administrators in suburban districts, this absence of guidance in relationship building, networking, and access could be a key barrier to school leader development and promotion” (p. 71). The lack of Latino and Latina administrators in school districts can contribute to creating a gatekeeping mentality that hinders the development and promotion of other Latino and Latina school principals.

Latino and Latina motivation to leadership. Meaning remains one of the linchpins on which leadership rests, for it is through making meaning of one’s context and one’s community that school administrators know how to guide with a common vision that leads to equitable and accountable schools (Lambert et al., 2002). For many school educators, the belief that one can influence and affect positive change is a motivation for entering the field of educational leadership (see, for example, Fullan, 2002; Jacobson, Orr, & Young, 2008; Jason, 2001). I would venture to state that Latino and Latina school principals enter this profession with that frame of mind, as supported by Fernandez et al. (2015), who cited that “Most participants believed that they really wanted to influence systemic changes in education” (p. 65).

Jason (2001) has argued, “The very core of leadership is infused with an individual’s belief that he/she can improve a situation. To this extent leadership is personal since effective actions in carrying out this responsibility do require sufficiently high levels of achievement motivation” (p. 35). Every school principal typically began his or her career as a classroom teacher or counselor and was propelled into educational leadership by events (Andrews & Grogan, 2001). Jason (2001) continued to explain that principals’ meaning in exercising their leadership is a function of their self-perception of their leadership influence (p. 34). What can be

inferred is that principals derive their leadership meaning based on their self-perception of their leadership influence within their educational realm.

Educational leadership at its core is about effecting change on some level in schools. Individuals seek positions in education to create change and be positive change agents in this field, and not to achieve fame or wealth (Grubb & Flessa, 2006). The Wallace Foundation (2013) highlighted important factors of effective school principals who guide schools to success, noting, “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors that affect student learning in school” (p. 5). Underlying this assertion is the notion that a school principal has the power to unleash and demand the very best of his or her staff to successfully affect student learning. The Wallace (2013) study emphasized the importance of effective leadership and the impact it has on making positive change in schools as they relate to shaping a vision, creating positive culture, cultivating leadership, improving instruction, and finally in managing people, data and processes. Fullan (2002) spoke about a moral purpose that can be directly related to motivation and how that moral purpose needs to concern itself with positive development or it will deteriorate and collapse (p. 416).

Scholars cited both drivers and barriers to the success of the Latino and Latina principals as they pursue a career in school principalship as being categorized into internal and external drivers and barriers. Fernandez et al. (2015) cited:

Internal drivers included: (a) a passion for educational leadership and (b) drive and determination. Internal barriers were comprised of (c) career doubt and (d) questioning of leadership capacity. External drivers were (e) family support and (f) mentors.

External barriers consisted of (g) experiences with gender discrimination and (h) district

resistance. Additionally, the theme of family influence and support had two additional emergent subthemes including (a) family members who were educators, and (b) supportive parents who were still married. (p. 64)

One of the internal drivers that Fernandez et al. (2015) cited as a motivation to enter school principalship was “A passion for educational leadership was pivotal factor for the principal participants when they described their decisions to take on administrative roles within the educational system hierarchy and move from positions as teachers to administrators” (p. 65). As far as external drivers for Latino and Latina principals, the themes that emerged related to strong family ties as well as meaningful mentorships. As Fernandez et al. cited, “Themes of family support, with a stable parental unit, and mentorship emerged in interpreting the participants externally related career drivers or motivators” (p. 68).

Internal barriers can cause a great deal of harm to Latino and Latina principals, and this theme surfaced from the study that Fernandez et al. (2015) illustrated when they cited that “Having their leadership capabilities challenged or questioned by others emerged frequently in participants’ descriptions” (p. 66). Also, Fernandez et al. outlined some external barriers that can be a considerable detriment to building confidence: “Based on participant interviews, gender discrimination and district and school leaders’ resistance to change were cited as substantial barriers to the principals’ careers” (p. 69). Something to point out from the Fernandez et al. (2015) study is that the barriers faced by the study’s principals focused around gender as being a major factor in discriminatory practices that affected Latina principals. Fernandez et al. cited that “All four of the women indicated that they believed gender might have been a factor in how and when they acquired principal positions” (p. 69).

Culturally Responsive Leadership (Theme III)

The American education system finds itself at a critical juncture if it is to diversify school leadership and close the achievement gap. Researchers have argued, “The identification and preparation of school leaders from under-represented racial/ethnic groups is recognized as a critical issue in successful educational reform” (López et al., 2006, p. 14). Scholars have begun to dive into the issue of diversification of school leadership and preparation programs (see, for example, Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Davis & Leon, 2011; Grubb & Tredway, 2010; López et al., 2006; Sanchez et al., 2008). The question of whether current educational leadership preparation programs are addressing the needs of all of their potential students is at the forefront of the discussion, and rethinking the “one-size-fits-all” approach has been suggested (see, for example, LaPointe & Davis, 2006; Davis & Leon, 2011; Sanchez et al., 2008). Certainly our PreK–12 school system is failing our students mainly due to the fact that the needs of these students of color are not being fully met (see, for example, Cambron-McCabe & McCarthy, 2005; Gooden & Dantley, 2012). Now we must begin to rethink what that means for preparation programs intended for school leaders. One simple approach has been suggested by several scholars and raises the issue of encouragement as a central approach to recruiting leaders of color. Cardno and Auva’a (2010) cited the disadvantage that New Zealand’s leaders of color have in relation to careers as leaders of color in school, stating, “Furthermore, it was found that minority groups were at a disadvantage in progressing because they did not have a ‘network’ of encouragement to rely on for job prospects compared to their white peers” (p. 89). Although the study by Cardno and Auva’a highlighted the experiences of leaders of Pacific Island descent in New Zealand, it echoes comments by Boser (2011), who cited similar experiences for people of

color in the United States. Sanchez et al. (2009) suggested, “Supportive actions might include openly encouraging teachers to pursue National Board certification and other leadership positions (through conversations or written notes); providing subscriptions or library access to leadership journals; and supporting teachers’ attendance at conferences and leadership academies” (p. 2). Building confidence in current teachers who demonstrate leadership potential can yield positive results in addressing the widening gap of leaders of color in the United States, and this simple suggestion is within reach of any current school leader or school district. Lastly, race must be a topic of the discussion where the diversification of school leadership is concerned. Sanchez et al. (2008) have stated:

Unless university leadership preparation programs acknowledge the historical and current role of race in our society and the field of educational leadership, there will continue to be an underlying supposition within the field of education that minority principals should only be placed and can only lead in schools with a heavy concentration of minority students. (p. 5)

This raises another issue in preparation programs. Sanchez et al. (2008) referred to this as a “double-edged sword” (p. 5); the view that principals of color are great role models to students of color can work against their being placed in predominantly White schools because they are thought to lack the skills to lead these schools. One can make the argument that this is a double-edged sword, but in contrast, Sanchez et al. have suggested that people of color can both fill school leadership positions and successfully lead a school regardless of their race or that of their students. These researchers believe that students should be able to see leaders as successful

regardless of their race, which in turn would and should provide a better role model for all students to follow.

Now more than ever it is becoming evident that school systems must look ahead in order to successfully meet the needs of a diversifying school system. Manna (2015) stressed that “Being a school principal is more challenging than ever, in part because of an expanding set of responsibilities, technological change, and growing student needs that are characteristic of a diversifying nation struggling to provide equal opportunities to all its students” (p. 12). It must also be said that while it is important to look to the future, it is also important to state that very little information and research has highlighted the experiences of Latino and Latina principals, as stated by Fernandez et al. (2015): “Overall, few studies have been conducted that focus on Latino/a secondary school principals or the experiences of Latino/a principals who work in suburban, rather than urban, school districts” (p. 61). Although Fernandez et al.’s citation refers to secondary school principals in suburban school districts, the research focusing on elementary school principals in urban school districts is even scarcer.

Leadership preparation programs can learn a great deal from the research that scholars have presented around the need to improve their existing programs. Fernandez et al. (2015) emphasized, “Moreover, university leadership programs rarely explicitly address social justice issues in ways that raise the consciousness of all school leaders regarding the importance of diversity in school leadership” (p. 72).

Summary: Implications and Discussion

With the growing Latino and Latina student population in schools as well as in the population of the State of California, it has become a social justice imperative to direct attention to the need for representative leadership in schools that reflects the student population being

served. Fernandez et al. (2015) cited the work of Aleman (2009a) which stated, “Consequently, the need for Latino/a educational leaders in U.S. schools has been identified by scholars as one of the most pressing issues in current education reform” (p. 70), which supports the need for leadership representation reflective of the student body of California. It is not just a matter of hiring new Latino and Latina principals to serve the growing Latino and Latina student population to solve the representative leadership gap, it becomes a call to action for current and future Latino and Latina educators to frame their work and careers through the lens of social justice. Freire (1970) suggested, “It is only the oppressed who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors” (p. 56); therefore, it becomes crucial for principals of color to take action. Latino and Latina educators must leave the sidelines and become active participants on a playing field that is clearly misrepresented by the current education system, and it is clear that the only way to set the tone for such action will be by recognizing the inequalities that currently exist. Fernandez et al. (2015) cited the work of Young et al. (2011) to help illustrate this need and call to action for all Latino and Latina school leaders: “Some scholars suggest that Latino/a school leaders must create their own membership programs and see to network outside of the conventional avenues of school districts and governmental agencies” (p. 73). By considering an ethnographic exploratory study that investigates the factors behind why Latino and Latina elementary school principals choose to enter educational administration, we can allow Latino and Latina school leaders to be active participants in identifying existing inequalities and in shaping the future leadership of America’s education system. This study can also inform school districts as well as schools of education to shape recruitment and retention practices that will support a healthy principal pipeline reflective of the student population of California schools.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Almost all school principals were once classroom teachers. While there might be a clear training path for educators to become principals, the reasons people become principals can vary greatly from individual to individual, as can the barriers they face. This research sheds light on the factors that have lead Latino and Latina teachers to become principals, focusing specifically on elementary principals. Given the small numbers of Latinos and Latinas in these positions and the need to increase their representation, it is critical to better understand the reasons this group of educators had in pursuing their goal of becoming a school principal. To this end, this research is aimed at answering one basic question:

- What factors led Latino and Latina elementary school principals to enter educational administration?

This study investigated the stories of Latino and Latina school leaders' backgrounds in education using interviews. This research is aimed at providing schools of education and colleges further insight into the need for a focused approach to increasing the Latino and Latina candidate pool for school principals. Moreover, it is targeted at providing school districts with additional information to consider as they recruit and foster Latino and Latina educators for principalships. Finally, I hope this research acts as a catalyst to current Latino and Latina educators who are considering entering the field of elementary school principals.

Problem and Purpose

The purpose of this research is threefold: to inform institutions of higher learning of the need to explicitly recruit Latino and Latina educators to pursue school principalships; to inform current school districts of the need to recruit and develop Latino and Latina talent from within to

pursue a career in school principalship; finally, to shed light on the need to further close the disparity in representation of Latino and Latina students and their school administrators, and inspire more Latino and Latina educators to seek a principalship.

Research Question

The following research question will guide this qualitative study:

1. What factors led Latino and Latina elementary school principals to enter educational administration?

Sampling

I invited a total of 12 Latino and Latina elementary school principals from the Golden State Unified School District, a large urban school district in California (see Appendix A and B for copies of the letter and consent form sent to prospective interviewees) to participate in individual interviews that lasted approximately one hour to one hour and a half. From this initial sampling of school principals, the intention was to further narrow the selection of these principals to include only those principals that earned their credential through a traditional leadership preparation program. The ultimate goal was to secure at least 10 Latino and Latina elementary school principals from GSUSD that fit the requirements for this study. However, only seven total principals agreed to participate in this study, and one of those participants had earned his administrative services credential through the completion of the Administrative Services Exam. This participant was included in the study to provide additional information and perspective to this study. The sampling of these principals was rather small due the limited number of potential candidates to draw from this school district. None of the Latino and Latina public elementary school principals came from a charter school, rather all came from a public

school district. All interviews were audio taped and later transcribed to identify common threads in the interviews.

Data Collection Procedures

Each participant agreed to at least a one-hour interview, to take place at a predetermined location either on or off campus. I contacted all participants by email or phone to arrange the meeting location, date, and time. Each participant received in writing an outline of the study, a copy of the Human Rights, and a copy of the informed consent letter. Participants also were informed of the confidentiality of the interview material and their voluntary participation in this study. Each participant was given a code name for confidentiality; only the researcher and participant know the code name. Refer to Appendix C for the protocol and the semistructured interview questions, and Appendix D for demographic data that were used to guide the conversation with each participant.

Protection of Human Subjects

The school district in which this study took place required a separate approval process. See Appendix E for the district's preliminary approval. Following my committee's approval of this proposal, I submitted a formal application to Loyola Marymount University's Institutional Review Board for approval.

Participants' identities remained confidential and anonymous. All data were kept on my password-protected personal laptop and printed data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in my home office. Only my committee members and I would have access to the raw data. When the study was completed, the data would be kept on file for future additional analysis for no more than three years.

The training that I received as a doctoral student at Loyola Marymount University includes completion of several research methodology courses, research writing courses, ongoing contact with the chair of my committee, and the support of the two additional doctoral committee members who provided expertise and assistance. I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) web-based training course on protecting human research participants. These qualifications gave me the expertise needed to interview school principals, analyze the interview data, and draw conclusions about the data.

Data Analysis

In using an ethnography approach for this research, I made sense of the data collected through formal interviews of elementary school principals. The lens through which I analyzed this data is as follows. The analysis of the data was accomplished through six lenses that relate to the Freirian concepts of banking, conscientization, and praxis described in this proposal as well as the three major themes outlined in the literature review. This framework closely matches what should be provided to students of color in American education, and should facilitate their transition from an oppressed state to one of having agency. Their voice on how they arrived at their current leadership position was present and facilitated through this theoretical framework, and should provide them the agency needed to liberate themselves from their current state of mind.

The concepts that Freire presented provided a guide to frame the problem, and made for a logical understanding of how the problem was presented. The banking concept was equivalent to the framing of the problem, and the conscientization concept tied into the development of

consciousness of the current problem. Finally, the praxis led to discussion of the problem, which will ultimately lead to the creation of a new reality or new action plan to address this situation.

The literature review of this proposal served as a tool to develop and arrive at a consciousness. The research itself established a praxis, with the ultimate goal of taking action as praxis is simply the dialogue portion. The research itself presented an action plan or direction to create and establish a new reality. These lenses were an integral part of the analytical tool used to analyze the data collected.

The approach of this ethnography was a holistic one in which the interviews were wide-ranging before I began to identify patterns in the data. Synthesizing the data into ideas that emerged facilitated the logical insights from the interviews conducted and allowed me to make recommendations for future actions. I used a data grid to help categorize the data of key events that participants shared during the interview, and I also used this data grid to triangulate the data to find patterns in the data.

Fetterman (2010) suggested that “the ability to synthesize and evaluate information—and a large dose of common sense” (p. 94) are crucial to making sense of collected data and provide an opportunity for triangulation, noting, “triangulation always improves the quality of data and the accuracy of ethnographic findings” (p. 96). Fetterman also suggested that once data are analyzed and patterns emerge, these can in turn suggest another pattern. Finally, for the purposes of this research, Fetterman suggested that “key events are extraordinary useful for analysis” (2010, p. 102). These “key events” are at the heart of this research. Below are some questions that this research hoped to find some patterns in, using triangulation and critical thinking, as suggested by Fetterman.

1. Are there common themes in the factors or characteristics that lead those interviewed for this study in the direction of securing a principal position?
2. Are there common cultural experiences that contribute to the development of these leaders?
3. Could some or all of these factors or characteristics be used to support the explicit recruitment of Latino and Latina educators to pursue a principal position?

Institutional Review Board Requirements

A formal Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was submitted to Loyola Marymount University's IRB for approval. As noted by the University, the "IRB is a committee that reviews proposed research with the aim to protect participants' rights and welfare" (LMU, 2012, cited Title Code of Federal Regulations Part 46). The potential benefits for the participants were the contribution to the literature on principals of color within urban school settings as well as recruitment and retention of highly qualified principals of color, which at this point is very scarce. It also provided participants an opportunity and platform to speak about the lack of principals of color representation within urban public schools as well as their relevant experiences within the educational system, and support the increase of the candidate pool entering this profession to better represent and serve the student body make-up of their schools. A foreseeable risk in participating in this study was that, while participants shared their own history, these stories could bring up uncomfortable memories that could create obstacles to their success. However, as unlikely as this was, it was important to state that this experience might have brought up past trauma if it ever existed.

Participants' identities remain confidential and anonymous. All data were kept on my password-protected personal laptop, and printed data were kept in a locked file cabinet in my home office. Only I had access to the data. Upon the study's completion, the data were kept on file for further analysis for no more than three years.

The training I received as a doctoral student at Loyola Marymount University included close contact with the chair of my committee and two additional doctoral committee members who provided expertise and assistance during data collection and evaluation. I completed the National Institute of Health (NIH) web-based training course on "Protecting Human Research Participants" and successfully completed coursework in research methodologies. These qualifications provided me the expertise that I needed to contact and interview school principals.

Summary

To recap, the purpose of this research was to examine the reasons why Latino and Latina educators elected to pursue an administrative position with the ultimate goal of becoming an elementary school principal. This research also aimed to inform school districts as well as universities and colleges of education of the need for a targeted recruitment approach of Latino and Latina educators to increase the principal candidate pool. Finally, this research attempted to inspire Latino and Latina educators to enter the role of school principals to provide additional mentoring and role-modeling opportunities to the students they serve.

Up to 10 Latino and Latina elementary school principals from a large urban unified school district were invited to participate in individual interviews that lasted approximately 90 minutes, and this research secured seven participants for this final study. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed in order to identify common threads in the interviews.

Finally, all participants' identities were confidential and anonymous, and all data were password protected. All printed data remained in a locked file cabinet in my home office, and only I had access to the data.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results and findings from the data collected to answer the research questions presented in the previous chapters. The purpose of this research was to examine why Latino and Latina educators elected to enter administrative leadership preparation programs with the ultimate goal of securing a principal position. The research used interviews conducted with Latino and Latina elementary school principals in the Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD), and examined several aspects related to their experiences through an administrative leadership preparation program as well as the journey they might have taken to achieve their current principal position. The research also aimed to provide further insight into how school districts as well as school and colleges of education could consider a targeted recruitment approach of Latino and Latina school leaders to increase the candidate pool for school principals and further close the disproportionate ethnic gap between students attending California public schools and those who led them. Finally, this research aimed to inspire and inform Latino and Latina educators to enter the role of school principals to provide additional mentoring and role-modeling opportunities to the students they serve.

The organization of Chapter 4 begins with a background portion that will highlight the overall structure of this chapter. A biography of each participating Latino and Latina elementary school principal will follow this section of Chapter 4. Sections that pertain to each of the six lenses used to synthesize the data collected will be presented following the biographies of each principal, along with an explanation of how the data collected addressed each lens. Three of the lenses pertain to Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed concepts of banking, conscientization, and praxis. The last three lenses presented in Chapter 4 pertain to the literature

review of this research study, and those are separated into three major areas: leadership for diversity and equity, career cycles of educators, and culturally responsive leadership.

The research question that guided this qualitative study lay in shedding light on the factors that led Latino and Latina elementary school principals to enter educational administration. I begin this chapter by addressing three of Paulo Freire's concepts through data collected from participant interviews. The banking concept, which suggests that students are empty vessels and need knowledge to be bestowed upon them, is highlighted by the data collected from principals participating in this study. This is followed by the conscientization notion that suggests that one must develop a critical awareness of one's reflection and action, and is finalized through praxis, which suggests that dialogue is not enough to gain knowledge and freedom. Action and reflection must be part of the process in order to achieve praxis.

The next three sections of Chapter 4, which pertain to the literature, are separated into leadership for diversity and equity, including subtopics around the leadership of California schools, trends, where Latinos are, and the moral imperative of diverse leadership. The next major area that will be addressed in Chapter 4 pertains to the career cycle of educators, which also includes subtopics of the teacher-to-administrator pipeline and Latino and Latina motivation to leadership. Finally, Chapter 4 concludes with culturally responsive leadership and includes subtopics around networking and dialogue as well as other emergent themes.

Population and Sample

The population of interest for this study was Latino and Latina elementary school principals in Golden State Unified School District. A sample size of about 14 potential Latino and Latina elementary school principals that fit the requirements for this study was identified. Due to the rather small potential pool of participating principals in Golden State Unified School

District the final sample size for this study was seven. There was only one principal, Nathaniel Martinez, who was an outlier in the sample size, as he did not obtain his administrative credential through the traditional administrative induction program.

Demographics

In an effort to provide background demographic data about the participating principals in this study, Table 1 shows the principals' names, gender, age range, and race and ethnicity selected on the Demographic Questionnaire, and the exact number of years they had served as an administrator. Table 2 indicates the participating principals' education level, the year they received their administrative services credential, the institution from which they received their administrative services credential, the name of their current school, and the school type.

Table 1

Participating Principal Demographic Data

Participating principal's name	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Exact number of years as administrator
Camila Beltran	Female	55–64	Hispanic or Latino	13
Teresa Sanchez	Female	55–64	Hispanic or Latino	26
Elsa Calderon	Female	45–54	Hispanic or Latino	11
Nathaniel Martinez	Male	45–54	Hispanic or Latino	7
Kathy Barrios	Female	45–54	Hispanic or Latino	9
Enrique Garcia	Male	35–44	Hispanic or Latino	2
John Ochoa	Male	45–54	White & Hispanic or Latino	4
Average number of years as administrator				10.3

Table 2

Participating Principal Education Level, School Name and School Type

Participating principal's name	Education level	Year administrative credential services was received	Institution were administrative services credential was received	Name of current school	Type of school
Camila Beltran	Master's Degree	2003	Golden State University	Heroes Elementary School	K-5 elementary with one bilingual strand
Teresa Sanchez	Master's Degree	1986	Golden State University	Lincoln Elementary School	K-5 biliteracy school
Elsa Calderon	Master's Degree	2005	Cathedral University (PLI)	Edison Elementary School	Spanish dual immersion school
Nathaniel Martinez	Bachelor's Degree	2009	State of California Administrative Exam	Washington Elementary School	K-5 Spanish bilingual school
Kathy Barrios	Master's Degree	2007	Cathedral University (PLI)	Springfield Elementary School	Elementary
Enrique Garcia	Master's Degree	2014	Cathedral University (PLI)	Franklin Elementary School	PreK-5 Spanish dual immersion
John Ochoa	Master's Degree	2010	Golden State University	Jackson Elementary School	K-5 Language school

Participant Biographies

The following section are biographies of each of the participating principals in this study.

There are seven participating principals; each of the biographies provides background information about each participant, which includes where they were principals, where they received their administrative services credential, how long they had been a principal, and their age range. Each biography also includes a brief summary of the major points of interests from the conducted interview with each participating principal, which set the context for their administrative leadership journey and experience.

Camila Beltran

Camila was a Latina elementary school principal in the Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD). She was currently the principal at Heroes Elementary School, and had started her tenure at Heroes in 2015–2016 school year. Her previous administrative experience lasted for 12 years and was her first as a principal in a school within GSUSD. She was between 55 to 64 years of age, held a B.A. in philosophy, an M.A. in Instructional Technologies and Curriculum Development and another in Educational Administration, and received her administrative services credential from San Francisco State University in 2003. Through formative experiences as a high school student in Colombia and an interest in Paolo Freire’s work regarding the struggles and realities that socioeconomic status plays as a result of education, she became aware of her ability to shape her personal narrative and influence others through teaching. This period of her life was critical in the development of the social justice lens she continued to use in her personal life as well as in her professional career.

Her experience in education spanned about 30 years. She had served as a teacher on special assignment for the curriculum and instruction and bilingual departments from GSUSD, and had also served as a Spanish teacher within GSUSD.

Her journey into education was facilitated by her interest in the arts and education, which stemmed from her high school experience as a tutor and teacher. Camila came to the United States to pursue her master’s degree and work around social issues through film. Early on, she produced a show called “Interview with Latin America” on PBS, which focused on arts and social issues and highlighted the accomplishments of Latinos in the city. Soon after, GSUSD approached her to produce a multilingual program for students in the city, and also invited her to

collaborate on a “Homework Hotline,” where students from multiple language backgrounds were able to serve as phone tutors. At the point of this study, many of those hotline tutors were teachers in GSUSD, and got their start in education through this experience.

Later, when Camila produced videos that showcased classroom best practices from around the GSUSD, many of these videos were featured in the district’s Curriculum and Instruction Department, which generated an invitation from the department for Camila to join the team. Camila completed a teaching credential in a bilingual education program and became interested in leadership as a result of her experience with supportive personnel in GSUSD. Her background in the arts facilitated an invitation from GSUSD to fill a leadership position at a small arts-focused elementary school for 12 years.

Camila perceived her transition into education as difficult decision because of the challenges identity presented to a Latina and English learner in a leadership position; many leadership positions in education were held by older White males. Her husband’s support allowed her to find success in education and to reach the academic success she has attained.

For Camila, equity had always been at the center of her focus in her work and personal life. Although Camila had the opportunity and offer to join a media company, she decided to pursue her passion for education because she wanted to feel like she was making a difference in her community, and she felt that education was a calling she had experienced early on.

She mentioned several role models that were instrumental in her development as an educational leader. These role models both respected her work and provided her plenty of creative freedom as a result of her social justice lens. The first she mentioned was her high school principal in Colombia, who managed the private school she attended during the day and

freely opened up the school to all children in the area in the evenings, where she was given an opportunity to teach. Camila also mentioned several role models in GSUSD that allowed her to be creative and encouraged her to participate in the district's development of student support systems and video libraries of best practices. The common factor in both anecdotes was the trust that was given to her in leading these educational initiatives as a result of her social justice lens.

Camila believed that leading by example was at the center of her leadership style, and she was 100% committed to her students. She was grounded in the realities and challenges presented by her school communities, and data were a driving force in everything she did on her campus. She saw herself as a learner and expected her teachers to have the same commitment; having hard conversations with them was a major part of her work to ensure that students were being served.

Camila believed that her preparation program was a great experience because it was connected to the school district she worked in, but also felt that there were not enough practical experience opportunities provided to her. She shared that as soon as she finished the preparation program, she became a principal "overnight" and was given limited support. Although she had an opportunity to shadow another principal the summer before she accepted her first principal role, she would have benefited from more opportunities provided to her cohort. She found that the shadowing experience she had had in the summer was an extremely valuable opportunity, and she credited many of her leadership traits to what she had learned during that summer. She had a school district coach that supported her through the first year as a principal, but access to this coach was very limited due to the workload that the coach had in supporting other principals.

Much of Camila's social justice lens was developed from her experiences as a student and teacher, and it continued throughout her career as a school leader. She described that, as a classroom Spanish teacher, she noticed that the racial make-up of her students in the advanced AP classes was mostly White and Asian, while Latino students made up most of the beginning Spanish courses.

As a school principal, she used her Professional Learning Community (PLC) as a way to continue to develop her social justice lens, and she recognized that the formal and informal conversations she was able to have with her colleagues allowed her the best learning opportunities. She also recognized that the most valuable PLCs were the ones you choose to participate in. Additionally, she had seen benefits in her participation in the PLCs provided by her school district and local universities. She tended to gravitate to the PLCs that addressed the root causes of social justice issues in education.

She now saw herself as a mentor much in the same manner as the role models she had had early on, and she was mindful about giving back to the community that had shaped her critical social justice lens. She was generous with her time when others reached out to her for support and guidance, and she made a concerted effort to support them because she knew how important this process was to others who were going through the same experience she had had. Through her journey, she recognized the importance of family support, especially that of her husband, who kept her focused with the same critical social justice lens she had. He worked in public radio and shared many of the same perspectives. He was also instrumental in supporting her through her process of becoming a school teacher and principal, and was very instrumental in her decision to choose this path. Although Camila was mindful about finding a balance between

her work and personal life, she recognized that when she was on campus, she was present 100%, and when she was with her family, she focused on them.

Elsa Calderon

Elsa was a Latina elementary school principal in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD) in a school that had a Spanish Dual Immersion program and an English ELD Pathway. She had been the principal at Edison Elementary School for almost 11 years. Her first leadership role at Edison was as an Instructional Reform Facilitator (IRF). She held a master's degree and completed her administrative services credential in 2005 from Cathedral University's Principal Leadership Institute program. Elsa was between 45 and 54 years of age and was originally from Venezuela.

Elsa came to the United States after having taught in Venezuela for a number of years, and after participating in a program that served as a pipeline to increase the number of school teachers with the goal of replacing retiring teachers. She was a professor at the university level, conducting research and presenting her findings at conferences. She began her career in GSUSD as a paraprofessional and consultant, a position that was tailored to her specific content knowledge and experience. While in this position, she expended a lot of effort to take multiple language courses to improve her English skills and ultimately return to the classroom. Although this process was very challenging, she shared she had had the complete support of her husband. She received her teaching credential with an emphasis on special education.

Eventually, her principal and assistant superintendent encouraged her to enter a principal internship program sponsored by GSUSD since she was already enrolled in Cathedral University's PLI program and had shown promise and ability to lead. Shortly after giving birth

to her first child and shadowing a principal through her internship program, she became a school principal. Elsa shared that she always felt she had the skills and ability to be an effective classroom teacher, but wasn't sure if she could be an effective principal. Elsa mentioned that her husband, a group of paraprofessionals at GSUSD, and a support network of university colleagues in Venezuela propelled her into educational administration.

Elsa's hesitation to lead was due in part to being an adult English language learner. However, she was confident in her teaching skills and also recognized that GSUSD had mindfully recruited for the principal internship program. Although she was one of only two Latinas that were recruited into the internship program, Elsa realized the value of her vision in education and felt she would find success as a school principal. Today, her vision for education was deeply rooted in the Freirean philosophy of education that she had developed while in Venezuela; one that was originally planted within from her mother's effort to ensure that all of her children would receive an education. The idea that education can change the world is something she firmly believed in and had been engrained in her since she lived in low-income housing in Venezuela.

Her experience as a school principal had made her aware of several things. She realized that early on in her career, she was not confident in her ability to lead due to the perception she felt people had of her background as a Latina and as an immigrant English language learner. Over time, she realized that she had the necessary skills and experience to lead. A recent conversation she had had with an African American colleague reminded her that, as minorities, they must work three times as hard to find personal success because minorities face a variety of challenges. Elsa shared that that she was present in her position for the students at her school and

that the students deserved a leader that looks like them. Part of this confidence came from her experience within GSUSD.

Elsa recognized that her principal preparation program prepared her for the theory and practice, but dealing with the politics that come with this position was not something she was prepared for. Navigating the school district's teacher's union and having honest conversations with her supervisor were skills she had to learn while on the job and through reaching out for support from her former coach from the PLI program. By the time of this study, she felt confident enough to push back while having a conversation with her supervisor, and her doubtfulness had diminished dramatically.

During the interview, Elsa posed a suggestion that encompassed providing Latino/a principals the opportunity to share the challenges they faced in order to help support their work. Something simple as sharing experiences with other principals and how they responded to those problems of practice would be extremely meaningful and positive in building self-confidence.

Elsa found herself supporting and encouraging other teachers to take on leadership roles within her school and school district. She also encouraged her students to become teachers and principals just like her so that the recruitment and retention of Latinos in education started with her. She mentioned that she saw characteristics of herself in some of the teachers on her staff, and that she was aware of their needs and challenges in similar ways to those of immigrant families. She highly valued this experience because it allowed her to build relationships and create connections with her school community.

Enrique Garcia

Enrique was a Latino elementary school principal in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD). Currently, he was the principal at Franklin Elementary School and was beginning his second year at this school. This was Enrique's first administrator experience, and prior to this he served as a Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) coordinator for his previous school district. The closest experience to an administrative position, according to Enrique, was his role as a Teacher on Special Assignment in his previous school district. Enrique began his educational career as a high school teacher in San Jose, CA, in 2000 and later moved to his previous school district, where he taught for several years. Enrique earned a master's degree and an administrative credential from Cathedral University's PLI program in 2014, and was between the ages of 35 and 44, which made him the youngest participant in this study.

Enrique immigrated to the United States when he was 15 years old, and he had a very difficult time with learning acquisition. However, he persevered and learned the language quickly, and set his sights on entering the teaching profession as a result of a past experience in grade school. While a second-grade student in Mexico his teacher asked him to retrieve a spiral notebook, and not knowing what the word "spiral" meant, he acted as if he had not heard the teacher to avoid following through with the request and being embarrassed. When the teacher finally retrieved the notebook he noticed that "spiral" was referring the wire holding the notebook together, and it was this experience that inspired him to pursue his teaching career. He idolized his teacher's knowledge of words and it moved and encouraged him to become a teacher. Later, while in the United States, he had a similar experience with a math teacher when he approached her and informed her that he would be dropping her geometry class. She told him

that he could do what he wanted, but that if he really wanted to learn about geometry she would make herself available to tutor him during her lunch. He realized that he was not expected to know everything, but that he was expected to learn. This further fueled his desire to pursue his career as a teacher.

Another factor that shaped his career focus was the desire to work with students of color, specifically Latino students, after reflecting on his own personal experience as an English language learner. He realized that while he was a high school student, he was placed in a Limited English Proficient (LEP) class, which was the lowest class below the ESL and general English classes. What he found profound was the reality that there were many students in the LEP class that had lived in the US for years, yet they remained in this class and were not moving on. When Enrique went to college, he decided to major in English literature because math was becoming increasingly difficult and, since he had to work to get through school, he was not able to study like before. His first teaching assignment was in San Jose teaching juvenile delinquents, and he quickly realized that although there were a lot of students of color in the class, it was not necessarily the target group of students he wanted to work with. Later, he went on to teach middle school in his previous district, where he was able to work with the target population of Latino students; this was where he felt that he had the deepest impact.

While working in his previous district, Enrique decided to attempt to become an administrator in that district, but ran into a great deal of resistance from the leadership there. He was essentially told that he would not ever be an administrator in that district, and Enrique cited many possibilities for this situation. He described himself as very outspoken, he was the vice president of his local union group, and he had written a letter to the superintendent expressing his

concerns for the opportunities that were being provided to students at the schools. He felt that the political environment of that district impeded his ability to move into a leadership role there, and he was indirectly forced to look elsewhere for this opportunity. When GSUSD invited him to apply, he initially declined, but a year later he accepted the invitation to do so. By this time, he had already completed his administrative credential at Cathedral University's PLI program. He wanted to prove to himself that he had what it took to be an administrator, and the reason he was not given the opportunity to lead in his previous district was mainly due to the political environment surrounding him. In GSUSD, he felt that he was still able to fight the good fight, and he had the opportunity to work with the target student population he desired to work with.

Enrique felt that the Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) prepared him very well for his work as an administrator. He felt that he received all of the tools needed to lead, and that now he had tools to access at any given moment during his experiences. What attracted him to PLI was the strong social justice perspective the program offered, and he realized that he was not alone in the fight for social justice. The one instance that he felt the program did not prepare him for was the ramification of having a former custodian at his current school site placed elsewhere. The school community had a very negative reaction to this decision, which was something he was not expecting, and the program had not provided him the tools with how to navigate the political landscape he was in. However, PLI did encourage participants to create networks, and he had found this to be one of the most valuable tools from his experience. He had several networks of principals he used daily to support him as thought partners and mentors. Although he had a district-assigned mentor, he found the networks of principals he had created much more useful because he selected them.

Another major characteristic that PLI helped him develop was his social justice lens. Enrique was very articulate when expressing his knowledge of inequities and how they affected him and his students. He was—as he explained “hyperaware”—of how he was perceived by others. He realized that as a Latino, gay immigrant others would see him through those lenses and that had created many experiences for him that had further shaped his social justice lens. He felt that his personal lens had “evolved” and cited experiences where he was profiled by the police, not served at a bar while with his husband, and was told to “go back to where he came from” while shopping at a store. All of these experiences coupled with his own personal experience as an immigrant in this country, teacher, administrator, and student in PLI helped shaped his social justice lens. He was keenly aware of the micro-aggressions that affected him and his students daily, which he took very seriously. As an outspoken person, he constantly fought against this through his work as a principal. He wanted to challenge the status quo at his school and wanted to pass on this critical lens to his staff. Enrique felt that he could impact a much larger group of students through his efforts, but realized that he needed to be politically savvy and strategic in accomplishing this. This was especially true, as his current school was a dual Spanish immersion school with a large enough White population of students and parents.

Finally, Enrique was cognizant that there were not enough Latino teachers in the State of California and was concerned that the number of Latino principals will be affected a great deal as a result of this. He asked what could be done to encourage more Latinos to enter education because he saw this as a concern, realizing that White teachers could not empower Latino students in the same manner as Latino teachers can. He also realized that the media had a great deal to do with the perception of teachers, and that teaching was not depicted in the same

glamorous manner as being a doctor or a lawyer. He also felt that when teachers are depicted in the media, they are often portrayed as a White savior often saving the lives of those endangered students of color. He stated that “there are Brown saviors too.”

Enrique mentioned that the cultural component that Latino teachers could use to educate other Latino students is something that is only afforded to Latinos. The idea of being “bien educados” or “well-educated” is something that Latinos could afford to teach other Latinos. This all has to do with “Buena educación” or a “good education,” which is different than what his White counterparts could provide. He stated that maybe it was because he is “old school,” but that today’s Chicanos might not have the same sense of urgency that he, as a Latino immigrant, had in education. He cited that the fact that he had the proper manners to tell his math teacher he was dropping her class afforded him the opportunity she gave him to tutor him because she saw the potential in him and did not dismiss him as a student that was indifferent about his learning. This was why Enrique felt that Latinos needed to see other Latinos as role models providing the “Buena educación” and being “bien educados.”

John Ochoa

John was an elementary school principal at Jackson Elementary School in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD). This was John’s fourth year as a principal and first GSUSD. Previous to becoming an administrator, John taught in an elementary school setting, served as grade-level facilitator, was a lead for his PLC, an ELD Coach for a K–8 school, and a vice principal in two previous school districts. He held a bachelor’s degree and two master’s degrees, and in 2010 he received his administrative credential from Golden State University. John

originated in Spain and was between 45 and 54 years old. He identified himself as both White and Hispanic or Latino in our demographic questionnaire.

John came from a low-income family in Spain and had an older brother that played a major role in encouraging him to complete his college studies. During the interview, he mentioned that his brother worked very hard to achieve at the highest levels in school and always encouraged John to do his best and never give up. His family always expected John's brother to go to college, but as a family, the expectation was that both of them would complete college and work on the farm or simply get a job. At the time of this study, John's brother was a professor at the university level and was a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University and a visiting professor at Stanford. John shared that his family was very proud of both of them and often joked that it was interesting that they never thought that John would have a BA, 2 MAs, and be the principal of a school. He originally planned to be a veterinarian because he loved horses, and his parents thought he should be a nurse because it was easier to get a job in a hospital since teaching positions were scarce at the time. However, John was firm in pursuing his teaching passion even if it meant that he would not find work upon completing his teaching degree.

High expectations of himself and others were at the core of John's beliefs, and this seemed to be a driving factor in how he approached his work. During the interview, John shared that he really began to appreciate language acquisition at a very early age, and when he was 12 years old, he was studying both Spanish and English, and later became a tutor in high school, where his language acquisition passion deepened. Both his bachelor's degree and master's degree were focused on teaching languages. He described himself as a perfectionist, and was not satisfied with simply a "good job" because he expected to do a "great job."

Early on during his teaching career, John took on leadership roles within the school, which caught the eye of his principals and school district personnel. He was encouraged to apply for an administrative position within the school district but he declined because he wanted to properly prepare for this opportunity, and he felt that after completing his administrative credential studies he needed a little more time to develop. John insisted on working with a mostly Latino student population when he became a school vice principal because he had always felt a connection mainly due to his own personal background. He was grateful to his parents for the sacrifices they made to ensure he and his brother received a college education, and this was something he understood and connected with from the Latino community with which he had worked. This special connection with the Latino community was one that he feels compelled to support through his work as a school principal. Once John felt that he was confident enough in his abilities and skills as a school leader, he accepted a principalship in his previous school district. He had the opportunity to coach, launch a Spanish Immersion program, and serve as a school vice principal and principal, so transitioning to the current position he held was natural because it fit his criteria for leading a school. John was adamant about leading in an elementary school that had a large population of Latino students.

During the interview, John shared that his administrative credential program was convenient for him since it allowed him to work during the day, go to school in the evenings, and connect and network with other administrators. He mentioned that the program was of good quality and the coursework was relevant to the learning of school administration. However, he felt that the program could improve by providing a more meaningful practicum. He found the program to be heavy in theory and lacked the deep and meaningful opportunities to have a

hands-on experience. He compared this experience to the experience of becoming a classroom teacher and that in a teaching credential program you are expected to have a student teaching opportunity, but nothing like that existed in his administrative credential program. John, however, took it upon himself to shadow his principal so that he could gain that experience himself, again pointing to the high expectations he had of himself and the need to feel 100% ready for the next challenge. John suggested that the program could be improved by connecting the coursework to a field practice component to put into practice what had been learned.

John was not sure where the future would take him even though he had already heard the same flattering comments from current supervisors that he should think about a possible assistant superintendent position or even a superintendent position, but he was quick to stop this and again reminded himself that he was not interested at this point. He really wanted to make sure that he “slows down” and perfects his craft at this point, but didn’t rule out the idea of possibly teaching at the college level around English language acquisition. He currently did not aspire to be a superintendent. John also shared that this transition into administration had taken a toll on his personal life balance. He felt that this started last year, and right now it was something that he really wanted to improve. John spent a great deal of time working on his craft and, being that he was currently single, it afforded him the time to do so. He really wanted to find that balance again, and he believed that it would be regained with his development in his current position.

Lastly, John expressed that one observation he had had regarding the high population of Latino students in California was that their current role models did not match them. He was referring to the high percentage of Latino students in California and the low percentage of Latino teachers and administrators in the state. He shared that he felt that there was a need to have more

Latino role models for students so that they might be able to connect with their students and provide their students what they need to succeed. John shared that during one of his experiences as a classroom teacher he was the only male Latino in the entire teaching staff, with the highest percentage of Latino students and all of the African American students in his classroom. While the rest of the teaching staff were mostly White women with low numbers of Latino students, he found it interesting that for those teachers, their biggest behaviorally challenged students were always the Latino students, while in his class he found that it was not the case. On the other hand, it was the few White students that were his biggest behavior challenges in the classroom. John suggested that, in order to increase the number of Latino teachers and administrators, the state might have to look abroad to address this. One last thing that John felt was significant to share was the perception of his teaching colleagues in seeing him as not just a Latino, but rather a more “superior” Latino because of his European origin.

Kathy Barrios

Kathy was a Latina principal at Springfield Elementary School in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD), and she was entering her fourth year as principal in this position. Kathy had been an assistant principal for a total of five and half years in two different school districts. She was a classroom teacher for two years and a coach for three years. Kathy was between 45 and 54 years of age, had a master’s degree, and received her administrative credential in 2007 from Cathedral University’s Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) program.

Kathy’s career in education began as a classroom teacher at another district and she eventually secured a position at GSUSD as an assistant principal. The assistant superintendent at the time, a Latina, was not always supportive and overlooked her abilities and potential for a

principal position several times. Kathy was told she was not ready to lead a school and felt that the assistant superintendent was punitive about her work.

Although she had served as the school's instructional reform coach and assistant principal, Kathy felt that the strained relationship that the principal at the time had with the assistant principal contributed to her being blamed by default for the school's shortcomings. Kathy felt that the assistant superintendent's perception of her was personal. Two weeks after leaving GSUSD, she was offered a principal position at GSUSD, which she declined.

During her time in the other school district, she had both encouraging and challenging experiences. She gained some great professional development related to leadership, but felt that the district lacked overall support for schools because it did not have all of the resources available at GSUSD. Her principal at that school district provided her plenty of mentorship opportunities that helped her develop additional confidence in her skills. Her transition back to GSUSD was facilitated by the need for simplicity of life since she was originally from the city where GSUSD resided and also because her daughter attended a school within GSUSD.

Kathy described herself as very quiet and reserved, and felt this may have impacted the assistant superintendent's perception of her ability to lead a school. However, Kathy always felt that she did not voice her opinions because it was inappropriate to challenge the leadership of her principal, and she was never actually asked to do so. Kathy also describes herself as "flying under the radar," and felt that this may have to do with her cultural background. She mentioned that part of her "accommodating" characteristic may be a stereotypical image of Latinas, and she recognized that this may have also contributed to this sense of Kathy not being an assertive leader. She valued shared leadership and always strove to find something positive in each

experience she had. Kathy mentioned that one of her teaching credential supervisors described her as working well in chaos and having the ability to recognize her limitations. She added that she was always willing to do some research to learn something new and would always take what was useful to her or needed.

Kathy's father passed away when she was five years old. Her older brother was rarely present and eventually moved out of the home, allowing her to spend a lot of time with her mother. She attended Catholic school, where she developed strong and lasting relationships with peers that continued to this day. Kathy shared that her leadership abilities were harnessed by those who saw her potential. She remembered her family often asking her to translate or speak for them because her English was better than theirs. In high school, her own classmates would encourage her to be a team leader and run for class president. Instead, Kathy chose to lead as her school's basketball team captain and grade-level treasurer. She never shied away from leadership, but she never sought it, even though leading came naturally to her.

Kathy felt that she was still developing as a leader, and mentioned an experience she had had while in GSUSD attending a leadership development at Deloitte. She felt that her experience in the Principal Leadership Institute was useful and supportive initially, but she cited experiences where she did not see the benefit or connection of certain program activities. She recalled an activity in which she was required to complete a piece of artwork that became a part of a journal that reflected her background. The activity took an entire work day and was meant to convey that all participants of the institute were of diverse backgrounds. Although she valued the theoretical perspective of the activity, she felt that too much time was spent on an individual activity rather than one that was more inclusive of others' perspectives. Additionally, Kathy felt that cultural

competence discussions in PLI were somewhat superficial even though the program greatly highlighted diversity.

Much of Kathy's social justice lens was developed growing up in the city as well as through her experience in education. She was a native of the city where GSUSD was located, and her mother always exposed her to all of the cultural events that took place throughout the city. She shared that her mother cleaned homes of affluent people, and during the summer months, Kathy would accompany her mother to work. She had the opportunity to play with children that lived in these homes, and therefore experienced a broad perspective of what it was like to be from an affluent background. Kathy took these experiences and further developed them as an educator and parent. She shared with her staff the need to ensure that all students' needs are being served and that differentiation is a key factor in student success. Additionally, she shared the struggles that students like her daughter, who had a learning disability, present for learning, and how her daughter's process of learning compared to her own. Both of them learned at different paces and lengths, and this struck a chord for Kathy as she led her current school team.

Finally, Kathy shared that her initial intent to enter leadership was not to be a school principal; rather, she wanted to gain the leadership experience she needed to obtain a central leadership position in English Language Development, since this was where her passion lay. Over time, she had accepted her role as a school principal and, at the time of this study, she was thoroughly enjoying her work. She saw a great deal of benefit in what she was doing. Kathy did not see herself taking on a central leadership role at this time, but did not rule it out for the near future.

Nathaniel Martinez

Nathaniel was a Latino elementary school principal in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD). He was the principal at Washington Elementary School and had been there for two years. At the time of this study, he was in his seventh year as an elementary school principal and previously served as a middle school principal for two years in a school within GSUSD. Nathaniel did not follow the traditional path of other Latino administrators in the research sample. He did not go through a traditional principal induction program like PLI at Cathedral University. Nathaniel took the State of California administrative exam in 2009 in order to be a school principal by request of the superintendent. Nathaniel received his bachelor's degree from UCLA and completed his teaching credential at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and was between the ages of 45 and 54.

Prior to Nathaniel being a school principal in GSUSD, he served as a teacher, then member, and later president of the GSUSD school board for a total of eight years, from 2001 to 2009. After Nathaniel left the school board to run for city supervisor, an election he lost, he was asked by the school district superintendent to apply for a principalship within GSUSD. Nathaniel felt obligated to apply for a principal position due to the nature of his relationship with the superintendent, and eventually was asked to lead Oak Middle School, a struggling school. Nathaniel felt like his close relationship with the superintendent facilitated the offer to lead that school since the superintendent had previously headed Oak Middle School and was sorely disillusioned with its state. Their relationship also allowed him to reach out about various challenges and other issues related to his new role. The superintendent believed that Nathaniel could turn things around. Nathaniel shared that he had had great success at Oak Middle School

for the two years he was there, but it was too late for the school. Enrollment of the school had declined dramatically, and the once affluent school was struggling to keep students and good teachers as well. He described a hostile takeover of Oak Middle School by another affluent and successful school that had been trying to become a K–8 school for several years. Subsequently, Oak Middle School was renamed and restructured.

Prior to becoming principal at Oak Middle School, Nathaniel was asked to shadow various principals within GSUSD. Elsa Calderon, also a respondent in this study, was one of his mentors during the spring months prior to his work at Oak Middle School. Although he found the shadowing experience valuable, he felt that starting as first-time principal in a struggling middle school highly difficult and stressful.

Nathaniel’s family highly influenced his work ethic and value for academics and education. His mother was from Canada and his father from Mexico. Although Nathaniel was raised in a suburb of Los Angeles that was considered highly progressive, he found that experiences with issues of race and ethnicity there shaped his lens of social justice. Early in life, Nathaniel and his three other siblings made the distinction that half of them were as dark as their dad and the other half were light-skinned like their mom. He shared an anecdote about a time he worried that the school would not believe his mom was his real mother during parent-teacher conferences. In another instance, he recalled being called the “N-word” because he had dark skin. On another occasion, he was not allowed to enroll in an Advanced Placement course because of his Latino last name. As a young adult, he remembered his mother sharing that his father grew so frustrated at being repeatedly passed over for promotions because of his skin color that he resigned and started his own business. Although both of his parents had had an impact on

his upbringing, his mother played the largest role in developing his view of social justice because she was a feminist and very liberal during a time when it was not socially acceptable. He also credited his father's autocratic character for his own shyness, but breaking out of this characteristic propelled him toward a more fearless personality.

Nathaniel described that this fearless personality and his school board experience allowed him to voice his opinion freely without fear of being terminated, even when other colleagues were not as assertive. Nathaniel recognized that a certain level of privilege was afforded to him as a result of not having a spouse or children, which would present limitations with his time and efforts. He also mentioned that he was highly committed to the education of students of color, and his resolve to be an advocate was deeply rooted in this commitment.

Nathaniel shared that the school district and/or preparation programs were not doing a very good job of preparing school principals for their work. He was only able to speak about his experience within GSUSD since he did not go through a traditional induction program, and he asserted that the system's onboarding of a school district was difficult and not very well supported for new principals to a district. Most of what he had learned about the school district's systems was learned on the job and/or from other principals. He said he was never taught to complete a school budget and believed this was a disconnect with principal preparation programs, as very few principals had a background in finance. He mentioned that although he did not follow a traditional principal preparation program, he felt he was able to be more creative when addressing problems in schools as an administrator and did not feel constrained by limitations of his preparation. He felt he was easily able to support his teachers and adequately respond to the needs of his staff since his transition into administration was a quick process and

he did not feel too far removed from the classroom. Nathaniel considered himself an anomaly, and describes his work and dedication in that manner.

Nathaniel planned to pursue another position with the GSUSD School Board again (at the time of this study) and felt that he would be successful in that endeavor again. He believed that it was time for changes to take place within the school district and that a cadre of like-minded individuals would make a deep impact on the district. He did not visualize himself as a superintendent at the time of this study, but questioned why GSUSD did not apply some of the same positive strategies that companies like Google and Deloitte used to develop their employees and make them more productive by providing learning opportunities that support their learning from each other. Nathaniel firmly believed that his job was to facilitate teachers' ability to improve, and that it would happen if they were given the opportunity to learn from each other and plan together.

Teresa Sanchez

Teresa was a Latina elementary school principal in Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD). She was the principal at Lincoln Elementary School and had worked in GSUSD for over 25 years. She was between 55 and 64 years of age, had a master's degree, and received her administrative services credential from Golden State University in 1986. Teresa was a native of the city where GSUSD was located, and her parents were from El Salvador.

Teresa began her career in GSUSD as a speech pathologist, was later a teacher, and eventually served as assistant principal and principal in district schools. Early in her career, she intended to move to El Salvador to open a clinic that would provide speech services to young children. After a presentation to her colleagues, she was approached by an administrator at

GSUSD that invited her to participate in a small cohort intended to develop leadership from within. Later, the recruiting administrator became one of her mentors and continued to support her throughout her career. Teresa was one of six participants in the cohort and the only Latina in this group. After, she worked as an administration intern but continued her work as a speech pathologist for the school district.

During the mid-1980s, she worked with various school district departments and substituted for various school district principals. In the late 1980s, she was assigned to a school that was run by the Navy as the assistant principal and subsequently was assigned to two different schools as assistant principal. Later, one of those schools offered her a full-time assistant principal job. She became principal of this school after the former principal received death threats from a parent.

Teresa had a humble opinion of herself, and she recognized that much of this was a result of her upbringing. She was a first-generation Latina and the older of two daughters. Teresa never thought of herself as a “big deal” because she witnessed how hard her parents worked to reach success. Her father worked for the city’s power and utility company, and her mother was a bank executive. She believed that she should leave the world in a better situation than how she found it, and this spirituality drove her humble nature. She learned from her parents that she should always give back, and Teresa always perceived her parents as leaders. Often when Teresa complained about something, her parents were quick to give her examples of the struggles they had endured as immigrants to reach their success.

Her parents were not the only supportive people in her journey. Both of the female principals she worked with as assistant principal were instrumental in fostering her leadership

and belief in herself as a leader. One of her principal role models was the director of the Educational Placement Center for GSUSD and the other was the first Latina assistant superintendent in GSUSD. Teresa's father encouraged her to attend a function to see her would-be supervisor present at a conference when she was very young, and she recognized that meeting her mentor was a turning point that led her down the administrative path.

Teresa's relationship with the other principal as a colleague was instrumental in shaping her leadership. Although both principal mentors were of different cultural backgrounds they both had a tremendous amount of respect for each other. When Teresa felt others were better suited for leadership positions, one of her mentors pushed her to lead and provided extra support to ensure she was able to do so. When this mentor asked Teresa to interview for the position she was vacating, and Teresa asked for more time to develop as a leader, her mentor reassured her she was ready to take on the challenge of leading a school. As an assistant principal, Teresa witnessed how hard the principal worked, and how dedicated and wise she was, and felt that she could never replace her.

A major driving force in Teresa's focus in administration has been her vision to help students of color find success through education. She wanted to show her students and families that there was a life out of the low-income housing projects. This was where most of her students lived during her first tenure as principal in GSUSD, and her energy was focused on helping others as her parents had taught her.

Teresa recognized that her administrative program at Golden State University gave her the working knowledge needed to succeed in the structure of the district she worked in, and added that there was nothing like on-the-job experience you gain from having to think on your

feet and prioritize situations. She also mentioned that her program did not prepare her to have difficult conversations with adults, nor did it prepare her to work with students undergoing emotional crisis. She learned how to address these issues through her experience in shadowing one of the mentor principals when she was an assistant principal, as well as by observing others on the job. She felt that her current school district had done a pretty good job of providing professional development to school leaders, but had found it difficult to participate with the time constraints that school responsibilities have on her availability.

Recently, one of Teresa's teachers had expressed her gratitude about the role model figure Teresa played for her. Teresa now equated her role to one of a principal mentor, much like she had early in her career. She loved to work with her school teachers and families, was very involved with her school community, and recognized that she was very good at relationship building. Teresa expressed that she had been "launching" other teachers into leadership positions for some time now, and was comfortable taking on the same leadership and mentorship role that her principal mentors afforded her as a young speech therapist.

Freire's Banking, Conscientization, and Praxis Concepts

This section of the research begins with Freire's banking concept, and how that concept applies to the data gathered from several of the participating principals. The data gathered are synthesized through this lens to demonstrate how the Banking Concept was present in the data gathered in this first section. This section is followed by the Conscientization Concept and concludes with the Praxis Concept. All three Freirean concepts are used as lenses to synthesize the data collected to help illustrate how these concepts applied to the experiences these Latino and Latina school principals had through their journey of becoming elementary school

principals, and to further explain how Freire's concepts for liberation were relevant to this research and to the Latino and Latina experience in education within the United States.

Banking Concept

Freire (1970) wrote, "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (p. 72). This portion of the research begins by establishing that the experiences that Latinos and Latinas have throughout their journey in the education system are plagued by examples of being seen as empty vessels. Although many of the principals that participated in this study did not explicitly articulate this connection, there were some underlying messages connected to Freire's banking concept. For Teresa Sanchez, her disbelief in her ability led highlighted the banking concept.

"The first feeling I had was like a disbelief. Like, 'really, you think I can do this job that I see you do?' So that was my first one." (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

She also described how she often encouraged others to take on leadership roles instead of her because she felt more comfortable in doing so:

"You know, I think for me I usually take a more humble opinion of myself and so I would more than likely be the one that would say, 'Oh you, Michael, or you Jose, you're better suited for this than I am. I'll support you but I know you can do better.' And so I kind of have operated that way I think. You know, I'd rather be in the background than in the foreground and that's just me. (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

This is not to say that she could not lead, rather it is to assume that at some point she did not have the confidence needed to lead because she was entering the leadership role with a deficit in knowledge on how to lead. This was a common theme found in the majority of the principals that participated in this study.

Both John and Elsa came from low-income families in their countries of origin, and both of their families saw the importance of gaining an education. For Elsa it was a way out of the poverty that her family was experiencing.

“My family is a low-income family. My mom had to raise the three of us. There was something in regards to her message that was always like, ‘Okay, my kids are going to go further than the life that I have. My kids are going to go to the university.’ And she was so into loving going to the university. But she couldn’t because her parents couldn’t pay for that. And even couldn’t pay for her—she needed to work to be able to help to sustain the family early on, 14 or 15 years old. She needed to start working.

So for her it was something that she wanted us to be better at. It was something that I can relate to the family. Because to me, I would be saying, ‘Yes, my mom was always into that.’ But part of her mission was like, ‘Okay, you need to learn this. You need to learn other languages. You need to’—so she was buying almost everything. And then she would say, ‘You, because we live in low-income houses.’ So she was saying, ‘If you get educated, you are going to live in other places. You are going to support other people.’ So she was always giving that, that education is the key for the future. That you have always this and you can do it.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa and her family, education was the key to exiting the poverty in which they lived and also to providing them an opportunity for a better life. The deficit that Elsa's mother wanted to have her children circumvent was part of her lived experience, and she saw education as a way out of poverty for her children.

As for John, his family also encouraged him and his brother to get an education, but there was little expectation for him or his brother to go beyond that level, and it was expected that they would simply find a job after completing school.

“I come from a low-income family. So my brother was the first one in my family that went to college, and I was the second one in my family. And also it was to my brother because it was not the culture of my family that we were going to go to college. The expectation was that we were going to just finish school and then just go and find a job. So for me it was really hard for my family to be able to afford that I could go to college. So for me that is why as I look back, I was like, okay, it was not easy for my family to be able that I go to college that I am able to graduate. And not just to forget about that and not try my very best in what I do. Because I know what it was to go through the process.

(J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

John used this experience to hold himself to a high standard because he knew how hard it was for his family to get him through school. However, both Elsa and John were driven by the idea that gaining an education would be important to obtaining a better life since what they already had to offer was not enough to validate their work because of their socio-economic status. Again, the implications of the banking concepts with both John's and Elsa's examples lie in their struggle out of poverty through education.

Where we see the more obvious examples of Freire's banking concept as it relates to leadership in education came from the interviews held with both Enrique and Kathy. Both had experiences where their direct supervisors doubted their ability as leaders within education.

“Part of it was I needed more experience and models of leadership and I mentioned that already and you could read between the lines and say, like, yeah, because you don't like the way my current principal leads. So I get it. I could see that. Also, the other is, like, how—that I wasn't strong enough. Those weren't necessarily used but that I needed more practice in developing my own voice. So that's what was said. I was, like, you never talked to me, how do you know what my voice is? So that was a frustration. There were other reasons or we can't offer you a school. I think one of the schools I wanted to work at was going to be part—a low performing school, so it was going to get special services or the newest initiative in the district.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy had served as a classroom teacher and coach for her campus, and even this was not enough to demonstrate that she had the ability to lead a school. Kathy's supervisor clearly told her that she was not ready to lead, and her association with the principal and his lack of leading a school contributed to her being passed up for a principalship. Her quiet demeanor also contributed to this supervisor's lack of trust in Kathy and to a perception of deficit skills in her leadership abilities.

Enrique had a similar experience to that of Kathy when his direct supervisor told him that he would not lead in that school district due to his lack of leadership experience.

“It took me to meeting with my assistant superintendent and having her tell me, ‘No, you need to go to the classroom and prove to me your leadership skills.’” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Although Enrique shared that he firmly believed that most of this was due to his outspokenness and the political climate of the school district, it was clear that his supervisor equated his lack of preparation to the banking model that Freire theorized because he needed to further prove his leadership skills.

During the interview, Kathy shared that the supervisor that was telling her that she was not capable of leading a school was another Latina leader. The irony of this situation was something that Kathy felt the need to share because of her frustration with her supervisor’s leadership and her connection to her ethnic background:

“I was finishing up my PLI and then going—yeah. Because before that, I thought we were good with this assistant superintendent because she was actually even on a panel for PLI, Latina, and so she made it a real point of saying how she supports Latinas and there needs to be more of us in every level of education, we need to support our kids, we have this knowledge of bilingual. She just talked it up. But the reality of it playing out and the way I experienced it was what she said was a bunch of B.S. If you want to support me, give me the critical feedback, because that's not the issue. Then tell me how I'm going to be able to fix it. It's like no, you can't do it now. Sorry. It didn't feel like that in and of itself, is not helpful. If you critique me and then give me some support or direction on what I need to work on besides my voice. My voice, that's still there. Like, what do you mean? Like is it not strong enough? Is it too strong? What is it? I don't know. So I kind of

felt like there was something missing in her critique.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

The frustration that Kathy expressed during the interview connected to Freire’s banking concept in that for those who are oppressed and but are later able to gain knowledge it becomes difficult to reject the oppressor’s characteristics. This is a great example of Freire’s warning about not taking on too much of the characteristics of the oppressor as one goes through the levels of liberation. Freire (1970) offered, “The oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or ‘sub-oppressors’” (p. 45). Kathy’s supervisor, in her attempt to bestow the necessary knowledge or confidence in Kathy’s ability as a leader, became an oppressor or suboppressor.

Both Enrique and Kathy shared that they had similar experiences in their school districts, indicating how an educational system can contribute to the oppression of Latinos and Latinas in education by implying that they have nothing to contribute to the learning process. “The peasant feels inferior to the boss because the boss seems to be the only one who knows things and is able to run things” (Freire, 1970, p. 63). The experiences that both Kathy and Enrique had were ones to which Freire referred and can be equated to the slave mentality that is pervasive in education. Moreover, these banking models can be as simple as the deficit thinking that both Teresa and John shared about their experience, or as complex and overt as the experiences that both Enrique and Kathy had.

Conscientization

Freire (1970) contended, “A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation” (p. 85). This

development of an awareness of one's social reality comes through reflection and action. For the majority of the principals that participated in this study, it was clear that they were conscious of their social reality within the context of education. For Camila Beltran, her consciousness was developed early on in her life as a student in Colombia when she taught in the evenings at her high school.

“In Colombia. I was in school. There was kindergarten through twelfth grade and I was in the same school for the whole time. So this principal was influential to me and she inspired me in so many ways. She came with a vision, again in equity lens, even though she built a private school that was very wealthy. But what she did was during the day and it was a very controversial proposition in that during the day it was a school, right, a regular private school, and after four o'clock all of the rooms in the whole school were open to the children in the area. Right. We were all bused from overpass, from the capital of Colombia, so it is a large city but the school was in the outskirts. So what we did was in the evening I would stay and we would teach and we were part of the teaching core group. There was a teacher in charge but we would support. I think that I was already, I was the oldest in my family, so I was a teacher at home, too. I was the oldest of eight and I was the teacher at home and my role at home was to make sure that all of my siblings had their homework ready for the next day in a large family. So, all the time since early life I was really interested in teaching, and you know, learning and how I could see learning taking place or not taking place and what favored it or not.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila shared that she further developed her desire to work with students as a result of this experience, and it further helped shape her social justice lens. She also shared that the teaching experience at her high school was positively impacted by that school's principal, who had a vision to help other less-fortunate students in the community.

Camila's social consciousness lens had always been evident in her work. This consciousness was evident as she produced videos focusing on Latinos in the community and brought to light social issues that were pertinent around her city.

“I was really interested in filmmaking and also to make statements regarding social issues through film and I began to produce a program called Interview with Latin America through the public service television station in the city. So I continued to have not only conversations about social issues but also how the arts are involved in that. So all of the influences in music, art to the social movement and also to highlight the accomplishments of Latinos, particularly in the city.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila shared that her call to action was deeply rooted in the social issues she wanted to highlight in her film and production work, and at present her actions as a principal further demonstrated this commitment on her part.

“I believe that my ethics are very tied to the work I do and I believe that when I am here, I am 100% here in support of the students and that is also what I want to transfer to my teachers and members of the staff—that is, the sense that when we are here we have an urgency to support our students, to teach our students and for our students to be in an

environment where they can flourish and that to me is what I want to, you know, get through.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila shared that she was committed to supporting her students so they would be able to flourish in their environment. She explained that she wished to share this sense of urgency with her teachers and staff because she saw the impact it would have in the lives of her students.

For Elsa, her conscientization was further developed while she taught in Venezuela. She described having conversations at the university that centered around the idea that education can change the world.

“Well, it’s just because I was this kind of a student. In the 1% (Laughs). I graduated magna cum laude. It was like ‘ooh.’ And the teachers were immediately like ‘oh.’ And I really enjoyed it. It was something that I really enjoyed, explaining thinking, and I was always just free and doing the things that you like to do. And when I was really mostly into the position that education can change society. And I was so into that idea of Paulo Freire and what are the things that we can do. That’s how I grew up. Those were the kinds of conversations that we were having in the university that I went to.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

This was, in fact, the case for Elsa, as her education did change her own reality as well as that of her family, as she described in her interview. Elsa also shared that her focus for her work as a principal was to benefit her students.

“But I always have been into like, okay, I need to be truthful as to why I am here. If I am here because of the students, I need to be able to say those things in a way that it is going to be heard.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Elsa expressed that she needed to be truthful about her work within the school district and in her relationship with her supervisor. Both John and Enrique had a very clear idea of the type of school they wanted to teach or lead in.

“So it’s taken some detours but it’s always been influenced by my second grade teacher, that I wanted to teach. And I wanted to teach specifically Latino kids and kids of color because I wanted to be the one that provided them that opportunity to improve and get to college.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

For Enrique, having taken some detours, meant that he initially taught in schools with different demographics and also held teaching positions and leadership roles at a district office. However, he was clear in that his ultimate goal was to work with Latino students and students of color to be their inspiration. John shared that he also had a defined sense of where he wanted to lead as a principal.

“But I had it clear. I had it clear what kind of vice principal I wanted to be. I needed to be with an elementary school, I needed to be with Latino students. So I had that clear.”

(J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

For both John and Enrique this consciousness was developed as a result of their own personal experiences as immigrants to this country. Nevertheless, their efforts to take action were deeply rooted in their past realities as well as their current reality. For Elsa, her consciousness was fostered while in college having conversations with her colleagues and framing her thinking around the teachings of Paulo Freire.

Both Kathy's and Nathan's consciousness was impacted by the environment in which they grew up. Nathan described how his experience growing up in Southern California, his family, and how what he experienced in his neighborhood and school helped shape his lens.

"I grew up in a very White neighborhood in Santa Monica. We were the only Latino family. It was the kind of neighborhood that when an Indian family from India moved in, our neighbors started a petition to remove them from the block. This was in the '60s in liberal Santa Monica. But they didn't do that to my mom and dad because my mom was really White and it wasn't as threatening I guess. So I grew up in a very White but not that privileged working class middle class neighborhood in Santa Monica. I went to public school all the way through." (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Nathan proceeded later to share what it was like going to a school conference with his mom and being worried that others may not believe that his mom was actually his mom. Although he shared that much of what he experienced was not extremely harsh, what he witnessed and heard from others made a tremendous impact on his perception of others.

Kathy also described how growing up in the city and her mother's effort to expose her to as much of the city's celebrations helped shape her consciousness.

"I always say I'm sure they were much unintended but definitely shaped me growing up. My mom would take me to every parade, celebration in the city. We went to the Chinese New Year's parade, Columbus Day parade, Italian Festival, the Irish Parade, St. Patrick's Parade, Carnival there used to be a Cinco De Mayo parade. Jazz Fest at the Fillmore. Did I leave anything out? There were definitely no Hawaiian or Polynesians, but

otherwise, we hit every other ethnic group. There was even a Russian Festival, but my mom liked to be out and about. She didn't like to be home, but definitely—and we would catch muni all over the place so we would definitely go to all these things, celebrations which are very superficial in nature, like I'm not really getting to know every culture but I was getting exposed—to me, in hindsight there were things that were accessible to me in the city and I think what helped me was to be very open and accepting and learning about other cultures. To me that was really like I never wrinkled my nose, like, ew, what are they doing over there? It was more, like, oh, let's go see what they're doing over there.”

(K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy shared that she recognized that the exposure to the celebrations was superficial in nature, but that it did allow for her to be open and accepting of what she witnessed. For both Kathy and Nathan, their experiences growing up in California and their home life provided the direction to help them develop their social consciousness. For that matter, every principal that participated in this study was impacted by something in his or her personal life that helped develop their critical consciousness lens, and each one had a consciousness that supported the need to serve other Latino and Latina students.

Praxis

Freire (1970) asserted, “Critical and liberating dialogue, which presupposes action must be carried out with the oppressed at whatever the stage of their struggle for liberation” (p. 65). Dialogue is important to this process, but action and reflection need to take place in order for the transformation to occur. Every single principal that participated in this study demonstrated a certain level of praxis through their work in education. For Camila, her focus on bringing social

issues to the forefront of her video production and her teaching Spanish at the high school level provided her the opportunity for this action that equates to praxis to take place for her.

“I think one of the most influential experiences was when I was teaching. I was teaching high school at the School of the Arts. Again, I looked for a school that had an arts emphasis and I was actually teaching Spanish in high school. Again, I had two classes, Advanced Placement Spanish and Beginners Spanish class. At that point I also realized that I was looking at the big picture, who is in each of those two classes. And at that point, this is what I observed. All of the beginner classes had Latinos that could barely read and write. All of the advanced classes had White or Asian students that were taking classes for their AP courses. There were few Latinos and I was proud that they could read and write and I actually did a lot of cultural activities with them to continue to promote their culture and they loved that. But I put and I think the bulk of my emphasis on supporting the Latinos that were in the beginner classes. There was a lot of building on pride of who we are and I think, to me, it was a revelation when I started to teach and Spanish was not perceived as something that they really were, not the Spanish but the culture to value who they were as Latinos. So, to me, that was influential and that is when also, I began to think about, you know, it’s a lens for the district. How are we supporting students who do not necessarily see themselves reflected in our culture here as a valuable, you know, member of society and what Spanish and our culture can bring to it. So that was an influential experience for me and again, shaped my desire to make a difference as well continue to take it in that direction. (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila shared that she had made some observations of who the Spanish students were in her classes, and she that made a conscious effort to support the Latino students in her beginner classes. Her reflection and action regarding this observation of her classes allowed her to make that effort of supporting her Latino and Latina students a major part of her work.

The common theme among all principals in this study was that they had taken some type of action that supported their praxis and liberation. Teresa shared that when she was a principal in a school that was predominantly of low socioeconomic resources, she wanted to show her students that there was a life outside of the neighborhood in which many of her students lived.

“But I was concerned about generations of families living there and I wanted my students to see that there were opportunities beyond the dwellings. That they could study and that study would help them get out of the projects and that they could have a job. They could go to school. So those were some of my teachings of the children. I really wanted them to just focus on they could do it. And so I thought if I have to tell the kids you can do it, that I have to believe that myself too.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Teresa shared that she would often walk across the street to connect with her students and their families that lived in these project type of neighborhoods, and her main focus was to encourage her students to possibly see a life outside their neighborhood and environment. Her reflection and action in taking this simple step of walking into these neighborhoods and encouraging her students to see a life outside their reality was part of Teresa’s praxis. Her action was to lead by example, and hopefully inspire her students to follow.

Enrique exercised a similar undertaking, which stemmed from his own personal experience as a young student. He shared that he wanted to be that person that inspired his students to succeed just as he had been inspired by his high school math teacher and his second-grade teacher.

“I want to be like her. I want to be someone who sees that a kid has the potential too and doesn’t just let him or her give up.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Again, leading by example and being a role model was at the heart of Enrique’s focus on how to lead. The same could also be said of John, who consciously chose to work with a mostly Latino community because he felt that his leadership would provide his students the ability to see him as a role model as well, and because it was where he felt that he would have the greatest impact for his school.

“It was that I decided, okay now I’m ready because I’d been thinking, oh, I could make a greater impact if I am outside of the classroom than I am in the classroom.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

For these principals, their actions were closely related to their reflection, which in turn could be equated to their praxis in a struggle for liberation for not only themselves, but also for their students.

Elsa was already leading her praxis when she was teaching at the university level in Venezuela, and was further supported when her paraprofessional colleagues encouraged her to pursue her teaching credential here in the United States.

“But also the group of paraprofessionals that worked with me. The majority of them were Spanish speaking, and they were a system of support in a sense. They were so into like ‘think of all the things that you are doing here. Of course you can do it.’ Things like that, and you can definitely feel, ‘Oh, okay.’” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Although she was seen by her paraprofessional colleagues as a leader, it was simply Elsa’s action to pursue her teaching credential that had become her praxis in this process. She shared a great deal about the support she had from her family and this group of paraprofessionals that encouraged her to have a deeper impact on her work, but ultimately—as she shared throughout the interview process—it was her motivation to pursue her education further.

Nathan was already taking action and had been doing so early on as a young man. He shared that when he was a young man he was very shy, but was able to muster the courage and determination to ask his school counselor to place him in honors or Advanced Placement courses while in high school.

“I think the worst thing racially that ever happened was in high school they wouldn’t place me in any of the Honors or AP courses. In 11th grade I finally went to the counselor, I was very shy. When I was growing up, you wouldn’t believe it now, but I was like clinically introverted. My mom took me to a doctor, she was so afraid I would get kidnapped as a kid because I was so passive. So I remember finally getting the courage to go to the counselor and saying, ‘*I want to take this class*’ and they were like ‘*No.*’ Just because of my last name. Years later I realized it was because of my last name. But they would never, so I just forced my way but that to me was clearly racial

because I had great grades, I was a straight A student in middle school and beyond.” (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Nathan took an action based on what he believed was the best placement for him, and overcame his shyness to do so. His actions were also part of his praxis after realizing that he could also lead by example as a school board member as well as fight for his coursework as a young man. Nathaniel’s comment about not believing that he was shy was due in large part to the reputation that he had in the school district as a very outspoken champion for change. He was also currently seeking another term as a GSUSD board member because he felt that he needed to be part of the new change that should take place in GSUSD.

Finally, Kathy was still describing her praxis as something she was developing through her voice. She shared an experience she had recently had where she was able to attend a leadership development opportunity that GSUSD provided to school leaders, and she realized that she still had areas of growth in her leadership.

“I participated in that leadership development that they had going to Deloitte in Dallas and I felt like that's still an area for me to continue to grow in. Dealing with adults—as humans, we're too different. It's complex. It's an area I need to be conscious of all the time. I feel that I may have some tendencies to do but I am not conscious of it. I guess, that relationship piece of leadership. If I'm not conscious of it, I'm not going to pay attention to it and that's what's going to end up biting me in the butt. I want to say that happened to me my first year as principal where it wasn't—I didn't do enough checking in with people and that was my first year so I've got to give myself some slack, I knew that, I know I needed to do that but yet I didn't do it. So somehow being able to also

know who my audience is. I think that was part of the conversation we learned. I think having those kinds of things, like, I would love for them to come naturally but they're not coming naturally yet. So that's where I'm at with it—I think I need to continue to develop strategies or routines that will help me do this more unconsciously.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy shared that she was not sure if the difficulty she had in dealing with other adults was something that she was not conscious about, but the mere fact that she was able to recognize this demonstrated that she was—and she was taking steps to help her further develop in this area as well. Although she didn't realize it, she had been taking actions as a result of her own personal consciousness, and this is exactly what praxis is.

Every single principal in this study was an example of the praxis that this study intended to highlight. All of these principals had undertaken the action to lead by example even if it was not their original plan. All had chosen to do so for benefit of the larger community, and all had a very well-developed critical lens that had been developed through life experiences and their education. They were all aware of the social justice issues that plagued their students as well as how their leadership impacted their role as school leaders.

***Literature Review: Leadership for Diversity and Equity, Career
Cycle of Educators, Culturally Responsive Leadership***

This next section of the research focuses on the three major content areas identified from the literature review of this study. These content areas are used to synthesize the work of this research and help frame the data collected from each of the interviews. Each of the three major content areas have subsections that are used to further narrow the scope of the research. This section begins with Leadership for Diversity and Equity and is further broken down into four

subsections which include Leadership of California schools, followed by Trends, Where are the Latinos?, and lastly, the Moral Imperative of Diverse Leadership.

The next major content area in this research study is focused around the Career Cycle of Educators and includes subsections aimed at highlighting the teacher-to-administrator pipeline and the Latino and Latina motivation to leadership. The last major content area of this research study pertains to Culturally Responsive Leadership, which includes subsections about Networking, Dialogue, and Other Emergent Themes. The Networking subsection further identifies areas such as encouragement, support, and building confidence. The Dialogue subsection also includes discussion around race and diversification. Finally, the Other Emergent Themes include discussion around language learners, immigration, and gender. The aim of these last three major content areas is to highlight how the data collected were synthesized using these three themes and to find commonalities from the research literature and the collected data.

Leadership for Diversity and Equity

The Leadership of California Schools

During the interviews with the principals in GSUSD, it became evident that principals in this study were focused on working with a mainly Latino student population. Although it was not stated clearly by every single participant, it was explicitly stated by two principals. Both Enrique Garcia and John Ochoa overtly stated their desire to work with a mainly Latino or student of color population.

“But I had it clear. I had it clear what kind of vice principal I wanted to be. I needed to be with an elementary school. I needed to be with Latino students.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

Enrique also had a very clear desire to work with Latino students that stemmed from his experience with his teachers as a student himself.

“I wanted to teach, but I wanted to teach specifically Latino and kids of color. Because I wanted to be the one that provided that opportunity to improve and go on to college.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

For both Enrique and John, working with a mainly Latino and Latina student population was important enough to make conscious choices about the positions they pursued.

Also, both Enrique and John expressed their concern over the number of Latinos entering the administrative profession and how this impacts the representation of Latinos in school as well as the possible impact on providing Latino students a positive role model that looks like them.

“The fact that we don’t have enough Latino teachers in the state, will impact the number of Latino administrators that we have.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

“That is why I think that if a teacher doesn’t connect with a student, if the student thinks that they have been chosen and are important in that classroom—if they don’t connect, then how are we going to make those students achieve, and how are they going to be successful? So that is one thing that we need to keep in mind. How school promotes and recruits more bilingual Latino teachers and administrators. Because it is important that we have them.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

Both Enrique and John were aware of Latino representation in either classrooms as well as in school administration positions in the State of California, and both made these statements with a

sense of urgency in their tone. The classroom-to-administrator pipeline was also part of their statements and concerns.

Trends

The need for Latino leaders to serve as effective role models was evident in the literature, but also became evident in the data collection process of this research. There is a very specific connection that is only afforded to Latino leaders that cannot be easily and quickly assimilated by other leaders.

“They need to see. They need to have somebody who may be able to understand their needs, their history, their background, their fears, their desires . . . The way that their families work, you know, so they understand the challenges, and they know that one way or another you can count . . . Well it’s not every Latino obviously but . . . You can count on a Latino teacher to support you. So, and also because there’s a cultural component, you know, where a kid can be scolded by the teacher, but it’s within the context of ‘educación,’ so that you are ‘bien educado,’ and they have manners. And I think that that is only something that can happen with, coming from someone who looks like them. And I lived it. That’s why I could talk to them in a different way than my White counterparts could.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique’s point of manner, which he referred to as “bien educado,” was within the context of the students’ education or “educación,” and the approach with which Latinos were afforded the ability to do so with other Latino students. According to Enrique, the manner in which this was accomplished was very different from how his White colleagues attempted to do so, and were not able to accomplish.

Where are the Latinos?

The impact that Latino leadership has on student performance was highlighted by a story and experience shared by one principal in this study. He referred to the behavior problem of children detected by a dominantly White teaching staff and how those behavior issues in the classroom were mostly the students of color, even though they made up a small percentage of the classrooms. While on the other hand, he shared that he in fact had a largely Latino student population in his classroom and the behavior issues came from his White students in his class.

“You know what? This is eye-opening for me. And it was very good because I had a great relationship with my colleagues. But for me it was a tough time hearing my colleagues talking about these students. It was like seeing the trend. That if they had only 2, 3 Latino students in their classroom for all the teachers, one of the challenge for behaviors was the Latino students. And I said, ‘Oh! This is interesting!’ Because for me, I have the higher number of Latino students in the classroom and all the African-American students in this grade level. I was teaching 1st grade at that time. And none of them were challenging behavior students. I don't have a lot of behavior difficulties in my class. I do have a couple of challenging students, who are White.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

The observation that John shared during his interview really pointed to the inequity that for the most part goes unchecked in schools. For John it seemed that he had a good enough relationship that he was able to make those statements to his colleagues. However, this again sheds light on the importance of having more Latino and Latina classroom teachers and administrators so that these marginalizations within the classroom are avoided altogether.

Moral Imperative of Diverse Leadership

The majority of the principals interviewed in this study expressed their ultimate desire to create change or be an agent of positive change for their current school. Some had implemented changes at their school that have taken time to create positive change, but were now seeing those positive impacts on the collaboration of school personnel.

“My vision and my philosophy is like collaboration matters, and I said that the first day I came here, and I continue saying that as now. I just have a teacher that she started working, we started working together when I started here and she left and went to another school. And when she returned this year she said, Wow! It’s incredible to see how the vision that you had from the beginning, now seeing how that is in practice because now it’s mostly how the teams are working independently, how things are really completely different than when I started—I was basically just one. Now it’s teams of people doing it.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Elsa was beginning to see the benefits of her leadership and her effort as a Latina principal within GSUSD. Although she now simply managed her teamwork and expectations, she was constantly working to benefit her students and teachers.

Another principal shared his experiences around creating change at his previous school, and really implemented some common sense strategies that put the learning of students at the center of the effort, and the results he got were incredible.

“We did so many things. We made the 50 minute blocks to 80 minute blocks, so we did 80 minutes of math and 80 minutes of language arts every day. Then every other day you did 80 minutes of social studies and 80 minutes of science. Our test scores, API,

everything skyrocketed. It wasn't anywhere near what other schools were but the rate of growth was incredible. It's because they were in the classroom and if there's anything going on they were able to get the benefit of that teacher." (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Nathaniel the implementation of what he described as common sense strategies made a tremendous impact on the school he was leading at the time. He later confided that unfortunately it was too late to turn the whole school around. The school ended up being "taken over" by another school district school that was looking to become a K-8, but his efforts did create a great deal of positive change for the school community.

Some principals felt that it was important for students to see more Latino representation in schools so that students were provided the tools they needed to succeed in school and eventually increase the pool of candidates in these positions.

"It's that relation, that connection between teacher and students, and in this case administrator, teacher and student. So that we have in some districts and in some schools out here in California, we have a very high population of Latino students or Hispanic students. And there is not a match with the role models for them. So that's something that I have noticed, that we need to have those role models for these students. Because if not, it will be more difficult to connect with them and to really know what they need to succeed. And that has been something that I have noted." (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

For John, the representation of Latinos in schools was something that he had noticed and that had made him reflect on the impact it might have on the student population of California. The need

to have role models to match their students was what he saw lacking in the schools, and felt that it becomes a crucial part of having a student to teacher and administrator connection.

Career Cycle of Educators

Administrative Credentials

The majority of the principals interviewed for this research study participated in a traditional administrative credential program. They either attended Golden State University (GSU) administrative credential program or they attended Cathedral University's Principal Leadership Institute (PLI). Only one participant received his credential by simply successfully completing the administrative services credential exam. He was the only outlier in this study.

“That was the anomaly, probably the anomalous part of my journey, I guess. The whole principal thing. So I took the state test and passed it. So that's all I needed. Because most people who take the test, they're qualified to become an administrator, that doesn't mean they're going to get hired. Usually they want somebody who's gone through an admin credential program or some sort of induction program. But since I was the epitome of an insider I guess, I was asked by the superintendent so that's the route I took.” (N.

Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Nathan's description of being the ultimate “insider” was due in large part to his participation on GSUSD's school board, where he had served as the board president for several years, and his relationship with then-Superintendent Jaime of GSUSD. Although he was qualified to take the state exam for administrative credentialing, he never participated in a traditional induction program, which made him the outlier in this study. All of the other participants in this study obtained their credential through an administrative credential induction program.

Journeys to Administrative Positions

Many of the journeys that the principals in this study went through to obtain their leadership position were very interesting. For some, their journey began in another field, and they were either recruited for their talent and skill; for others their journey began in education. One way or another their leadership was undeniable and replete with challenges and victories. For Camila Beltran, her journey began in the arts and media where she produced a television show for the public television station in the city. She was later approached by personnel from GSUSD to help begin a student homework hotline staffed by students in GSUSD. From there, her journey began to move in the direction of education, and she eventually became a classroom teacher.

“I was the producer and director of this program and so it became a great resource for students and families and at the time also, the internet began to catch up and all of that and I was invited to actually produce videos by going to the classrooms and identifying and videotaping best practices in the classroom. So I began doing that. So aside from doing the program at the news station, the bilingual department would identify, different schools to go to and videotape and so I began doing that. When I began to produce those videos and the segments, those were featured also with the curriculum and instruction of it and they were now interested in having something similar but it was the beginning of the implementation of content-based standards in San Francisco and they wanted to tie some of those practices to the standards. So that is how I began also to produce those and I was invited to move to the curriculum and instruction team. By then I had already gotten my teaching credential, my bilingual credential, and I had begun also teaching as a

teacher in special assignments and so for years I was working, as I said, in the bilingual department and curriculum instruction and I was invited actually to interview for a school. Once I did that I also became interested in literature. I was surrounded by administrators, by people in these two departments that were role models for me.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila had some very strong influences and role models that inspired her to pursue this education career, and she shared that it was a difficult decision to make since she already had a life in media. However, Camila shared that this was something that she found rewarding and passionate about.

John Ochoa shared in his interview that he had originally wanted to be a veterinarian, but became attracted to teaching as a young adult tutoring other students. Both Elsa and Teresa were content with teaching or leading in either a special education program or as a speech therapist. Enrique learned at an early age that he wanted to be a school teacher, largely due to the inspiration he gained from his second-grade teacher, and Nathaniel shared that he was propelled into a school principalship because of the commitment he felt obliged to uphold when asked to take the position by the district superintendent. Every journey shared by the participating principals was very different, and the only commonality of this journey was that the majority of the participants experienced their preparation program. Even that was not 100% consistent, as Nathaniel was the outlier in this area, and the preparation programs where the other principals obtained their credentials were very different.

Mentoring and Recruitment

The recruitment process for the participating principals was very different for each one. For some it was simply being encouraged by another principal to pursue a position as a school leader, and for others it was a very direct approach asking them to take on a leadership role within a school.

“I was a speech pathologist and I think it was in 1984 that I had met Barbara. She was the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services and Special Education in Golden State Unified School District and she and I struck up a conversation and she called me one night and she said, ‘You know Teresa, I’m thinking of presenting a resolution to the board about getting people of color to go into administration, what do you think about that?’

“And I said, ‘Well, I’ve never thought about it because I am a speech therapist and that’s what I’m thinking my role is going to be for the rest of my life.’ Then she said, ‘Well you could study administration and still be a speech person.’ So I went in to see her and what she was proposing was something that struck me as very novel. I was one of six people that had been kind of tapped from different parts of our district and I was the only Latina and so I was very honored.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Teresa, having the support of someone like Barbara to recruit, mentor, and support her was very powerful. During the interview process, Teresa went on to share that Barbara, and, later Julia, her principal, became part of her support network and mentors. For some of the principals in this study, having the support of already-established leaders within the school district had a

tremendous impact. This also enabled them to build confidence in their abilities to be effective leaders.

“But for me it was my principal. He at that time said, ‘It’s an opportunity. I know that you are taking classes at Cathedral University so you are already in this trajectory. Why don’t you take the opportunity?’ So he definitely was one key element. And also the assistant superintendent at that time, she knew my work in the school. I was in the internship leadership team. I was in every community, like the bilingual community. I was in a lot of things. Then she also said, ‘Oh, why don’t you apply to this?’ (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa, having served as a school leader in Venezuela provided her the ability to draw from leadership skills she already possessed.

Either someone within their leadership circle encouraged these participating principals to seek a leadership position, or it was a matter of following their passion. For Nathaniel Martinez, the recruitment and encouragement came from the GSUSD superintendent who hand picked him for a principalship in his former middle school.

“Toward the end of my tenure there, the superintendent, Jaime, put it into my head that I should seek to become a principal as I was leaving the board. Which I had not really given any thought into prior to that. I took it seriously.” (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Later in the interview, Nathaniel shared that he actually wanted and had accepted a principalship in an elementary school within GSUSD, but the superintendent requested that he take on the challenge of leading a troubled middle school in the city. Nathaniel shared that he felt obligated

to do so since he had already established a positive working relationship with the superintendent and accepted the position. He later shared that in hindsight it was probably against his better judgment to accept the position, but he did it because he felt the support of the superintendent.

Teacher-to-Administrator Pipeline

Teacher recruitment into administrative programs. Some of the principals in this study were explicitly recruited by other administrators within GSUSD due to their leadership skills. Camila Beltran found that some of the Latina leaders in GSUSD proved to be role models that supported her and eventually recruited her into leadership after she had displayed her ability as a leader in education through media.

“They were women and they were Latinas and they supported me and invited me to participate in what at the time was one of those programs in which there was a partnership between Golden State University and GSUSD to again have leadership from within and I joined that cohort.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For John Ochoa, it was two of his past principals that saw his potential. He shared that while he was a classroom teacher and teacher leader, he was encouraged by his former administrators to pursue a position in school administration.

“Yeah, it was 2 of my principals, because there was at that time a change in the principalship at the school where I was working. So my first principal at that school was encouraging me to become an administrator and also the incoming principal as well. Then for the district staff, the director of HR, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum

and Instruction. So there were multiple people districtwide that they were encouraging me to seek that.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

When these recruitment efforts were done in a positive manner, they yielded positive results, as was the case with the majority of the participating principals in this study. As has been highlighted in this study, principals like Nathaniel, who was recruited by the GSUSD superintendent, and Teresa, who was recruited by the Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, the impact on their confidence was tremendous. The only two principals in this study that were not explicitly recruited were Kathy and Enrique. However, both were recruited by other school district personnel, and both of them used these recruitment efforts to build their self-confidence in their leadership abilities in their new school districts.

However, for some, the recruitment was not such a positive endeavor. In fact, some were never recruited into administration and were actually encouraged not to do so by other administrative staff.

“So there were lots of reasons given to me why, like, we can't consider you for that position because you haven't turned a school around. I'm, like, I haven't turned a school around because I haven't had a school yet.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy's frustration and negative memory of this was a result of her then-supervisor letting her know that she was not fit for a position as a school principal as a result of her lack of leadership ability in turning a school around. During this time, Kathy had served as school coach and assistant principal, but even with that leadership experience she was still encouraged to wait

longer and experience other school leaders in order to prepare for a principalship. For Enrique, it was pretty clear he would not be a principal in his previous school district.

“I know for a fact that the Director of HR at that time had my performance deemed that I was not up to being an administrator at the district.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

For both Kathy and Enrique, the reason for not being recruited was simply because the administrative personnel in their school districts didn't feel they were “ready” or “prepared” for the leadership role they were seeking—although both described their perception of this lack of recruitment support from their district personnel as “political” or “personal” in nature. What was undeniable was the impact that these doubts had on both Enrique and Kathy, and that their resiliency and determination to pursue their position as school principals allowed them to find a place in school district that supported them in the end.

Networking support. Not every principal that participated in this study explicitly stated that he or she had a support network, but the majority of the participants did in fact share that they would reach out to a few leaders consistently. One principal mentioned how he developed his own network of support for his current principalship.

“I have one network of principals who are new like me, so we are going through similar situations and we just talk about, ‘What do you do? Who do you talk to?’ I also have a network of veteran principals and they tell me, ‘Do this’ or ‘Do that’ or ‘Call this person.’ So it's more directive than prescriptive than the newbie principals.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Although Enrique was provided a school district mentor, he had taken the proactive initiative to create his own network of principals that he often reached out to for support completely on his own. Enrique later shared that this was due in large part to the tools he received from his induction program at Cathedral University and the PLI program he participated in. The PLI program highlighted the importance of creating support networks.

During the interview with Teresa Sanchez, she shared that while she was a school principal in the early nineties, there was an effort to organize Latino and Latina leaders into a support network. However, the effort within GSUSD just simply fell by the wayside, as described by Teresa.

“You know Jose, a few years ago there were several administrators that used to try to get together on at least once a month on the weekend and we were having a hard time coming ‘ALAS’ and we met maybe once or twice. So when this group got reorganized again and people were trying to meet it was like the mid-2000s. I guess, I said why don’t we call ourselves The Association of Latin American Supervisors. We’re from all over and we’re supervising people. And then it turned out that one of the core members there knew that Superintendent Jaime had established an organization called ALAS also.

“So I said well it makes sense, why don’t we dovetail, maybe there’s some information we can get. So our group met for a few months and then it got dropped and nobody took on the lead but we were able to sign up and log into different information from ALAS. So every now and then I get something from them and I try to read articles or see what’s being sent but without a particular person who’s getting this together or networking us, you know, it’s just fallen by the wayside. What I try to do then, just like I

said, if I have the time, I will read some of the articles and for me I think what I need is just to continue to work on my own professional development.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

There is in fact a support network group called ALAS, which stands for Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents. This researcher is not clear if this group was begun by the former GSUSD superintendent or if this ALAS group came to exist as a result of the efforts of that same superintendent. What is a fact is that the group does exist and does support Latino administrators and superintendents, and does provide opportunities for networking as well as learning opportunities to develop professionally. However, for many of the principals in this study their network of support lies within their mentorship experiences and relationships.

Mentorships for Latinos. Many of the participants in this study had a network of mentors they reach out to for support. Teresa shared her experience of her mentor while entering her role as a school principal and how she was thrust into building confidence in public speaking.

“For example, this is just a very simple example but I talk about it a lot. When we were having an evening event one time and we had a lot of families in the cafeteria and a lot of kids and it was kind of noisy and I said, ‘So Julia, who’s going to greet the crowd and get things in order?’ And she said, ‘Well, that’s your job. You’re the Assistant Principal.’ I said, ‘But Julia, you know I’m shy. I’m not good at that.’ She goes, ‘Well that’s your job now.’ And so that was that. I got up. I greeted everybody. I asked them to please sit down and be a courteous audience and we were going to enjoy the winter program that the kids had put on.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Teresa shared that she often thought of Julia whenever she needed to speak in public. For Teresa, being thrust into the principalship position early on provided her the opportunity to maintain that relationship with her colleague as a mentor. For some of the principals in this study, the mentorship came from other Latinos; for many others it did not.

“When Julia and I were colleagues we would call upon each other. You know, she would just come on over and visit me to see how things were going, or I could always call her.

She was like my lifeline.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Teresa, her mentor, Julia, who left her in charge of a school she was leading after receiving death threats, trusted in Teresa enough to encourage her to lead the school. Julia had served as one of Teresa’s mentors throughout her career as a school principal within GSUSD. Julia was Asian and Barbara was Latina, so Teresa had had two mentors from different ethnic backgrounds. In fact many of the principals in this study shared their experience of having another administrator serving in that mentorship role.

Latino and Latina Motivation to Leadership

Meaning for becoming administrators. Many of the principals interviewed for this study shared that the meaning for their principalship lay in their desire to impact the larger school community. Enrique Garcia shared :

“So that actually confirmed this idea of ‘I can make much more impact as a principal than I could ever do as a teacher, as a classroom teacher.’” (personal communication, February 14, 2016)

The common theme among the principals interviewed for this study was having a deeper impact on the larger community.

“It was that I decided, okay now I’m ready because I’d been thinking, oh, I could make a greater impact if I am outside of the classroom than I am in the classroom. Because I am impacting the lives of 23 students that I had at that time in my classroom. So that is why having that experience outside of the classroom helped me make these decisions later, a few years later, of becoming an administrator.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

Both John and Enrique expressed that they felt they could impact the greater community if they became the school leader, and in turn could impact more than their small classroom.

“Every year that I worked with them, until the last one, I felt that I was, that I could, in fact, impact more kids if I became an administrator. Because as a classroom teacher I could only impact 100 kids in my district every year but as an administrator, putting in place policies and procedures and systems that take into account the needs of our students, all of them in the whole school, I felt that was the most impactful thing I could do. Influencing and impacting more kids positively was, it seemed to me, only possible through becoming an administrator.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

However, Enrique’s desire to become a teacher originated with his second-grade teacher and later became important to his pursuit to become a school principal. Enrique’s second-grade teacher had a tremendous impact on what it was to be a scholar and have command of a language.

“I was in second grade when my teacher actually asked me to get her a notebook, a spiral notebook. I didn’t know what spiral meant so I pretended that I didn’t know she was

talking to me and I went to hide behind my desk. She caught me and said, *'Where's my notebook?'* I pretended to have understood that she had asked someone else in the classroom. I remember she said, *'Never mind,'* and she reached behind her to the bookcase and retrieved a spiral notebook. That's when I realized that it meant the spring even though at the time I didn't know the spiral shape. I just associated it with the spring that came with those notebooks. So at that moment I idolized my second grade teacher and I wanted to be as knowledgeable as she was so that's when I decided to be a teacher, in second grade." (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

John was very explicit about being a principal in a very specific type of school and making a positive impact just as he had in the classroom when he was a teacher, and Enrique was very inspired by his second-grade teacher's command of the language, so much that it caused him to admire his teacher and propelled him to become a teacher. Not one principal interviewed for this study expressed the desire to be a principal for the money or the recognition. All of the principals interviewed expressed a desire to create positive change in their school and found meaning in their current work as principals.

Before they became administrators. One interesting piece of data that surfaced from the interviews lay in the original plan that these school principals had for their careers. Many of them wanted to simply continue in the classroom as teachers, but most had a desire to take on some type of leadership role. However, being a school principal was not in the original plan.

"No, it was more like as a kid, I loved animals, especially horses, and that was like my dream as a kid—that one day I wanted to be a vet." (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

Although John's reason for wanting to be a veterinarian was deeply rooted in his affinity for animals, once he decided to become a teacher he did so with a great deal of passion and perseverance. Some principals shared that they wanted to be teacher leaders as directors of programs that related to what they felt passionate about.

“So my initial thinking was that I wanted to be a program administrator in special education. That was my first thinking because that was the area of my expertise. But then after doing this shadow, after being at the school for a year and knowing how the school works, I said, ‘Oh! Yeah. This is definitely something that I can do. It’s not that far away from what I was doing already when I was a teacher.’ But then the reality was that when you take the job, it is different! (Laughs) You say, ‘Oh.’” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa, her thinking was to simply continue the work she was passionate about around special education as a program administrator because she felt that she could lead in this manner. Teresa shared that she was content with being a speech therapist forever, but the connection she had with Barbara and her own willingness to learn about the possibility being presented was enough of a push to engage her in a leadership role.

“Yeah, but it was her call to me and my willingness to meet with her and learn more about it. But you’re right, I didn’t think, oh yeah, I should be an administrator. I was happy to be a speech therapist forever.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Whether they chose to lead in the classroom or at the district level, they all ended up as principals within Golden State Unified School District (GSUSD).

Culturally Responsive Leadership

Other Emergent Themes

Leadership preparation programs. The majority of the principals that participated in this study found that their programs were very useful and insightful as they related to the philosophical approach of what it takes to be a principal. For principals like Enrique Garcia his program was very impactful in his preparation as a principal.

“PLI is so complete that it gives you all the tools that you need. What makes the difference is that when you get to the school, there are different tools that you can use to address the situation but you have to decide which of the tools you received from the program you’re going to be using. And I think that’s part of the learning. PLI does a tremendous job of preparing you as an administrator.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique expressed that the PLI program prepared him with the necessary tools to draw from when needed. However, a good number of the research participants expressed that a more hands-on approach would benefit the preparation of incoming principals to a leadership position.

“But I think that the practicum should be something that should be improved. Like I think that there should be a way that in this program, there are more opportunities to have practice before you really become an administrator. Similar to like student teaching, when teachers are completing their programs or maybe a shadowing of my principal.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

John expresses the importance of having a “practicum” similar to the student teaching experience in a teaching program. For Teresa Sanchez, the importance of being exposed to the hands-on experience of a principal is very important to the development of a school principal.

But going back to the program, there was nothing like being on the job to really learn what this principal job is about. You can have a little different readings and theories and presenters but once it was on the job, you're in the trenches and you've got to think on your feet all the time and prioritize, you know, mentally prioritize. (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Teresa expressed the difference between the theory aspect of a preparation program and that of being "in the trenches," as she put it. In fact, the majority of the participants in this study felt that their preparation programs gave them plenty of background knowledge about leadership, but that they could have really used the opportunity to shadow a principal through the process or had more hands-on experiences to further develop their leadership skills. Some felt that once you complete a preparation program you are expected to lead as if you have experience in this field, and it was equated to the same manner to when teachers earn their teaching credential and the student teaching that needs to take place before releasing you to your own classroom.

Language learners. This was a theme that was not initially foreseen as having an impact on leadership. Several participants identified themselves as language learners because English was not their first language. One particular principal shared her experience as a school principal, and how although she was confident in her leadership ability, her language skills were creating doubts in her mind about being able to lead and be respected in an English speaking community.

"And just to be able to be completely transparent as part of the process that you want us to have, I was hesitant because of being a minority, because of being someone that didn't grow up here. I came here already being an adult, learning English as a Second Language. So I was really hesitant. I knew that my skills. I had a set of skills. But I

was also hindering in the sense of the Spanish. ‘Hmm, can I communicate with all of these people, the things that I’m thinking in a way that the parents can understand me?’ Or is it going to be a barrier. So that was the part that I said, ‘I don’t know if I can do this work,’ because of that. And also the images of that. That some of the parents have of minorities in general here.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Elsa was confident in her skills as an administrator, but her reasons for being hesitant were related to her status as a “minority” as well as an English language learner. Camila was another principal that had a similar experience with language and leadership as she was considering an administrative role within the school district.

“One of the things that made it difficult is that, as I mentioned, I was a first generation Latina and as such, I am fully aware of the perception of an English language learner and how that will be perceived in terms of, you know, the ability to be the leader of the school. And so I was cognizant of that and I could actually perceive it not only during the program phase but I could see it, you know, on a daily basis basically in terms of the expectations of a leader to be, actually the majority of the leaders at the time were I would say, at the higher level, male and White, and, yeah as I said, all fluent English speakers, let’s put it that way. Through this process I was also learning English and it was one, and I think my major concern was, oh am I going to be able to make it? Am I going to be able to really, you know, be up to the challenge, and as I said, I have a very supportive family that has actually allowed me to do what I do because my husband has taken on the role of being the major caretaker at home.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Although she was transitioning from another career into education, she also felt the pressure of her language skills as a possible barrier. She also shared that she made a keen observation about the people in charge at the very top, which happened to be White men and how this contributed to her perception in leadership and as a language learner.

Because language is a major part of the culture for the principals in this study many of them were hyperaware of their positions as language learners. For Enrique's experience of coming to the United States as a much older student, he developed this hyperawareness through his experiences, and he shared one that impacted him while he was a classroom teacher.

“When I was teaching I went to one of the CTA conferences and we were at the table talking about what we were teaching or whatever. So I tell the other members that I teach English literature and this older, White girl, it was an older, White woman, looks at me and bends her head and asks, ‘Really?’ I asked, ‘What do you mean?’ She said, ‘Oh, I thought you’d be teaching math or something like that.’ Because I have an accent, I wasn’t expected to be teaching English literature. So even within the teaching profession, there are these biases and prejudices that either hinder who you want to be or really give you the motivation to say, ‘You know what? I am going to spite you and be who you don’t think I can be.’” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique felt that even within the ranks of the teaching profession his language and culture were barriers that impeded others from treating him without prejudices, but he used these incidents to fuel his drive in education.

Gender. The goal of this study was to present a balanced number of male to female participants, and of the seven participants in this study, four of them were women. This was just

simply luck because the actual pool was extremely small. The majority of the female principals that participated in this study confided that their role models and mentors were other women. Teresa speaks of the first Latina assistant superintendent within GSUSD with a great deal of pride, and this was even more meaningful since she also became Teresa's support network member when she became a school principal.

“I wanted to share that Barbara was the first Latina Assistant Superintendent that our district had. So when she was going to be speaking at a public forum my dad said Marlene, let's go and hear her. It's really important for you to hear her and so we went and I got to meet her and then later on we met again.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Teresa also shared that she was one of the first participants to have benefited from Barbara's foresight in the creation of an internship program to develop leadership talent from within the school district because Teresa was one of six participants in that first group and also the only Latina in that cohort. Later in the interview, Teresa described her other mentor and support network member, Julia, as being Chinese and that although she was of a different ethnic background, both Julia and Teresa made for a great partnership.

During the interview process, Elsa pointed out a very interesting observation about race and gender, and what she had observed in principal's meetings within GSUSD, and how she and another colleague decided to make a tally to present informal data about this observation.

“I think, did we say about who is in power. It is a lot of things to be, who is the one who speaks the most and who is the loudest voice in the room. And you look at the principal meeting, you might want to say that. Because we have a very close friend, that we were

doing that in my 3rd year as a principal. We started taking into account how many times a Latino was speaking, how many times a White was speaking. We were just counting males, females. Then we were presenting that information to us. Then when we were having drinks after the principals' meeting we were saying, 'Do you know how many times male, Whites were speaking in the principals' meeting? This is the times. How many Latinos were speaking? Two times.' So we were basically being mindful about that and really discussing those elements. I think uncovering that is going to be, is important. We say that to the teachers in the classroom. Who are the loudest voices in the room? So are the leaders that you are creating if you only allow some voices to speak or some voices to be heard. And this is still what happens in our principals' meetings."

(E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa and her colleagues, it was important to identify who were the loudest voices in the room because they allowed her to frame the discussion with her colleagues and ultimately with her teachers. Elsa's goal was to be mindful of the issues that affected her and her environment, and being aware of these simple truths allowed her to frame her social justice lens.

Immigrant. One of the most interesting emergent themes from this study was that of the immigrant experience. Four of the seven principals in this study were originally from another country, which played a major role in their development as principals. One particular principal shared that she had immigrated to the United States as an adult, and that that presented some challenges for her since she had already established a career in education in her country of origin.

“When I was in Venezuela, I was already a teacher at the university, because I was this kind of a student that I was really, I applied myself really. I don't know. I really enjoyed that part. And because I had a master's degree, I was already working, I was in a position of supporting new teachers in their class. So I was part of a research study group, and I was really going into so many directions. And when my life changed, I moved here for a personal reason, getting married and all of that.

“So I moved here. And when I came here, I didn't have enough English at that time to really – so you are working at a university and then you come here and you are like, ‘Ooh, and now you have to start.’ And for me, at that time, I said, ‘Okay, I can do this!’ So I studied as a paraprofessional and consultant, consultancy and paraprofessional. So I started doing these two things.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa the challenge was not only in coming to the United States and learning another language, but also in the sense of starting all over again from the bottom. Elsa was already an established researcher and teacher in Venezuela, and moving to the United States she needed to begin working as a paraprofessional and consult in schools.

Another principal shared his struggles as a teenager coming to this country and experiencing the immigrant challenge of language learning in public schools.

“In my high school years I had just come from Mexico but what surprised me was that those kids who were with me in the small, at that time we had LEP classes. We were excluded from the main class but the interesting thing was that we were the lowest group and there was the ESL group and there was a regular English class for the same grade

level. What was interesting to me was that in that lowest group, there were kids who had been in the States for years and they still were not proficient, not even enough to be in the ESL class, let alone in the regular English class. And a lot of those kids were coming from East Palo Alto. So it always made me wonder, ‘What is going on in East Palo Alto? Why are these kids not prepared for high school courses? I’m 15 and haven’t gone to school in three years and yet here I am with the same kids that have been in the school system in the United States for many years and they’re in the lowest group with me.’ So I always wondered about that, so when I became a teacher I wanted to prevent that from happening.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique shared his observation through the lens of an immigrant student within the American educational system. He questioned how it was possible for students that had been in the United States to stay in English language courses for many years and still not make progress. John Ochoa shared his experience as an immigrant from Spain and how that shaped his desire to work with a mostly Latino population of students at his school.

“Because I come from a low-income family, that I can see that when there were sometimes people don’t believe that you can make it, that you can succeed . . . So for me, that is why I can see how many of our families, low-income families here, what they go through. I identified with that. So that is why I do believe that they can do it, and that is really why I think to be a principal in that school, where the majority of the population was the Latino population.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

John’s experience as an immigrant from a low-income family in Spain shaped his desire to work with Latino students. The experiences that both John and Enrique had early on helped shaped

their desire to work with Latino students. Finally, Camila Beltran shared how the majority of her work prior to entering education in the city centered on producing media programs that highlighted Latino artists within the community.

“I was really interested in filmmaking and also to make statements regarding social issues through film and I began to produce a program called Interview with Latin America through the public service television station in the city. So I continued to have not only conversations about social issues but also how the arts are involved in that. So all of the influences in music, art to the social movement and also to highlight the accomplishments of Latinos, particularly in the city. So we will have guest from Latin America coming here and we will have artists from the city that would be in those programs.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Camila shared that it was important to highlight these community members because they were part of a statement she was making around social issues. She also shared that a great deal of this focus stemmed from her past experiences growing up in Colombia and how that impacted her lens for social justice.

Politics. Finally, one theme that emerged that was also not expected was the role that politics played in the development of the participants. For some of the principals that participated in this study, navigating the political waters for this leadership position proved to be quite a challenge.

“There’s so many factors that I can tell you why I think I lost the political fight. It took me to meeting with my assistant superintendent and having her tell me, ‘No, you need to go to the classroom and prove to me your leadership skills.’ To me, that was all politics

because she knew what I was doing and my principal wrote a glowing letter of recommendation and he expressed so much gratitude for the things that I was doing. So it was politics. ‘No, you’re not going to be an administrator. You have to go back to your classroom and wait a little longer.’ That’s what I mean when I say that I was forced into that choice. ‘Do you want to stay here and prove to somebody that you’re worth it? Or do you want to go somewhere else where someone is willing to give you the opportunity without knowing you, to get an opportunity to prove yourself.’” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

For Enrique, it was clear that he would never be promoted into a leadership role within that school district. Although he was the youngest participant in this study, and the one with the least amount of leadership experience, he attributed his political woes to the fact the he seemed to just simply be too opinionated.

“I think that was another issue because I’m outspoken so if things are inadequate or inappropriate or handled in a way that is not conducive to growth, I can’t keep quiet. That’s what I’m thinking of in terms of the politics.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

The political environment in his previous district really affected his self-reliance, and prevented him from moving into a principalship within that school district. At the time of this study, it was clear that Enrique had experienced a great deal of disappointing situations, but within his current school district he had found much more success and opportunities to practice his leadership skills.

“Knowing full well that I lost the other political fight in my previous district, now I’m becoming more aware of that and more political savvy. And who knows? This may not be the place where I devote my whole political moves or skills or whatever but I think that was the lesson. So all of these experiences and all of these events have made me attempt to become more strategic. Like I said before, I am outspoken but I think that I have learned how to be outspoken but with the right people so the right people will come to my side when we need to push through the status quo.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique had become more strategic about his approach as a leader and was more aware of the political climate that surrounded him. From Enrique’s comments, it seemed that he was still outspoken, but he now knew when and where he could do so.

The experience that Kathy Barrios had was similar in that she was being prevented from obtaining a principalship role within GSUSD as a result of being politically connected to another school principal while she served as a school coach.

“Partially is going back to the principal that I worked under as a coach, that second year that I was negatively connected with. I think he was frustrating to work for because he didn't have a vision for this school. That's what it came down to.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

For Kathy, it was not all due to her being connected to her school principal’s failure to lead the school, but there were other factors that she felt contributed to her being passed over for a school principalship.

“By default I’m under him, I’m going under his orders. I’m part of the problem by empowering the teachers more and not really focusing on teacher or adult development more so than student outcome.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy was not outspoken in the same manner that Enrique was. In fact Kathy described herself as a quiet person, and she also felt that this may have contributed to her being passed up for a principalship within GSUSD initially.

“And also just in general I think my demeanor, I’m a quiet person. I’m not going to be the first one to speak up. I will speak up, I like to participate, but I don’t—I’m not that assertive and I’m always going to speak my mind right off, that’s not who I am. And so I don’t. I do that in my own way because I still feel like I do contribute my ideas.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Again, Kathy shared during the interview process that she felt that her quiet demeanor might have contributed to the negative association with her principal and her lack of experience in leading.

“But I think what was reaffirmed was with this district person telling me you’re not ready, basically saying you’re not ready, we’re going to pass you over. Maybe next time you need to experience new principals was her suggestion and that’s why I was moved in my coaching position three different times.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Although Kathy had gone through an administrative credential program and was encouraged to pursue a principalship, she was still not seen as prepared enough to lead a school by her direct supervisor. She was encouraged to have additional leadership experiences with other principals

to possibly see better leadership role models, and as a result, like Enrique, Kathy decided to leave GSUSD to gain her experience elsewhere. For both Kathy and Enrique, their decision to move to another school district to gain the leadership experience necessary to lead a school or to simply prove to themselves that they could lead was extremely important to their leadership development. Nevertheless, both Kathy and Enrique equated these experiences to the political environment they were working in.

Support systems and networking . Many of the principals that participated in this study found their support network within the same school leaders that propelled them into leadership positions. Both Camila and Teresa found support and encouragement from two separate school leaders instrumental in their leadership development.

“When I was doing that administrative intern year under Barbara and Frank, Julia was the Director of the Educational Placement Office and so Barbara was walking me from the 135 Van Ness building to the Franklin side, when the Franklin side was still operational and we just happen to cross paths and Barbara stopped and said, “Oh Julia I want you to meet Teresa Sanchez, and she’s doing this internship.

“And Julia always remembered, she said, ‘You know for Barbara to stop and personally introduce me to you, that must have meant something, so I always remembered you that way.’ And so it started way back then and then when we had the opportunity to work together, we just formed a closer bond. She was Chinese, I’m Latina but we just . . . And we had different styles because some people were actually afraid to go and talk to Julia but they would always be able to come to me so that I could soften whatever needed to be said and then go present to Julia whatever the comment or concern

was. So it was just a good partnership and a good balance.” (T. Sanchez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Teresa, having both Barbara and Julia within her support network was crucial to her success and confidence building. She was able to reach out to Julia at any moment, and Julia would check in on her from time to time. Teresa already had made an impression on Barbara as she had encouraged her to pursue a leadership internship program, but the fact that Barbara introduced Teresa to Julia made this relationship and network even more powerful and meaningful to Teresa. Camila shared that she felt a very strong connection with the two Latinas that recruited her into the leadership role within GSUSD. She also shared how those Latinas became her role models and allowed her to be creative with her work, and they provided her the confidence to fail if necessary to create her work.

“Yeah, I really felt a connection with these two women who, at the same time that they were supportive, they had very high expectations of the work that we had to do. And at the same time they valued a lot of the work that I did. So I think that created an atmosphere of I could fail, I could try things, I could really, you know, see which areas, I was given a lot of opportunities for example with the projects that we were doing to really be creative and that for me was very important, as well to be creative and to be able to identify also and, at the time, that was not openly discussed, to really identify practices that were done with bilingual students, in bilingual classrooms and supporting English language learners.” (C. Beltran, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Later in the interview process, Camila shared that she still reached out to these two Latina role models, but did so now to keep in touch because she had built a great relationship with them.

The same leaders that provided both Camila and Teresa the encouragement and confidence to take the leap into a principalship also became their support network and sometimes thinking partners while in their leadership position. The relationships that both Camila and Teresa had fostered allowed them to connect with their role models on a personal and professional level.

For Elsa her support came from her PLI coach, and the relationship she was able to build and foster over time.

“Yes, but she continued because I did PLI and then I did the clear credential with the same coach. So it would take about 4 years of working with me, I would say, 3 to 4.

Then still sometimes I call her. Like, ‘Okay, I need your help.’” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

She reached out to her PLI coach for consistent support, and had done so as recent as the past year. Like both Camila and Teresa, the relationship they had built from their administrative credential program or from the working relationships they fostered through their work, were with those already established school leaders who supported their network, and for Camila, Teresa, and Elsa, it was other women that had the greatest relational impact. However, it was over time that Elsa has found confidence in her voice.

“I developed that through the conversation that I had with my coach in the sense that I don't think that my program prepared me to talk to my boss in a way to explain really like . . . Because my boss could be right but sometimes could be wrong. And sometimes we realize that we don't know how to express that in a way that your boss is going to listen to you. But with her support, I was able to do that. Still it is difficult to me because she

is the boss. But I am trying to be better. I am just saying, ‘Okay, these are things that you are seeing, and this is also what I see and how to come to a common understanding of the situation.’” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa, the development of confidence in her voice came through experience and the support of her PLI coach. She was more confident in respectfully disagreeing with her “boss,” and providing enough clarity for her supervisor to listen to her point of view. This was something Elsa shared as being a tremendous support for her confidence building.

For Nathaniel, that support network and confidence building came from an unlikely person: the former superintendent, who encouraged him to lead a troubled school.

“The day they offered me the job, Eduardo pulled me aside and said, ‘We really need you at Oak now. I’m just so upset at what’s happening there and I know you can do it. I’ll back you up.’” (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

Although Nathan had already developed a sense of confidence in his work, it was very clear that others saw him potentially a leader that could create positive change.

“Being on the school board allowed me to think about kind of anything I wanted to do because it’s a very powerful position with a lot of prestige, I guess. So I felt like, ‘Oh, I can do that. There’s no fear, I have no fear.’” (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

However, Nathan described this network as his ability to foster the relationship he had with the superintendent as a result of being the president of the school board. As mentioned before, Enrique consciously developed his own support network to help him with the leadership needs that were important to his survival as a school principal.

“One of the most important tools that I received from PLI was this need for networking. I can say that a lot of the issues that I now face, I presented them to my networks. I have one network of principals who are new like me, so we are going through similar situations and we just talk about, ‘What do you do? Who do you talk to?’ I also have a network of veteran principals and they tell me, ‘Do this’ or ‘Do that’ or ‘Call this person.’ So it’s more directive than prescriptive than the newbie principals.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

The networks that Enrique discussed during this interview were both ones he had created for himself to have as a resource. Although the school district had provided him a mentor, Enrique still reached out to his network for the leadership aspect of his work. However, he confided that he reached out to his mentor for more of the managerial tasks that came with being a school principal. The confidence portion of his leadership development was his own proactive approach to prove to himself that he was capable of being a school principal because he shared that he felt he was not going to be given this opportunity in his previous school district.

“In my previous district it didn’t, I don’t think they were interested in giving me an opportunity to see if my theories actually would make an impact. I was forced, or given the choice of making a choice to stay or to leave. So I needed to prove to myself that, ‘Yeah, I’m not crazy. The things that I’m talking about are meaningful and significant.’” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

More importantly, Enrique did not take no for answer and actually sought a principalship within GSUSD so that he could prove to himself that he was capable of leading a school.

For both Kathy and John, support came from former principals they had worked under or with.

“And it was a good opportunity to build relationships with other leaders that were going through the same process as myself.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

For John, this opportunity was possible as a result of his participation in his administrative credential program; for Kathy, it was the leadership role models she had witnessed from her previous principal and the assistant superintendent from a previous school district.

“Thinking strictly to leadership roles is the principal's job, I would say, I could name two people and I think one was the principal that I worked with in the previous district . . . I think the other voice would be my last assistant supervisor that I had and just really like the idea of leading with a why.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

For John, it had been the ability to connect with other principals during the coursework he took while in his credential program, and for Kathy it was her relationship with her past principal and assistant superintendent in her previous school district that allowed for the networking process to serve as guiding support.

Dialogue (Race and Diversification)

Cultural connection with students. Culture and language was a theme that also emerged from the data collection. Elsa mentioned that culture was a major factor in allowing her to connect with her students and their families.

“And we are a little bit different. We bring other things to the table. We bring our culture. Our way of being, our way to communicate. And all those little things are different. I think that my experiences helped me to understand where families from other countries come. And what are the ideas that they have about schooling and the ideas that they have about this. Because when I talk to parents who come from Mexico, they come from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, it is the same educational system or there are some components that are similar. And then you say, oh, okay. I understand where you are coming from.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa, this ability to connect with her families around their culture and language afforded her the ability to foster positive relationships with them. Enrique was well aware of the biases and how others treated him, and used this knowledge to navigate the complexities of the educational system he was leading in.

“The first thing for me was this component of our having to face our own privileges and biases because without being aware of what you bring into this leadership role, you will not be able to either understand the needs of the population or address the needs of the population and how every decision that you make is going to be impacting your school. Without awareness of what is driving you to make those decisions, then it’s problematic.”

(E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

In fact, Enrique attributed his development of this lens as surfacing and refining during his experience in PLI. He and his colleagues were pushed to explore issues of race, ethnicity, and gender as well as all of the other factors that might contribute to the understanding of their school community. As a result, Enrique was extremely self-aware of the issues that pertained

not only to race and ethnicity but also to gender, sexual orientation, and class. John also expressed his ability to connect with his students and families as a result of his own personal experience coming from a low-socioeconomic environment in Spain:

“Because I come from a low-income family, I can see that when there were sometimes people who don’t believe that you can make it, that you can succeed” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

In fact it seemed that all of the participants had a very strong connection with their students of color as a result of their own personal experiences and self-identity within the culture in which they lived.

Conversations about race. The majority of the participants in this study were relatively comfortable with having conversations about race. Elsa shared that she had a very interesting conversation with another colleague once that really highlighted her awareness of how much race impacted her leadership.

“I had a conversation with another administrator here, that she is African-American. And she told me something that for me was true. She says, ‘Remember Elsa, we are minorities, and we have to work three times harder to show our work than other administrators.’ And I was very like, ‘You are completely right. You are completely right. But we are here because of the kids.’ And that’s why, the faces of the kids are our faces, as you were saying before. They look like us, and they deserve to have a person who looks like them.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Elsa, having another colleague she could have these conversations about race with was powerful, and it helped remind her of why her work was important to her students. However, the

reminder that Elsa's colleague brought to her was even more powerful in that it highlighted the struggles that principals of color must endure in order to prove their work and effort. Just about every principal in this study expressed a certain comfort level about his or her ability to either have or lead a discussion around race in education.

“It was hard in a way because my dad was very dark. I have two siblings that are very fair skinned and myself and another sibling were darker. So we knew even in our family that kids look like mom and kids look like dad. My mom tells the story where it was like parent conference night, when I was like 1st or 2nd grade, and we were walking to school and she was holding my hand and I said to her, ‘Mom, how are they going to know you’re my mom?’ And she was like, ‘They’ll know. Don’t worry.’ (Laughs) I only had a few incidents but they really stuck with me, racial things where people would say wetback in front of me and I’d be like, ‘I’m Latino,’ and they’re like, ‘No, not you.’ Because I was middle class. At my high school almost all the Latino kids were poor and tracked into their vocational, so I had no classes with Latino kids, they were all White kids. I knew that we were different and I knew my dad’s background was very poor, we knew that we had more privileges. We would sometimes hear the ‘n’ word or me being called the ‘n’ word because I was darker. But I can’t say that I was totally harassed or treated really badly.” (N. Martinez, personal communication, February 12, 2016)

For Nathan, simply sharing what he recalled from his experience growing up in Southern California certainly had an impact on his race lens. During the interview process, Kathy expressed that she was not completely comfortable leading a discussion around institutionalized racism. Yet she had a very clear understanding of factors that affect students of color in the city.

“I feel I can connect and have some experience in that but to lead a conversation about all of this, I guess the institutional racism that exists, I wouldn't know where to start, you know? Because now working in the neighborhood that I'm in, it's not predominantly black. Our school reflects the neighborhood. I think it definitely. Not everybody is used to or comfortable with that. The changing demographics of the city, where the money is, I think that's also . . . It's hard for me to understand what's going on and how to speak to the staff, just to bring consciousness to them. I don't know. I need to be able to have a clear connection of that to how that's impacting us at the school site and I get overwhelmed with that for sure. So I don't have a clear message yet.” (K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

However, Kathy proceeded to talk about cultural competence and how that can negatively impact students of color in schools. She understood that having cultural competence could help her discuss issues pertaining to students of color and suspensions as well as students with learning disabilities.

One of the most interesting interviews pertaining to the topic of race was with Enrique Garcia. The themes that Enrique was raising were very critical and provided a great deal of information about his critical race lens and how it impacted his social justice perspective.

“I think I'm so familiar with the understanding. Not understanding, aware of American society that, we talk so much about freedom and equality and liberty and whatever, yet on a daily basis we violate those principles. By we, I mean society. But throughout my education I've seen how the dominant culture, I suppose, how they have been setting the guidelines and the parameters of how and when people of color will advance and how far

they'll be able to go before they become members of the status quo. When I learned about the immigrant struggle and when I learned about the Latino Chicano struggle, when I learned about the gay and lesbian struggle, I immediately think about three disadvantages I have in terms of opportunities for advancement in the general population.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

Enrique was able to express and articulate issues that pertained to his own personal struggle as a Latino, gay immigrant within the context of living in the United States, and how that had shaped his critical social justice lens. Enrique later shared that he was able to consistently use this lens to identify the micro-aggressions that he was exposed to and experienced on a daily basis personally and professionally.

Lastly, John Ochoa shared something that he found to be very hurtful and disappointing about the unfair perception that others may have of him and that of other Latinos and Latinas.

“As a teacher, I did feel also in that experience in that high performing district that it was treated like I was perceived like a privilege, because I am European. Compared to the other Latino teachers here in The States. ‘Oh no, but you are European.’ You know, ‘Like you are superior.’ And for me that was little bit hurting because it was like, again it comes to the low expectations of Latino students or Latino teachers or administrators.” (J.

Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

John expressed that what he found painful was the perception that others would have of him being “superior” to other Latinos and Latinas simply because he was European. What was undeniable from all of the principals interviewed was their ability to recognize that race, culture,

language, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic level, and politics all played a major role in their development as school leaders.

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the findings from each participant interview conducted for this research. Seven interviews were conducted with Latino and Latina elementary school principals in Golden State Unified School District of the potentially 14 possible candidates within GSUSD that could have participated. Of those seven interviews, only one participating principal was the outlier in this study, as he had not received his administrative services credential through the traditional induction program. He actually received his administrative services credential by simply taking the administrative services credential state exam. Each of the interviews lasted from one hour to one hour and a half, and all participants agreed to participate in this study.

The result of the data analysis for this study suggests that there were many factors that positively and negatively affected the experiences of Latino and Latina educators as they chose to enter the field of school leadership. The majority of the participating principals agreed that their preparation programs provided them the necessary chest of tools to draw from as well as the necessary theories to lead. However, the majority of the principals interviewed agreed that a more hands-on approach and more experiential opportunities would have made a tremendous impact on their leadership preparation experience.

Recruitment and mentoring were also major factors in the development and support of Latino and Latina elementary school principals. For many of the principals in the study having a network of support proved to be a valuable strategy to further their leadership skills and knowledge. Other factors, such as navigating the political waters, proved to be a challenge to

and lesson in their attainment of a principalship. Language and culture were another factor that surfaced from the interviews and participants in this study. Nearly half of the principals that were interviewed for this research were English language learners and/or originated from a country other than the United States. This factor contributed to some of the challenges that most of the participants experienced through their journey to becoming an elementary school principal. Lastly, the majority of the school principals that participated in this study had developed varied degrees of a social justice lens and were able to clearly articulate their perspectives or were still in the development stages. However, the issue is more complex than this simple summation of the findings—findings that indicated the need for additional research in this area of education.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings for this research study about Latino and Latina elementary school principals' motivations to enter school administration. The conclusions were developed from the findings, interpreted, and are all presented in this chapter. Implications for future research is also presented in this chapter as well as a discussion of the results of the research questions.

Overview

This research was designed to explore and examine why Latino and Latina educators chose to enter an administrative leadership preparation program with the ultimate goal of securing a principal position. The research study began with a review of the theoretical framework followed by the literature pertaining to leadership. The theoretical framework closely examined the three Freirean concepts chosen to synthesize this research data. Those Freirean concepts include banking, conscientization, and praxis. With regard to the literature pertaining to leadership, the research focused on three themes, which included leadership for diversity and equity, career cycle of educators, and culturally responsive leadership. These three literature review themes then had subtopics, which included the leadership of California schools, trends, "Where are the Latinos?", and the moral imperative of diverse leadership for the theme of leadership for diversity and equity. For the theme of career cycle of educators, the two subtopics addressed the teacher-to-administrator pipeline and Latino and Latina motivation to leadership. The final theme of culturally responsive leadership included subtopics addressing networking, dialogue and other emergent themes.

The next step in this research study was to identify possible participants for this research and contact them to secure a personal interview. Interviews were conducted with principals that agreed to participate in the study, and each participant was given a Demographic Data questionnaire to complete prior to the interview process. Once interviews were conducted, they were transcribed, and the raw data were synthesized using the three identified Freirean lenses of banking, conscientization, and praxis, as well as the three major literature review content areas of leadership for diversity and equity, career cycle of educators, and culturally responsive leadership. The data were organized in a data grid to help identify common themes among the participants.

The sample size of the participants was rather small, seven total participating principals, and was rather equally balanced in terms of gender. Among the total of seven Latino and Latina principals, four were female and three were male principals. The majority of the participants identified as Hispanic or Latino on the Demographic Data questionnaire, and only one participant identified as Hispanic or Latino and White because he originated in Spain (see Table 1 in Chapter 4). Also, the sample of participating principals had one outlier in that this principal did not obtain his administrative services credential through a traditional induction program at a university. He received his administrative services credential by successfully taking the administrative services credential state exam. All of the remaining participants received their administrative services credential either from Golden State University or Cathedral University's, Principal Leadership Institute (PLI). The average years of experience for the sample size of the participating principals was 10 years, with the most experienced principal at 26 years and the least experienced principal at two years, as shown in Table 2 of Chapter 4.

The purpose of this study was to examine why Latino and Latina educators elected to enter administrative leadership preparation programs with the ultimate goal of securing a principal position. The research also aims to provide further insight into how school districts as well as school and colleges of education can consider a targeted recruitment approach of Latino and Latina school leaders to increase the candidate pool for school principals and further close the disproportionate ethnic gap between students attending California public schools and who leads them. Additionally, this research aims to inspire Latino and Latina educators to enter the role of school principals so as to provide additional mentoring and role-modeling opportunities to the students they serve.

Discussion

The research outcomes presented in Chapter 4 indicate that when Latino and Latina educators are recruited and targeted for leadership positions, it is likely that they will accept the challenge and pursue a position as a school leader. This was especially true with the principals in this study when they demonstrated leadership abilities and promise. However, it also indicated that other factors such as district politics and negative support could have a detrimental effect on the confidence building needed to support Latino and Latina educators as they considered entering school leadership. This factor can have a negative effect on creating and supporting a large pool of candidates for school leadership positions. The data also suggest that other factors such as culture, language, gender, and socioeconomic status play a major role in the decision-making process for educators considering entering school leadership. The next portion of these findings will identify how those factors impacted the decisions of the participating principals in this study and should provide a better understanding of how these challenges can be addressed.

Emergent Themes

The following sections further outline some of the common themes that emerged from the participant interviews. This portion of the findings has been organized to reflect the emergent themes related to induction and preparation programs, gender, race, and language and culture, and ends with social justice.

Preparation programs. From the data collected, the majority of the participating principals expressed their contentment with their preparation program for school administration. The two emergent programs from this study were the Golden State University and Cathedral University's, Principal Leadership Institute (PLI), which are prevalent in the universities near Golden State Unified School District. Participation in these programs was split evenly among the six participants that completed their administrative credential program. Some of the participants had completed their program recently, and others had completed their program some time ago. Regardless of when they had completed their program, what was evident was that they all agreed that their preparation program provided a good theoretical base from which to draw. Enrique suggested that the PLI program gave him the tools he could access as a school leader.

“PLI is so complete that it gives you all the tools that you need. What makes the difference is that when you get to the school, there are different tools that you can use to address the situation but you have to decide which of the tools you received from the program you're going to be using.” (E. Garcia, personal communication, February 14, 2016)

He felt that he had many of the tools needed to address any situation. However, most of the participants agreed that they could have used a more hands-on approach. Having an opportunity

to shadow a principal while participating in a preparation program prior to completing their credential would have been helpful. One principal suggested that the completion of an administrative preparation program should include a practicum or internship to aid with the experiential component.

“But I think that the practicum should be something that should be improved. Like I think that there should be a way that in this program, there are more opportunities to have practice before you really become an administrator. Similar to, like, student teaching, when teachers are completing their programs or maybe a shadowing of my principal.” (J. Ochoa, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

One could draw parallels to that of a teaching internship or student teaching opportunity, and suggest that the same should be included for all participants who wish to pursue a career as a school principal. Putting into practice what one has learned from the theories of school leadership is very different than simply learning about them, and it should be considered that the demands placed on a school principal are much more complex than those placed on a classroom teacher.

It is important to note that the principals that participated in this study all completed their administrative credential programs prior to the new changes implemented by the State of California’s Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). As of 2014, California adopted a new clear induction program that requires new school leaders to shape their learning to include on-the-job experiences and professional development, which replaces the traditional experiences of theoretical learning that take place in the classroom—much like what this study’s principals experienced. Essentially the new clear induction program is exactly what these participating

principals expressed as their desired learning model. This new model provides coaching, assessment and professional learning opportunities over a two-year span, concluding with a recommendation for a clear administrative services credential. In fact, the model is reminiscent of a teacher induction program where a coach is assigned to each school leader and the learning is shaped to meet the needs of the new administrator. The old model, in which most of these principals participated, did not provide this opportunity, so—at the time of this study—the State of California was making positive strides to support the development and retention of new school leaders.

Gender. The intent of this research study was to secure at least 10 willing principals to participate in this study, and although I was fortunate to have secured seven willing participants it was fortuitous to have a relatively balanced number of male-to-female principals for this research. It may appear that gender was not a focal point explicitly stated by our female participants in this study, however, I have further questions that need to be researched as a result of some of the feedback expressed by the participants. The themes that emerged around gender provide powerful insights into the need to support our female educators as they choose to enter the field of school administration, and these themes can be suggested as a recommendation for further studies. On numerous occasions, the Latina principals that participated in this study expressed how the expectation to be submissive was something they were either conscious of or reacted unconsciously. During the interview process, Kathy shared something that piqued my interest as it related to gender and the expectations for Latinas.

“Stereotypically we're very accommodating. I think I do that to a degree. I do accommodate. I'm very flexible, like, actually using that lens, just like the text between

you and me, like, so where do you want to go? No, where do you want to go? There was a lot of I don't care. Where do you want to go? Definitely a lot, like, I don't take the lead that way. I know plenty of places, but I'm not going to make it go where I want it to go.”

(K. Barrios, personal communication, February 13, 2016)

Kathy recognized that gender and being a Latina had impacted her development as a leader. She recognized how stereotypically she was expected to be accommodating even though she knew what she wanted. Elsa also made a reference to being submissive during the interview.

“Well, it's challenging because he's your boss and how we're submissive.” (E. Calderon, personal communication, February 12, 2016).

Reading into the comments by both Kathy and Elsa would seem to indicate that gender and the stereotypes that surround what it means to be a Latina in education could have a tremendous impact on their leadership development. Thus, this might be an area for further research as it was not pursued during the interview process. It was also interesting to see that among the participants in this study, gender was not a determining factor for their entry into leadership even though education is a field dominated by women in the teaching ranks. However, examining the current educational leadership structures in education, it could appear that upper leadership is dominated by men. This is not the case. Data from the California Department of Education (CDE, 2015) indicated that in 2013–2014, 61% of California's administrators were women, while 39% of administrators in the state were men. When we further analyze these percentages by Latinos, the numbers are similar in that 57% of Latinas held administrative positions while 43% of Latinos held similar positions in the state. Perhaps this area is one that warrants future research.

Race. It is very difficult to separate race from the language and culture discussion because it is an integral part of the experiences of Latinos in the United States. However, for principals like Nathaniel Martinez, race and culture was something he shared during his interview as having witnessed with his family as a young man first hand. He shared that he was very aware of the color of his parents' skin as well as their cultural background, and his concern during a parent conference with his mom and worrying that others would not recognize that his mom was actually his mom. Nathaniel also shared that although he never felt extremely discriminated against, he did witness many incidents of name-calling and efforts to remove an Indian family from his neighborhood. All of these experiences and his relationship with his mother helped shape his own critical lens. Kathy shared that she felt that her mother provided her a well-rounded experience growing up and exposing her to the celebrations around the city that celebrated other people and cultures. However, she shared that she felt uncomfortable in leading a discussion about race with others even though she was very well aware of the manner in which race impacted her students. John also shared a very interesting and painful experience he had had while teaching in a high-performing school district, where he was being treated differently because he was made to understand that because of his European lineage he was "superior" to other Latinos. From the data gathered in this study, it becomes evident that race is a factor that warrants additional discussion and consideration in education. As Latinos in the United States, it is a lens that we are judged and measured by, but there really is not any real discussion taking place in educational circles to help frame how race impacts the experience Latinos have in education.

Language and culture. Language and culture proved to be two very insightful themes that emerged from the principal interviews. For the Latino and Latina principals that participated in this study, it was difficult to separate culture from language, especially when it was coupled with their status as immigrants to the United States. Four of the seven participants came from Latin America and their experience as language learners proved to be a major factor in how they developed their social justice lens as well as their leadership ability. Enrique immigrated to the United States as a young adult and his experience in school as a language learner helped shape his lens of language acquisition with Latino students in the United States. John, Elsa, and Camila all arrived to the United States as adults, and they, too, were impacted by their experience and perception as language learners. What emerged from these experiences is a critical lens that propelled them to focus on working and supporting Latino and Latina students. Enrique and John were adamant about working with the Latino and Latina student population. Both Elsa and Camila were already working with a lens that centered on supporting Latino and Latina students. Finally, Teresa shared that she was very proud of her parents, who immigrated from El Salvador and became her role models because of their work ethic and pride. The data gathered in this study certainly highlighted the impact that race, language and culture have on the development of Latino and Latina educators' leadership as well as their focus in schools.

Social justice. The one emergent theme that was prevalent in all of the participating principal interviews was related to social justice. Every single principal that participated in this study had a relatively well-developed social justice lens. It seemed as if they were all working toward addressing a social justice issue within their work as school principals. What became evident was that some of the principals, like Camila and Elsa, specifically shared how their

experiences with being exposed to the teachings of Paulo Freire impacted their work. Other principals, like Enrique, were extremely self-aware of their experiences of being a gay, Latino immigrant, and how others perceived him, and he was able to clearly identify the micro-aggressions that impacted him daily. This and his personal life experiences had shaped his approach to working with a mostly Latino and Latina student population. What the data demonstrated was that the social justice lens these principals had developed was a result of their life experiences and education. Being members of an oppressed group certainly created a heightened sense of awareness to injustices that affected them, and this further helped shaped their social justice lens.

This is where having a larger sample size would help to demonstrate if, in fact, being a member of an oppressed group automatically provides principals an opportunity to develop their social justice lens. It was incredible to witness the level of commitment that these principals had to addressing issues related to social justice and the passion with which they approached their work.

Implications

The implications that this research study presents can be powerful in terms of closing the representative gap within California public schools. What follows is a discussion of how the data connect to the Freirean concepts of banking, conscientization, and praxis, and how those play an integral role in what needs to be considered as we address this social justice issue in education. We also discuss why this is a problem that needs to be addressed and raise some questions to be considered for further discussion.

Freire. We must begin this section by identifying the three Freirean concepts at the heart of this research. This researcher believes that banking, conscientization, and praxis are deeply connected to the success of increasing the Latino and Latina educator pipeline and closing the representative leadership gap in California. Paulo Freire's seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, represents a guide to help frame this discussion, and the three concepts that follow further create a road map to be used in addressing this social justice issue. This research study itself is a representation of all three of these concepts with the ultimate goal of enabling the inspiration of current educators to take action in addressing this social justice issue.

Banking. Freire's banking concept implies that students are empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge they lack in order to be productive and contributing members of society. When that concept is applied to Latinos in education, the assumption is that Latinos do not have anything to contribute to education, and this becomes even more evident when the representation of Latinos in teaching and leadership roles are severely diminished. The likelihood of a Latino and Latina student having a teacher or principal that looks like them is very unlikely. This sends a clear message to those students that, as Latinos, it is virtually impossible to teach or lead schools. From the data gathered, what became evident was that, for some of the principals who participated, the banking concept certainly affected their development. For Teresa, the banking model manifested in her disbelief in her ability to lead as a young assistant principal. At some point in her career, she came to understand that she was not well-equipped or knowledgeable in leading. This was made clearly evident to Enrique and Kathy as they initiated their pursuit to become school principals, and were blatantly told that they needed more experience in leading. The assumption that they were lacking knowledge or experience is a clear sign of how the

banking concept impedes the progress and confidence building of Latinos in education. Rather than building their self-confidence and mentoring opportunities through dialogue and feedback, the response is negative and destructive.

Conscientization. Developing consciousness or awareness of the issues that touch Latinos in education becomes critical in creating a plan to address the representation gap in California public schools. When the majority of the students in the State of California are Latinos and their teachers and school principals do not match their ethnic background, it presents a very problematic sense of reality. One could interpret this message to be that Latinos are not equipped or able to teach other Latinos. Freire (1970) contended, “A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation” (p. 85). In order for Latinos to transform this current reality, it becomes significant to increase the pool of candidates in education. There must be an explicit approach to allow Latinos to teach and lead in schools so that students may see Latinos as capable in doing so. For principals like Camila and Elsa, who were exposed early on to the teachings and writings of Paulo Freire, their consciousness was their reality, and they led with that lens. For other principals, like Enrique, this consciousness developed as a result of his life experiences and questioning injustices. However, the data support that all of the principals that participated in this study were conscious and very aware of the social justice issues that not only affected their students and work, but also how those same issues affected them personally and professionally.

Praxis. The praxis of this research is exactly what this study represents. It presents the opportunity to begin a discussion about the need to create change and a new narrative in education for Latinos in the United States. Recognizing that there is a

problem and becoming aware that one exists are important steps in this process. The participating principals in this research study were at the conscientization and praxis stage of this work. They were aware of what was happening around them in education and were taking action by leading schools that predominantly supported and served Latino students. They were becoming the role models for those students and were hopefully inspiring other Latino and Latina students to take action and possibly consider a career in education. For principals like Enrique, who voiced clearly in the interview that he wanted to be the one that inspired his students—just as he was inspired by his second-grade teacher—demonstrated his praxis in this process. Camila had been actively participating praxis through her work in media and now as a school principal, and the same could be said for Teresa, who shared that she wanted to show her students living in the projects that there was a way out. Every principal that participated in this study demonstrated some level of praxis in their work and focus, and were aware of how their actions impacted the students they were serving. However, additional work is needed to address the representative gap that in California public schools and reflecting and discussing are just not enough. Action must be taken in order to truly create change and a new narrative.

Why is this a problem?

This is a critical issue in California public schools today, and if we cannot see it as a problem, then we are accepting the status quo without considering the impact it will have on Latinos in California. The numbers do not hide that there are more Latino and Latina students in California than any other subgroup in the state, yet their teachers and administrators do not

adequately reflect our state's population. This is a matter of equity if education is truly a tool for liberation.

Lacking Latino representation in school leadership. In 2013–2014, the state enrollment of Latino students in public schools was 53% (CDE, 2015). More than half of the students in the state were Latinos. However, 66% of their teachers and 62% of administrators were White (CDE, 2015), a statistic that should raise questions. If the Latino student population has been on the rise in the State of California over the last five years then why is that statistic not reflected in the number of Latino and Latina teachers and administrator in the state as well? What is even more interesting is that the 62% of administrators in California do not differentiate if these “administrators” are principals, vice principals, directors, assistant superintendents, or superintendents. Again, the likelihood of a student in a California public school seeing a Latino or Latina principal is very unlikely. The Wallace Foundation (2013) highlighted important factors of effective school principals who guide schools to success, noting “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors that affect student learning in school” (p. 5). The representation gap exists even in school districts like GSUSD even though the student population reflects that of the city in which it resides. This was made evidently clear and apparent as this researcher found it difficult to secure enough principals to participate in this study because the pool was extremely small. The fact remains that nearly half of the teachers or administrators are White in Golden State Unified School District.

Pipeline-to-school administration is severely limited. The pipeline to school administration is severely limited or does not exist altogether. While there is a tremendous push to provide STEM programs in schools to increase the pool of scientists in this country, there

really is nothing that supports or encourages Latino and Latina students to enter the field of education. Coupling that with the fact that next to African American students, Latinos are less likely to graduate from high school creates an issue that puts a stranglehold on the number of possible candidates that would become potential educators. However, there is a significant pool of Latinos that enters the prison system, and it appears that the education system has been steadily feeding this pool for some time now. One could make the argument that the practices that are prevalent in schools are contributing to the population of the prison system. When teachers “criminalize” behaviors like tardiness and defiance, and students are suspended and sent out of class, then students are receiving the message that they do not belong in the classroom. Often these practices are not done maliciously and are practices that have not been questioned or challenged. However, this school culture is prevalent in California public schools, and must be challenged. The outcome of this is often referred to as the “school-to-prison pipeline,” and the point that is being made here is that it is working efficiently. Here is where the issue becomes even more distressful. When we think about who the classroom teachers are, based on the percentages being that most teachers in California are White, then one could present the argument that a form of modern genocide or extermination being facilitated by the practices enabled in public schools.

Implications for students and role models in leadership. Enrique shared during his interview that he felt that it was important for Latino and Latina students to see other Latinos in leadership roles. He suggested that the media sometimes paints a “White savior” in schools that are predominantly filled with students of color. The movie *Dangerous Minds* suggested this, but his point is poignant in that as long as Latino and Latina students do not see other Latinos

leading a school and providing positive role models it becomes easy to disconnect from the importance that education presents to students of color. Enrique later suggested that there are “brown saviors too,” and was attempting to become a role model for his students. John also shared that he felt it was important for Latino and Latina students to have Latino role models and suggested that the pool of candidates be increased by going outside the United States to recruit candidates. This is a great suggestion to infuse the current pool, but the question we should be raising is why we would need to do so if there are enough Latinos and Latinas here in California based on the student enrollment population?

Mentoring programs are lacking. Mentoring opportunities and programs that serve the Latino community are scarce. There is nothing in place to promote mentorship programs for Latino and Latina students in K–12 education and these mentoring opportunities are also extremely limited once Latinos enter education. On many occasions, the mentoring that takes place is not representative of Latinos, so mentors in K–12 are almost nonexistent. Once Latinos become teachers or administrators, mentoring opportunities are also limited. Sometimes if Latinos are able to find a mentor, it is very unlikely that they will reflect their cultural background—just as is the experience of Latino and Latina students in California.

Dismal recruitment efforts. Like mentoring programs, recruitment efforts to increase the number of Latino and Latina educators are limited. There is not a campaign or effort clearly present to increase the pool of Latinos in education. Recruitment efforts to attract more Latinos must be explicit and strategic in order to increase the pool of Latino and Latina educators. This cannot take place once students arrive at college and have determined that they would prefer a more lucrative career in technology or science. Recruitment efforts must start early in K–12

education and, more importantly, what needs to take place is a recognition that this is a critical issue of social justice that affects education today.

Conclusions

When reviewing the literature around Freire's concepts, it is clear that this is an issue of social justice. It clearly presents issues of oppression and equity especially since education should be a tool for liberation and not oppression. In this case, it seems that education is contributing to the oppression and enslavement of Latinos in California. Coming to an understanding that the classroom teacher is the most important element of a student's success, it becomes crucial to also accept that the school principal is the second most important contributor to a student's success. With that in mind, it also becomes paramount to recognize that not having appropriate Latino and Latina representation in classrooms and school leadership becomes an issue of social justice. What follows is a model for implementing change within the educational structure that supports and increases the administrator pipeline that begins as early as high school.

Increasing the Pipeline

When thinking about how to further address this issue of social justice in education, it becomes critical to create a plan that can support and sustain a healthy pool of candidates to enter the field of education. The plan would be to expose and provide experiences through mentorships and hands-on experiences that would foster and promote an educational opportunity to students. Ultimately those Latino and Latina students could then make a decision based on the exposure and experience gained from this approach. If, at that point, they wish to pursue a career elsewhere, they would have at least have had this opportunity, and the pool of candidates would

certainly increase. It becomes critical to increase the pipeline of students entering education. At this point, it is clear that the education pipeline is leaking in the K–12 environment, and very little is being done to solve this social justice issue. Why wait to increase the pipeline in college when the numbers of Latinos have greatly decreased already? Why not start as early as the high school?

Leadership Academy at the high school. The creation of a Leadership Academy or strand at the high school level would inject a great deal of energy and focus into increasing the number of Latino and Latina students interested in entering education. As mentioned before in this chapter, the focus and interest in increasing the number of students pursuing careers in the sciences has been positively affected by the focused attention to STEM programs. Needless to say it would behoove public education to seriously consider a similar approach to developing leadership and fostering an educational focus with students at the high school level.

Teaching and leadership component. This leadership academy would benefit greatly from having 11th- and 12th-grade students mentor and guide the younger 9th- and 10th-grade students within the school, creating a continuous cycle of support—similar to having a varsity and junior varsity team in high school sports. The upper classmen would be focused on leadership opportunities as well as teaching within the school and at the middle school and elementary school level. This could also be part of a final graduating portfolio that would enable students that graduate with an education focus to enter college ahead of students that are beginning to explore education as a possible major. The teaching component could be implemented by providing these high school students tutoring opportunities that would enable them to put into practice the teaching strategies and theories they have learned in the leadership

academy and bring back those experiences to share with the younger 9th- and 10th-grade students.

Bachelor's degree with a teaching credential. One of the major challenges that students desiring to enter education face is the likelihood of additional time spent in college to earn a teaching credential with a very small financial reward at the end of this accomplishment. Currently, it seems that teachers are in school nearly as long a lawyer or doctor only to graduate and earn very little, making the lure of teaching not as attractive. Additionally, the new induction requirements needed to clear a teaching credential make it almost unattractive to pursue a teaching career—not to mention the amount of pressure to perform well amid a great deal of pressure to have great test scores in the face of a great deal of negativity associated with the failure to teach students. In order to increase the pool of Latino and Latina principals, we must have a healthy pool of teachers to draw from, and this would enable this plan to have said pool.

It is important to state that currently there are programs at universities that support this plan. Incoming undergraduate students can declare education or teaching as part of their undergraduate degree so that at the end of their five-year program they graduate with a bachelor's degree along with their teaching credential. This plan would expose students to education early in their careers and inspire new students to consider pursuing a career in education with the hope of increasing the educator pipeline. Currently, the State of California is in crisis trying to find enough teachers to fill vacant teaching positions, and the situation is even worse when we talk about the substitute teacher shortage. While it is important to increase the pool of Latino and Latina educators, the issue to avoid is to inject this pool with unqualified

educators. Again, starting this approach at an early age provides the candidates the opportunity to determine early on if teaching is a profession they would like to pursue in the first place, and ultimately increase the educator pipeline which, in turn, can potentially provide an increased pool of Latino and Latina school leaders.

Explicit opportunities to shadow and teach. Providing college students the opportunity to shadow or teach while in their undergraduate coursework would also provide a better opportunity for students to determine if teaching is a career path they would like to pursue. This provides yet another level of exposure to education, and these efforts must be supported by schools of education to help foster increased interest in education as a real possible career path. These teaching or shadowing opportunities must be explicit and allow for enough of a practicum to take place so that the skills that are being gained are refined and improved. As a classroom teacher it is believed that most of the time a teacher does not really begin to truly understand and refine his or her craft until the third or fifth year of teaching. This opportunity would greatly diminish that time for refinement and could inject a healthy pool of educators that would benefit students in public schools. This would support an increase in the general pool of education candidates. However, these efforts must be tailored to support an increase of Latino and Latina candidates, and it could be accomplished much in the same manner as programs like MESA, which focuses on increasing the math, engineering, and science pool of students in college. Again, the goal is to increase exposure to education while providing an explicit opportunity for practice.

Schools of education and school districts. Schools of education and school districts could draw from this pool of candidates before these students graduate from college with their

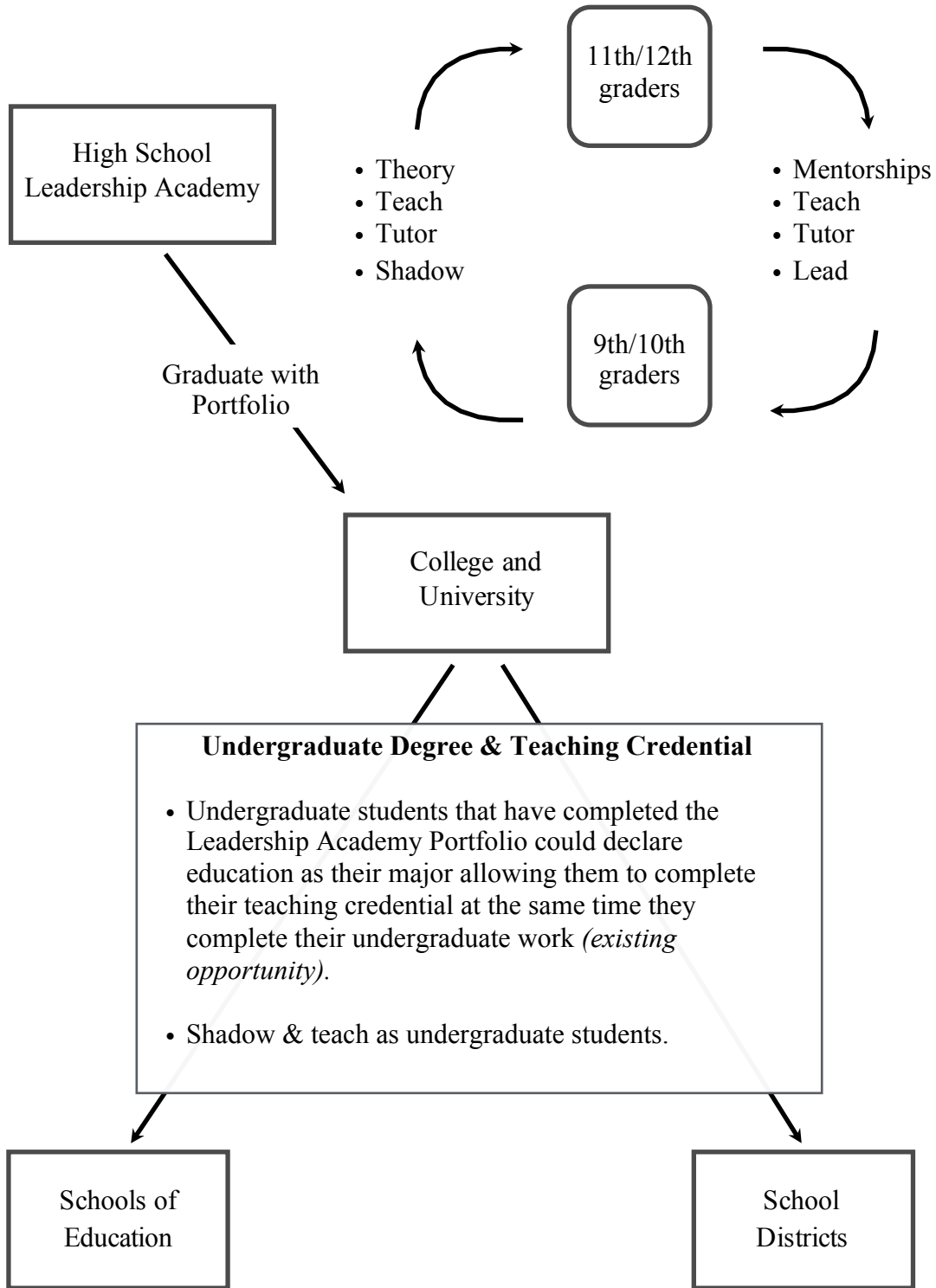
teaching degree or credential. While much of the information presented in these last paragraphs has focused around teachers, it becomes critical to state that teaching is the first step before entering school leadership. However, with an increase in the number of Latino and Latina teachers in the education system, it becomes critical to have an explicit recruitment process for potential school leaders, and this is possible with the increase of Latino and Latina school teachers. One suggestion for schools of education and school districts would be to provide seminars or information sessions to interested Latino and Latina candidates thinking about entering the field of school leadership with the knowledge and background needed to successfully reach this goal. It is important to state that the goal of these sessions would be to provide a road map and guidance on how to successfully reach a school leadership position so as to encourage and not discourage potential candidates.

Recruitment and education organizations. It is critical to recognize that a plan of this magnitude would need a great deal of lobbying, planning, and convincing, but with the support of education organizations, a plan such as this could prove to be an effective tool to increase the pipeline. Having the support of education organizations such as the California Teachers Association (CTA), The Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS), the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA), and local school districts is critical—not to mention the support of the policy makers to make the necessary changes and adjustments to the credentialing requirements to ensure that there is a more streamlined approach to support an endeavor of this magnitude. At the end of the day, the recruiting of Latino and Latina educators must be a shared responsibility between local school

districts, schools of education, and education organizations. Without this concerted effort, increasing the pool of qualified Latino and Latina educators will remain unchanged.

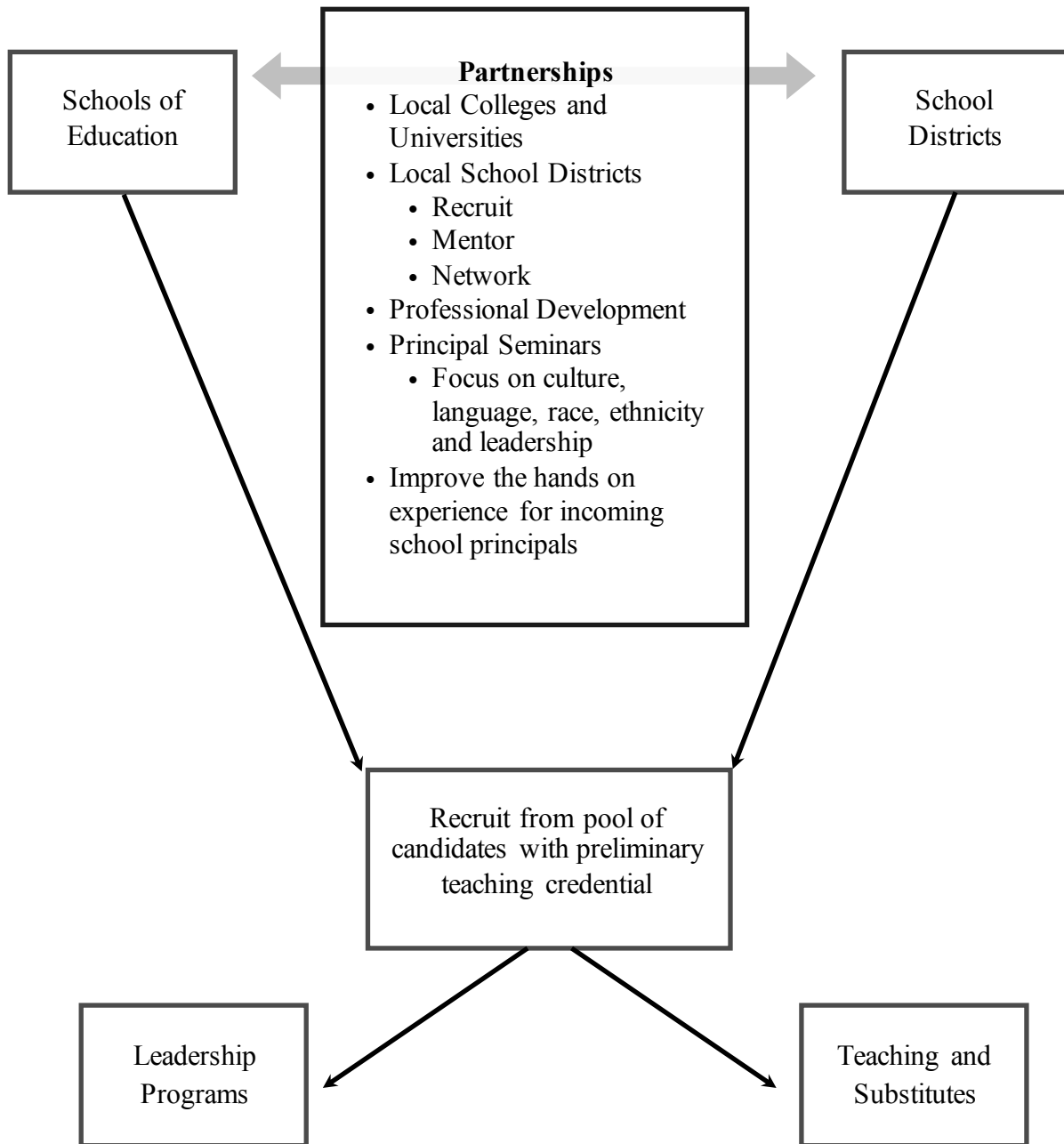
Networking, recruitment, and mentorships. Finally, having the organizations mentioned above provide explicit networking, recruitment, and mentorship opportunities is critical to changing the narrative of California education. However, these efforts should not only be led by these organizations, but also need the energy and direction of schools of education as well as school districts. If we have established that the lack of Latino and Latina representation is a matter of social justice in California public schools, then there needs to be a very real and honest conversation about changing the system that is creating this shortage and pipeline leakage. The current changes to the administrative credential process is a huge step in the direction of increasing the pool of qualified candidates in general. However, until we become conscious of the fact that this is a problem that affects the Latino and Latina community, and we discuss, dialogue, reflect, and take action upon the said matter, all we have is a problem without a real solution.

Figure 8: Increasing the Pipeline



Continued on next page

Continued from previous page



Recommendations for Practitioners

While the data suggest that there are many factors that affect Latino and Latina educators' consideration to enter school administration, it becomes critical that school districts

and schools of education take the lead to remedy this issue. Many of the factors that affect Latinos in education are neither created nor supported by the educators themselves, rather they are situations that could be addressed by school districts and schools of education. These recommendations are simple yet extremely powerful and have the potential for the greatest impact on Latino and Latina educators entering the field of school administration.

Recommendations for School Districts

Better recruitment efforts explicitly designed to attract Latinos and Latinas.

School districts in California need to create an effort to explicitly recruit Latino and Latina educators into the field of school leadership. The assumption here is that this effort has not taken place because there is not recognition that this is a problem in California. Although organizations such as CALSA have identified this as a problem in California, the time to act is now, and we must move beyond the discussion phase and into the action phase of this process. The goal of this research is to present this issue as a problem in California schools, so it should become the goal of school districts to create and implement better recruitment efforts to explicitly attract Latinos into school leadership. This could come in the form of incentives such as additional stipends or tuition remission. From the data gathered, it was evident that those principals that took advantage of partnerships that GSUSD had with Golden State University in order to recruit potential candidates were successful, as was the case with Teresa Sanchez. The PLI program at Cathedral University has proven to be very successful in producing good school leaders, but we cannot infer that the program actively recruits Latinos into the program.

Effective mentoring programs for Latino and Latina principals. School districts should also consider creating an effective mentoring program for Latino principals. From the

data gathered in this study, there was not any mention from the participants that there was an explicit mentoring program within GSUSD that supported Latino and Latina principals only. Not only is there the challenge of recruiting effective Latino and Latina school principals, but also the challenge to keep them. Pairing up Latino and Latina school principals with a mentor of their choice or one that the school district would suggest is important to the success of Latino and Latina school principals. Perhaps this mentorship program could call upon retired school principals or veteran principals within the school district to support relatively new school principals.

Support network designed to support Latino and Latina principals. While having a support network available to any school principal is important, it becomes even more important to ensure that there is an explicit support network for Latino and Latina school principals within the school district. This cannot take the form of only a social network, but must be explicitly created with the goal of supporting Latino and Latina school principals to address problems of practice. This support network must also take into account the factors that make this group of educators unique in their experience as school principals. There must be explicit discussions around gender, language, culture, race, and politics integrated into conversations around curriculum, common cores standards, assessments, instruction, and budgeting. Too often the issues that Latino and Latina educators face are moved aside to discuss issues that are addressed within professional development opportunities the school district provides. In other words, there must be an explicit catering to Latino and Latina school principals and their needs.

Recommendations for Schools of Education

1. Partnering with local school districts to offer administrative leadership programs

Schools of education must make a concerted effort to partner with local education agencies to offer meaningful administrative leadership programs to potential school leaders. These efforts must make it extremely attractive for potential candidates to pursue, and cannot be perceived as an added gatekeeping mechanism to keep Latinos out of educational leadership opportunities.

2 Explicit recruitment of Latinos and Latinas into school of education

Schools of education must make a concerted effort to recruit Latino and Latina undergraduate students to consider entering the field of education. This must look different than the current “open house” approach that schools of education take in order to recruit. It must be hands-on, and it must expose potential candidates to the reality of entering the field of education. This could be accomplished through a series of seminars that exposes students to classrooms and schools and really provides those students a true feel for what is rewarding about the field of education. Above all, it must be focused around the experience that Latinos have in education, and it must be aimed at explicitly recruiting them to enter this field.

3. Improved preparation program

While the recruitment process should focus on Latino and Latina candidates, it should also provide potential educators who are looking to become school principals the opportunity to shadow a school principal for a period that would allow them to learn from them. From the data gathered in the interview process, it was evident that most principals interviewed felt that having a more hands-on approach to their administrative preparation program would have provided them a better grounding for what it is like to be a school principal. Interestingly enough, the only participant that did not go through a preparation program, Nathaniel, shared that he had

shadowed Elsa Calderon for nearly a year to prepare himself to be a school principal. A great deal of the managerial duties that a principal executes are things that are learned while on the job, but providing this opportunity to potential candidates enables them to focus on the instructional leadership that is often needed in schools. Creating a more effective preparation program for aspiring school principals is essential to the success of recruiting and retaining Latino and Latina school principals.

4. Additional opportunities for leadership seminars to explore problems of practice

It is not helpful for school principals to be given the keys to a school and then ignored for the remainder of their career or school year. This is potentially one of the greatest contributors to school principal attrition. There must be additional leadership opportunities in the form of seminars that allow current school principals to address problems of practice. Too often principals are left to lead a school and not given the opportunity to network and talk with other school principals about what matters most in their schools. If these opportunities were created in conjunction with a school district and school of education to provide additional professional development opportunities that are chosen by the school principals, it would make it more meaningful and effective in the retention of current school principals.

5. Augment the culture, language, race and ethnicity component of leadership preparation programs

Finally, while it is important to have a great background in the theoretical approach to school leadership, there must be a concerted effort to talk about race, culture, language, and gender in order to better prepare school leaders with the reality of this position. Not only that, but it also validates the experiences and builds confidence within Latinos as they navigate the

complex waters of education. This is the elephant in the room as it pertains to this issue of social justice. The discussion around race, culture, language, gender, and ethnicity needs to be at the center of a leadership preparation program. It cannot be simply addressed by taking one course, one semester, or by reading a few articles and expecting that every principal will develop a social justice lens. For the principals interviewed in this study, it has been a life-long experience of developing this social justice lens, and it becomes absolutely critical for schools of education to make this component especially critical as it prepares school leaders to serve their constituents. For Latino and Latina school principals, this creates a validation of their reality and provides them a platform to create a new narrative for their work with the students of California.

Recommendations for Future Research

The data presented in this research has implications for schools of education as well as for school districts in California. The need to have a larger pool of potential Latino and Latina school principals is evident in the number of Latino students increasing year to year in California. The data suggest that Latinos are continuing to increase in numbers in California, and there is no slowdown in sight. However, the number of Latino and Latina school principals have not shown a significant increase over the last five years. It becomes critical to continue to perform further studies around this subject matter to have a much better understanding of the additional factors that contribute to Latino and Latina educators entering school leadership. Also, a much larger sample size than the one gathered for this study could provide additional emergent themes that were not identified with the sample of this research. A research study that focuses primarily on the issue of gender in school leadership and its impact on Latinas might provide a deeper understanding of how they effectively manage and enter the field of school

leadership. A longitudinal study might also provide more information about the effectiveness of recruitment strategies as well as that of support networks designed to retain Latino and Latina school principals. Perhaps a longitudinal study evaluating the effectiveness of the current administrative services credential process would provide further insight into improving and making recruitment strategies more effective in supporting Latino and Latina school leaders. Finally, the potential to explore the effectiveness of a particular administrative preparation program could provide additional insight to inform schools of education and school districts about the direction needed to improve preparation programs for potential Latino and Latina educators considering a career in school leadership.

Epilogue

In 2013–2014, the California Department of Education data stated that the Latino and Latina student population of California comprised 53% of the total student population. This was not an anomaly isolated to just one year, but rather has been the reality for the last several years where the Latino and Latina student population has steadily shown a yearly increase. However, the Latino and Latina teacher and administrator representation in schools has remained extremely low and insignificant. One can speculate that Latinos and Latinas just don't want to enter the field of education. However, that would be an absurd speculation considering that the next largest students subgroup in California is White students, with 25% comprising the 2013–2014 statistics from the California Department of Education. However, White teachers and administrators make up more than 60% of the California representation, according to the California Department of Education. How is it possible that the largest student representation in schools does not comprise the largest representation in classroom teachers and administrators?

California's Latino and Latina student enrollment is on the rise, but their teachers and school principals do not match them. There must be an explicit and concerted effort to increase the pool of Latino and Latina educators to enter school leadership. The likelihood of a Latino or Latina student having a teacher or principal that looks like them is rather small, and the impact that this has on their self-awareness, confidence building, and pride is substantial. There is an inherent connection that students have with their teacher and school principals, and it must be fostered through an increase in representation in these extremely important positions. The educator-to-principal pipeline is not evident, and schools of education, along with school districts, must take drastic steps to address this issue. Recruitment efforts, along with positive and productive mentoring programs, must be created and sustained in order to increase and retain the pool of Latino and Latina school principals. This is a social justice matter that can no longer be ignored, and one for which we have entered a critical stage. We must become conscious of how this impacts the Latino community and create our own praxis.

Keeping all of this in mind and what this research has presented as a social justice issue in education, it becomes critical to state the obvious. Education has been an effective gatekeeper that has created an educational environment unwelcoming of Latinos and Latinas in teaching and administrative positions. The current education system sends a loud and clear message that Latinos and Latinas are not welcomed into the realm of educational leadership, and it continues to perpetuate the banking concept that has effectively eliminated Latinos and Latinas from a liberated state of mind by supposing that they are simply empty vessels without knowledge. This research represents what Paulo Freire referred to as the opportunity to liberate ourselves, but also to liberate our oppressors through this conscientization and praxis. If this provokes a dialogue

and/or challenges a thought, then we must take the next step in engaging in a meaningful dialogue that can produce a positive result, which can lead to an opportunity to create a new narrative and reality of how Latinos can positively impact the educational landscape. Action must be at the center of this new narrative and it must be taken in conjunction with all of the members of the educational community so as to provide an example of how to truly liberate those oppressed through education.

APPENDIX A
Solicitation for Participants

Dear [],

As a part of my dissertation research for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for Social Justice with Loyola Marymount University, I will be conducting a research study that is designed to provide insight into what factors have led to Latino/a principals' decisions to enter educational leadership. The study will also examine what opportunities or barriers exist regarding mentoring and professional development for Latino/a school leaders. The results may contribute to a deeper understanding of how to develop and retain Latino/a school leaders at a critical time in the nation's history.

My sample for this study includes Latino/a elementary principals in our school district. I would like to invite you to participate in a confidential, audiotaped interview that will last for approximately one hour. If you would be willing to participate, please let me know a few dates and times that you are available between now and [date]. I will send you the Informed Consent form, Experimental Subjects Bill of Rights, and the interview questions that will enable your participation.

Yours sincerely,

José Montaña, Principal Investigator

APPENDIX B
Informed Consent

DATE

Loyola Marymount University

Protocol Number: LMU IRB _____

Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration 1)

I hereby authorize José Montaña to include me in the following research study: **Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration.** 2) I have been asked to participate in a research project which is designed to provide insight into what factors have led to Latino/a principals' decisions to enter educational leadership. 3) It has been explained to me that the reason for my inclusion in this project is that I am a Latino/a principal in the school district. 4) I understand that if I am a subject, I will participate in an interview of approximately one hour. The investigator(s) will ask me questions related to my experiences that led up to my decision to become a principal and my current experiences as a principal. These procedures have been explained to me by José Montaña. 5) I understand that I will be audiotaped in the process of these research procedures. It has been explained to me that these tapes will be used for teaching and/or research purposes only and that my identity will not be disclosed. I have been assured that the tapes will be destroyed after their use in this research project is completed. I understand that I have the right to review the tapes made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part. 6) I understand that the study described above may involve the following risks and/or discomforts: None are anticipated. 7) I also understand that the possible benefit of the study is a deeper understanding of how to develop and retain Latino/a school leaders at a critical time in the nation's history. 8) I understand that José Montaña who can be reached at montanojose@mac.com will answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study. 9) If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. 11) I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to my standing in the school district. 12) I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study. 13) I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law. 14) I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that I may not wish to answer. 15) I understand that I will not receive compensation for my participation in this study. 16) I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact David Hardy, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, 1 LMU Drive, Suite 3000, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 (310) 258-5465, david.hardy@lmu.edu. 17) In signing this consent form, I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the form, and a copy of the "Subject's Bill of Rights."

Subject's Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C
Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to an interview about your experiences that have led to your leadership as a principal. I will ask a series of questions about your background. If, at any time, you do not wish to answer a question, just let me know.

General Questions:

- Tell me your name?
- What is your current position?
- How long have you been in this role?
- Tell me about your previous education positions leading up to your principalship?
- Is there anything I haven't asked that you would like to add?

Life Events:

1. Define or describe yourself as a leader.
2. Describe your leadership preparation, experience and training.
3. Describe your current mentoring and/or leadership development training that you receive as a principal.
4. What factors or defining moments led to your decision to enter an administrative leadership preparation program? Consider these factors if participant does not raise them:
 - a. Spirituality
 - b. Family
 - c. Mentors

- d. Environmental Influences
 - e. Cultural Influences
 - f. Career Advancement Goals
 - g. Others
5. Are there one or two events in your life that helped to shape you into the leader you are?
6. Why do you think these events helped shape you into the leader you are now?
7. How would you characterize your decision to move into a leadership position? (E.g., was it a calling, etc.?)

Cultural Background:

8. What impact has your culture had on your decision to be a school principal?
9. What do you feel needs to be in place to support the ongoing development of Latina/o in leadership?
10. Do you see a benefit in Latino/a students having a Latino/a principal?

Leadership preparation, Professional Development, Mentoring:

11. What are your future leadership aspirations?
12. What kind of support/training do you feel you need to achieve your future aspirations?
13. To what degree is your present leadership circumstance providing you with the support to achieve your goals?

14. What would you like to see in principal preparation programs that would support the leadership development of principals of color?

APPENDIX D
Demographic Data

Latino and Latina Urban Elementary Principals' Entry into Educational Administration

José Montaña, Principal Investigator

Participant Number _____

1. Gender
 - Male
 - Female

2. Age Range
 - 18-24 years old
 - 25-34 years old
 - 35-44 years old
 - 45-54 years old
 - 55-64 years old
 - 65-74 years old
 - 75 years or older

3. Race/Ethnicity
 - White
 - Hispanic or Latino
 - Black or African American
 - Native American or American Indian
 - Asian / Pacific Islander
 - Other _____

4. Professional length of time in position
 - 0-1 years
 - 2-3 years
 - 4-5 years
 - 6-7 years
 - 8-9 years
 - 10+ years

5. Education Level
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
 - Doctoral degree

6. Year received administrative services credential _____

7. Institution where administrative services credential was received

APPENDIX E

Permission to Conduct Investigation in Golden State Unified School District

September 29, 2014

Professor David Hardy, PhD
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Institutional Review Board Office
Loyola Marymount University
1 LMU Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear Professor Hardy:

This letter provides provisional approval for Mr. José Montaña, a doctoral student at Loyola Marymount University, to conduct the research study titled, “The Life Stories of Leaders: The Impact on K-5 Urban Principals’ Leadership Development” in the Golden State Unified School District between October 2014 and September 2015. Final approval will be granted when Loyola Marymount University’s Institutional Review Board provides its approval for the study and when the completed GSUSD research application is approved.

Sincerely,

Jan Link

Name: Jan Link
Title: Supervisor of Research, Planning and Accountability Department
Golden State Unified School District

REFERENCES

- Anderson, E., & Reynolds, A. L. (2015). State of state policies for principal preparation program approval and candidate licensure. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education, 10*(3), 193-221.
- Andrews, R., & Grogan, M. (2001). *Defining preparation and professional development for the future*. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED459534.pdf>
- Barnett, B., Shoho, A., & Copland, M. (2010). Using Internships in the Preparation of School Leaders. Implications from UCEA. *University Council for Educational Administration*.
- Berta-Avila, M. I. (2004). Critical Xicana/Xicano educators: Is it enough to be a person of color? *High School Journal, 87*(4), 66–80.
- Boser, U. (2012). *Teacher diversity matters: A state-by-state analysis of teachers of color*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
- Burkhauser, S., Gates, S. M., Hamilton, L. S., Ikemoto, G. S., & RAND, E. (2012). *First-year principals in urban school districts: How actions and working conditions relate to outcomes*. Retrieved from http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR1191.html
- Burkhauser, S., Gates, S. M., Hamilton, L. S., Li, J. J., & Pierson, A. (2013). *Laying the foundation for successful school leadership*. Retrieved from http://www.rand.org/pubs/research/_reports/RR419.html
- Bush, T. (2007). Educational leadership and management: Theory, policy and practice. *South African Journal of Education, 27*(3), 391–406.
- California Department of Education. (2015). California admin staff by ethnicity. Retrieved from <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>
- Cambron-McCabe, N., & McCarthy, M. M. (2005). Educating school leaders for social justice. *Educational Policy, 19*(1), 201–222.
- Cardno, C., & Auva'a, E. (2010). A study of Pacific island senior managers as aspiring principals in New Zealand primary schools. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 38*(2), 86–99.
- Contreras, A. R. (2004, February). Epilogue: Latinos at the portal of the 21st century. *Education and Urban Society, 36*(2), 223–234.

- Davis, S. H., & Leon, R. J. (2011). How not to prepare school principals. *Planning and Changing*, 42(3/4), 274–287.
- Fernandez, R., Bustamante, R. M., Combs, J. P., & Martinez-Garcia, C. (2015). Career experiences of Latino/a secondary principals in suburban school districts. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 10(1), 60–76.
- Fetterman, D. M. (2010). *Ethnography: Step-by-step* (vol. 17). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos, Trans). New York, NY: Continuum.
- Fullan, M. (2002). The role of leadership in the promotion of knowledge management in schools. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8(3/4), 409–419.
- Gifford, L. A. (2010). *Recruitment and retention of K-12 public school principals in a regional educational collaborative in Rhode Island* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest LLC database.
- González, C., & Gándara, P. (2005, October). Why we like to call ourselves Latinas. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 4(4), 392–398.
- Gonzalez, R. G. (2013). Same and different: Latino college students' perceptions of themselves and other on campus. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 12(1), 3–22.
- Gooden, M. A., & Dantley, M. (2012). Centering race in a framework for leadership preparation. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 7(2), 237–253.
- Grubb, N. M. & Flessa, J. J. (2006, October). “A job too big for one”: Multiple principals and other nontraditional approaches to school leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42(4), 518–550. doi:10.1177/0013161X06290641
- Grubb, N. W., & Tredway, L. (2010). A school leadership “crisis,” despite remedies. *Education Week*, 29(18), 22–24.
- Hernandez, F., Murakami, E. T., & Cerecer, P. Q. (2014). A Latina principal leading for social justice. *Journal Of School Leadership*, 24(1), 568–598.
- Hughes-Hassell, S., & Cox, E. J. (2010, July). Inside board books: Representations of people of color. *The Library Quarterly*, 80(3), 211–230.

- Jacobson, S., Orr, M. T., & Young, M. (2008, July). Implications from UCEA: Successful leadership in high poverty, urban schools. *University Council for Educational Administration*, 1–2.
- Jason, M. H. (2001). Principals' Self-perceptions of influence and the meaning they ascribe to their leadership roles. *Research for Educational Reform*, 6(2), 34–49.
- Khalifa, M. (2012). A re-new-ed paradigm in successful urban school leadership principal as community leader. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(3), 424–467.
- Lambert, L. (2002). *The constructivist leader*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- LaPointe, M., & Davis, S. H. (2006, September/October). Effective schools require effective principals: A study of professional development for principals offer these findings about the qualities and impact of strong programs. *Leadership*, VOLUME NUMBER? 16–38.
- Lomotey, K. (1987). Black principals for Black students: some preliminary observations. *Urban Education*, 22(2), 173–81.
- López, J. A., Magdaleno, K. R., & Mendoza Reis, N. (2006). Developing leadership for equity: what is the role of leadership preparation programs? *Educational Leadership and Administration*, 18, 11–19.
- Manna, P. (2015). *Developing excellent school principals to advance teaching and learning: Considerations for state policy*. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.
- Sanchez, J., Thornton, B., & Usinger, J. (2008). *Promoting diversity in public education leadership*. Retrieved from OpenStax-CNX: <http://cnx.org/content/m18745/1.2/>
- Sanchez, J. E., Thornton, B., & Usinger, J. (2009). Increasing the ranks of minority principals. *Educational Leadership*, 67(2), 1–4.
- Santamaría, L. J. (2014). Critical change for the greater good: Multicultural perceptions in educational leadership toward social justice and equity. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 50(3), 347–391.
- Santamaría, L. J., & Santamaría, A. P. (2015). Counteracting educational injustice with applied critical leadership: Culturally responsive practices promoting sustainable change. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 17(1), 22.
- Silverman, S. K. (2010, June). What is diversity? An inquiry into preservice teacher beliefs. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(2), 292–329.

- Simkins, T. (1995). The equity consequences of educational reform. *Educational Management and Administration*, 23(4), 221–232.
- Trujillo, T., & Cooper, R. (2014). Framing social justice leadership in a university-based preparation program: The University of California’s principal leadership institute. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 9(2), 142–167.
- Vidal-Ortiz, S. (2004, Summer). On being a white person of color: Using autoethnography to understand Puerto Ricans’ racialization. *Qualitative Sociology*, 27(2), 179–203.
- The Wallace Foundation. (2013). The school principal as leader: Guiding schools to better teaching and learning. *The Wallace Foundation*. Retrieved from www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/effective-principal-leadership/Pages/The-School-Principal-as-Leader-Guiding-Schools-to-Better-Teaching-and-Learning.aspx
- Wiemelt, J., & Welton, A. (2015). Challenging the dominant narrative: Critical bilingual leadership (Liderazgo) for emergent bilingual Latin@ students. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 17(1), 82.