LATINO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN LARGE URBAN SCHOOL

DISTRICTS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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by

Rolando Treviño

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DEDICATION

The rewarding and extensive process of completing a dissertation as a first generation Latino doctoral student would not be possible without the love and support of my family, mentors, and *Dios*. My wife, Maria "*Lulú,*" encouraged me to embark on this journey by motivating me to work on my Masters in Educational Leadership during my high school teaching years. Her support, coupled with unconditional love, was essential in the completion of this dissertation. My wife's companionship inspired me and allowed me to spend long hours in class, study, conduct the needed research, and write while she cared for our beautiful kids Alexia, Emma, and Mario Enrique. My *suegros* were always helpful, *la suegra* took care of the kids when needed, and *el suegro* was an honest traveling man.

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ABSTRACT

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Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Latino superintendents' who work in large urban school districts. Additionally examined was how the participants' experiences contributed to or inhibited their successes as superintendents, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills. Large urban school district superintendents' preparation and background knowledge is known to influence the key decisions they make and ultimately reflect the values and norms of the district they represent (Meier, Wrinkle, & Polinard, 1999; Rocha & Hawes, 2009).

Methodology

This study was conducted using a qualitative design, combining phenomenological and narrative approaches. These approaches allowed for the capturing of the collective voices of the five Latino superintendents selected for study participation. Their life experiences were documented through their own narratives as collected through two rounds of individual interviews and a background questionnaire. Analysis of the narrative data involved a constant comparison process using NVIVO as a tool to identify patterns and themes in the superintendents' experiences.

Key Findings

Findings from this study have significant implications for the academic preparation and mentoring of Latino school leaders. Participants shared the need to

develop compensatory skills, compensate for self-depreciative thinking, and celebrate culture-sharing characteristics. Code-switching, honoring hierarchal constructs, reverence for elders, and being humbled servant leaders were viewed as positive attributes. Overall, participants' inhibiting factors were found in professional networks, race and ethnicity biases, and cultural cross-overs. Additionally, participants shared the need to press for the interest and desires for those people they presumed to represent, on both community and societal levels.

Implications

Based on the results of this study, the scarcity of superintendents in large urban school districts who are Latino might be attributed to insufficient opportunities to participate in educational programs and networking specifically targeting culture-sharing factors and generational barriers that inhibit success. Intentional efforts to develop the compensatory skills and cultural competency training of aspiring Latino superintendents might provide more guidance in career path development. Additionally, highly qualified Latino school superintendents are called to serve as mentors and to legitimize the shared social, cultural, and historical phenomena of being Latino and an aspiring educational leader in the United States.

KEY WORDS: Latino school leaders; Latino educational career pathways; Compensatory skills; Imposter, Culture-sharing characteristics; *Vocación emproista*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to the Census Bureau (2016), as of July 1, 2015, the Hispanic

population of the United States was 56 million, making people of Hispanic origin, the

nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. Hispanics constituted 17.6 percent of the

nation's total population. The bureau projects that by the year 2050, Latinos could reach

130 million in number in the United States. The Pew Research Center (2013) estimates

more than half (55 percent) of the U. S. Hispanic population resides in three states:

California, Texas, and Florida; with 14.4 million Hispanics living in the state of

California. It is evident, Latinos are the largest and fastest growing population in the

United States and our public school systems throughout the country are experiencing

similar rapid student population growth.

According to the Council of the Great City Schools [CGCS] (2016), 46% of

CGCS superintendents identified themselves as White, 45% as Black, 9% as Hispanic,

and 2% as Other. Given the fact that only 9% of the large urban school superintendents

are Hispanic, educational leaders are facing challenges in addressing the fast-growing

Hispanic population in large urban public education systems. The disparity demonstrated

by the data between the increasing Hispanic student population and the number of

Hispanic superintendents causes concern, since increasing the number of Latino

superintendents provides the best advocacy on behalf of Latino students and ultimately

support all students.

The implied advocacy is grounded in the notion that superintendents are assumed

to be individuals have the discretion to make decisions and recommendations about

policy and services, which reflect their own value system. Subsequently, in some large urban school districts, the individual's discretion and background knowledge influences the decisions made and ultimately reflect the values and norms of those he or she represents (Meier, Wrinkle, & Polinard, 1999; Rocha & Hawes, 2009). The need to develop the requisite cadre of well-qualified Latino school superintendents must necessarily acknowledge certain social, psychological, and historical phenomena that may have impeded potential superintendent candidates from the opportunity to ascend to the superintendency (Rocha & Hawes, 2009). Therefore, attention to the preparation and development of Latino school superintendents are crucial and must address technical, cognitive, cultural, phenomenological, psychological, and social domains.

Typically, the journey to the superintendency is comprised of two paths: (a) the pursuit of formal degrees and administrative credentials, and (b) an experiential learning process that involves extensive experiences as a school leader. According to Mullen (2004), based on a study of 450 principals and superintendents, socialization was found to be critical to the preparation of school leaders. Heck (1995) described Latino school superintendents as a collective culture-sharing group that is particularly drawn to the organizational socialization or the learning experienced in a new leadership job. Many women and minority school superintendents begin their careers with formal education and find a mentor to guide and advise them for a position. Escobar (2009) described how White males were tapped first by the organizations they served, giving them opportunities to build their credibility by offering them a promotion and then they were financially and intellectually prepared to obtain the formal education and experiential knowledge needed for the positions they had already attained.

Ortiz (1982) also noted that unlike the appointment of White males to the superintendency, the appointment of Latino superintendents had symbolic and political overtones. The composition of student bodies and teaching staffs, along with the make-up of the community, speaks to the need to improve the record in preparing and placing minority administrators as superintendents (Glass, 1992). Glass (2000) found that, in general, the superintendents surveyed believed that women have a more difficult time being hired than do minorities, and many of the superintendents surveyed believed that hiring discrimination against minorities is a major problem. Despite these perceptions regarding potential discrimination in hiring, there are several challenges facing the minority superintendents who have successfully ascended through the oppressive mechanisms and risen to the position.

Campbell-Jones (2000) noted that there were several factors that posed the greatest challenge to minority superintendents. They also indicated that racial prejudice was a constant reality and preconceptions about their abilities, leadership, effectiveness, and qualifications were ever present by members of the organization they led and by the community at large. These preconceptions, self-deprecation, and self-depreciations are aligned with Iglesias's (2009) position that:

> The influences of race and racism in the United States played a critical role in the lack of Latinos at the superintendency level within the K-12 system, even though the numbers of Latino students continued to grow at a rapid rate. (p. 33)

The disparity between the percentage of Latino students within the educational system and the percent of Latino superintendents, as well as the suggested factors that may contribute to this disparity, requires a shift in the balance of power within

educational administration and governance. Magdaleno (2009) supports the need to have

leaders who have the cultural pedagogy in working with Latino families by framing it as

a shift in Latino demographic power "with the changing demographics of the nation, the

power structure is being transformed" (p. 28).

Statement of the Problem

The Pew Hispanic Center (2011) documented that "Hispanics are the nation's

largest minority group, making up more than 50 million people, or about 16.5% of the

U.S. population. Among the 30 million young people ages 18 to 24, 6 million, or 20%,

are Hispanics" (p. 6). Similarly, large urban school districts throughout the nation are

experiencing a rapidly growing Spanish-speaking student population while the scarcity of

educational leaders creates a service gap. Large urban school district leaders are

characterized by Reville (2007) as having complex challenges:

> A multitude of problems such as poverty, crime, outdated and deteriorating
>
> infrastructure, inadequate funding and a lack of support are only a few of the
>
> concerns shared in urban city schools across the US. However, urban school
>
> districts are compelled to address challenges in their own unique ways when they
>
> lack the additional resources necessary to contend with a city's specific
>
> challenges. (p. 7)

Silverman (2005) indicated that it is important that urban school leaders be resilient due

to a plethora of issues within the walls of their buildings that are less likely to be

challenges in charter, private and suburban schools and school districts. Hispanic growth

needs to be paralleled with an increase in both research and role models for Latino school

superintendents and educational leaders. Lim (2006) described the need for current

Latino leaders to be active individual administrators pressing for the interest and desires of those persons they presume to represent. Therefore, as the Hispanic population and student demographics continue to increase, Latino educational leaders are:

> called upon to be change agents in a society that is part of an ever expanding global economy; one in which the old ways of hierarchical models of leadership are being abandoned to acknowledge a more collectivist and inclusive model of leadership (Cisneros, 2008, p. 3).

Purpose of the Study

In large urban school districts, the superintendent's discretion and background knowledge influences the decisions made and ultimately reflect the values and norms of those he or she represents (Meier, Wrinkle, & Polinard, 1999; Rocha & Hawes, 2009). The need to develop the requisite cadre of well-qualified Latino school superintendents must necessarily acknowledge certain social and historical phenomena that may have impeded potential superintendent candidates from the opportunity to ascend to the superintendency. The purpose of this study was to explore Latino superintendents' experiences that have contributed to or inhibited their successes as superintendents, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills that superintendents believe to be necessary to be effective in their role.

Significance of the Study

This research provides aspiring Latino urban school superintendents with information they need to make informed decisions regarding the direction of their careers, the behaviors often associated to their culture, and the skills needed to succeed in urban public education systems. There is a need to contribute to the body of knowledge

in the area of Latino school superintendent practices, behaviors, skills, virtues, and the way the aforementioned qualities and traits relate to cultural, social, and personal leadership. Literature in the area of inhibiting factors and experiences that Latino school superintendents share as a cultural phenomenon is limited. The scarcity of case studies mirrors the presence of Latino school superintendents; therefore, this research is of utmost importance. Tallerico (2000), in her work *Gaining Access to the Superintendency: Headhunting, Gender, and Color,* supports the need to have Latino superintendent case studies by indicating that initiatives need to be put into place by search consultants and boards of education to remove minority candidates' barriers to the superintendency. As an active board member of the Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS), I have witnessed conversations surfacing around the possibilities we can create if we developed a Latino search agency to promote the proper placement and success of qualified and prepared Latino school superintendents.

Results of this study contribute to the development of a road map for compensatory skills to assist the next generation of Latino school leaders as they navigate the political landscape of the field of educational leadership. The findings from this study will be used to explore effective practices among Latino school superintendents while understanding the context, the generational time, and the cultural commitment to establish a landscape for the next generation of Latino leaders in education. Cisneros (2008) summarized the need to increase academic literature on Latino superintendents stating:

It is only within the last decade that a burgeoning body of literature has surfaced in which particular attention has begun to be given to the unique characteristics, attributes, and behaviors demonstrated by Latino leaders as informed by their culture and personal history. The fast growing Latino population and the concomitant need for Latino leadership suggests a challenge to increase the literature regarding the special contribution that a Latino perspective can offer to leadership theory and practice (p. 5).

The abundance of literature that addresses leadership practices and behaviors from the mainstream cultural perspective serves as the foundational work for this study. However, the significance of this study is the identification of compensatory skills that contribute and promote the success of the next generation of Latino school superintendents. If the power structure will ever shift, then as Freire (1970) stated, the "implementation of a liberating education requires political power and the oppressed have none, how then, is it possible to carry out the pedagogy of the oppressed?" (p. 54). In the near future, the power structure will include Latino leaders in the field of education; therefore, as the group prepares for the shift "all leaders should be ready for that change and understand how cultural and racial differences affect those with whom they share the future of education" (Magdaleno, 2009, p. 40). The need to develop Latino educational leaders and public school superintendents is a reality that merits the commitment to focus on the quality of leaders and not just the quantity that are ascending to the role of the superintendent.

The next generation of Latino superintendents can use documented anecdotes and experiences that can offer celebration, development, and cultural clarity to facilitate the

ascending process. Additionally, the data acquired from this research can be used to emphasize the need to move from the theorizing around the need for more Latino school superintendents to the action-driven identification of current and future Latino school leaders, principals, and most importantly, large urban school district superintendents. Rotherham and Mead (2007) stated that the challenges currently facing America's urban public schools strikingly illustrate the burdens and obstacles that weigh on the lower class and poverty-stricken families. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2036 Hispanics are projected to compose one-third of the nation's children ages 3 to 17 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). This research will assist the success of the next wave of Latino leaders by celebrating their cultural behaviors, traditions, and nurtured leadership skills. Ultimately, I sought to document the need to develop and pave the road with numerous possibilities for the next generation of Latino school superintendents.

Research Questions

This study consisted of one central research question and five subquestions. The central research question was, what are the lived experiences of Latino superintendents who work in urban school districts?   The subquestions were:

1. What behaviors do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

2. What skills do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

3. What factors do Latino school superintendents perceive inhibited their success as a superintendent?

4. What do Latino school superintendents perceive as important social network experiences that contributed to their success as a superintendent?

5. What do Latino urban school superintendents perceive are the compensatory skills needed to experience success as a superintendent?

Conceptual Framework

This study was designed to explore inhibiting and promoting skills, behaviors, beliefs and virtues that assist in the foundational work needed to create a framework for the professional development of Latino urban school district superintendents. Additionally, it was concerned with necessarily developing among Latino superintendents the compensatory skills that are necessary to be equally empowered in the superintendency as any other candidate, regardless of race or ethnicity. It was situated in a LatCrit framework and social capital theory.

LatCrit theory, which expands critical race theory, is concerned with understanding the oppressive aspects of society in order to evoke societal and individual transformation. According to Solorzano and Delgado Bernal (2001), LatCrit theory moves beyond the notion of the oppressive aspects, and proposes that Latinos' identity is multidimensional – language, culture, racism, sexism, classism and other forms of and reasons for oppression. The LatCrit framework includes a commitment to social justice; whereby, Latinos are motivated to eliminate the aspects of oppression and empower the underrepresented or marginalized.

The cultural capital theory of Pierre Bourdieu (2006) was developed to break the presuppositions of the theory of human capital, stating that a dominant class is able, in effect, to impose its definition of reality upon all other classes. Inhibiting factors and

personal experiences were utilized to define the self-deprecation concept inherent in

Latino leaders. Promoting factors will be identified to replace the self-deprecation or

deficiency model and create a new framework of compensatory skills. Therefore, the

findings from this study were used to explore the specificity of Bourdieau's (2006)

"cultural reproduction theory, whereby existing disadvantages and inequalities are passed

down from one generation to the next" (p.45).

The intersection of the LatCrit framework and social capital theory in this study

created a research-based road map for the preparation and continued development of

culturally self-aware future Latino superintendents. The findings of this study may

thereafter be used to explore the skills and the ideal behaviors needed to overcome

inhibiting factors as elucidated in the study, and promote the success of an urban school

superintendent.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of terms that are of particular interest to this study are as follows:

Active Representation. Active representation is utilized in this research as the

state, which expects the individual or administrator to press for the interest and desires

for those whom he or/she is presumed to represent, whether they be the whole people or

some segment of the people they represent (Lim, 2006).

Code-switching. Code-switching is the switching between two languages. Code-

switching will be used in this study to represent the skill needed to communicate fluent

Spanish while keeping the English audience informed of relevant educational topics

(Kanellos, 2003). Particular emphasis is given to the bilingual and code-switching skills

needed to serve and connect with the fast growing Spanish-speaking Hispanic student population. Code-switching is utilized as an added asset and a tool for communication.

Conceptualization. Rieser (1995) and Solomon (2007) defined conceptualization as the leader's ability to convey a larger vision, which can inspire people to act creatively on their own behalf. Spears (1995) adds that an attribute of a conceptualizing leader is showing the way for others and being better than most at pinpointing the best direction to take.

Consciousness-raising. Consciousness-raising is a Freire (1970) term used as *concientización* in this research to describe the need to raise awareness and consciousness about the phenomenon of Latino school superintendents.

Healing. According to Greenleaf (1991) and Solomon (2007), healing involves ensuring wholeness in oneself. Healing also includes taking opportunities to restore wholeness to others. For the purpose of this research, healing is used to address the social and human capital needs of the Latino culture-sharing groups.

Hispanic. The term Hispanic is used interchangeably with the word Latino (Alonso, 1977).

Hispanoparlantes. Hispanoparlantes is a term that defines the Spanish-speaking population. Hispanoparlantes as hispanophones is used in this research to define Spanish-speaking instead of the definitions of Bilingual (Alonso, 1977).

Inhibiting Factors. Luria (1973) and Dempster (1993) propose that inhibition is a general construct that affects many aspects of behavior defined as a basic cognitive suppression that contributes to task performance by keeping task-irrelevant information from entering and being maintained in working memory. Inhibiting factors according to

Luria (1973) and Dempster (1993) make somebody feel self-conscious and self-depreciated, which in turn prevents a person from behaving or speaking freely and ultimately resulting in a social cognition block.

Las Movidas. Identified as a power play, a smooth political move, and utilized as a reference by Latino superintendents interviewed as a term to identify risky negotiating situations presented by the board-superintendent relationship.

Latino and Latina. Latino and Latina is a term used to define persons of Latin American and Mexican/American descent. The words Latino and Latina will be used interchangeably with the word Hispanic. Latino is the person from Latin American origins or descent (Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987).

Navigational Capital. Yosso (2006) described the ability to maneuver through social institutions as the navigational capital required to experience success in large urban school districts. Yosso (2006) describes the navigational capital as a social capital that is driven by the political dynamics found within the experiences of practicing school superintendents.

New Political Knowledge. Hunter and Donahoo (2003) identified a need for a new political knowledge to counter the white male dominant educational leadership culture, federal, and state education policies; the overall school takeover history; and the effects they have had on the leadership, the political nature, and the structure of school districts in big cities.

Race. The term race in this research is utilized as a social construct that a collective group acquires based on their roots, beliefs, and traditions (Torres & Ngin, 1995).

Self-Depreciation. Self-depreciation (Freire 1970) is described as a characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them.

Social Capital. Coleman (1988) referenced social capital to anything that facilitates individual or collective action as generated by networks of relationships, reciprocity, trust, and social norms. Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possessions of a durable network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.

Vocación emproista. Pujadas (1968) applied the words *vocación* and *emproista* as words taken from the marine vocabulary and referring to the one who stands watching at the tiller-wheel to alert of dangers and to trace the way on the sea. It symbolizes one's vocation to follow the path of Christ and to trace out the way for others.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study included the following: (a) to Latino superintendents with at least three years superintendent experience; (b) to five Latino superintendents of urban school districts; (c) to superintendents in school districts with at least 30,000 students. Superintendents who did not identify as Latino or who work for smaller public or private school districts were not included in this study.

Limitations

The limitations of this study involved my subjectivity as the researcher and my ability to elicit from the participants rich and deep responses, which created a robust data source of the participants experiences, beliefs, behaviors, and values. It is implied that I analyzed and interpreted the data authentically. The findings of this study were limited to

the superintendents who participated in my study. The research questions of this study addressed Latino superintendents' perceptions of experiences that inhibited and promoted their ascendency to the superintendency. Therefore, the participants may have limited the truthfulness of their responses. Similarly, the selection of participants was limited due to the number of participants that met the criteria, particularly in the female representation of Latina school superintendents.

Assumptions

The environments in which individual interviews conducted were presumed to promote trust and allow the participants the opportunity to elaborate and share their stories in a setting that welcomed their individual life experiences and met their leadership styles. The goal was to enable interviewees to be open and forthright with their responses. All of the research participants were selected based upon their successful experience in a large urban public school district.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. In addition to Chapter I, Chapter II provides a review of the literature that introduces the theoretical framework that supports the research project, Latino demographics and the scarcity of Latino school superintendents, Latinos in the large urban school superintendent landscape, the social environment of Latino school superintendents, Latino mentorship, the role of the Latino superintendent, and several Latino leadership theories. Chapter III provides a description of the research design and methodology that was used to examine the proposed research questions. Chapter IV presents and discusses the responses acquired from the interviews of the subjects, patterns, and themes that were found from the analysis. Chapter V, the

final chapter, contains a discussion of the study as well as findings, conclusions, and

implications for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Census Bureau projections for the next 15 years forecast that the number of Latino children between the ages of 5 to 13 will double, and that by 2030, Latino students will comprise one-fourth of the total K-12 school population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). In Texas, during the 2014-2015 school year, 56.6% of students are identified as Hispanic (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2014). Although Latino students are quickly becoming the majority in public education enrollment, the percentage of Latino superintendents is not proportionate. According to the Council of the Great City Schools [CGCS] (2016), 46% of CGCS superintendents identified themselves as white, 45% as black, 9% as Hispanic, and 2% as other. With only 9% of the large urban school superintendents being Hispanic, educational leaders are facing challenges in addressing the fast growing Hispanic population in large city public education systems.

The road map required to identify, prepare, and further develop the next generation of Latino school district superintendents requires that superintendent candidates "undergo a process of socialization and acceptance into the mainstream" (Iglesias, 2009, p. 30). Latino educational leaders need to fully understand what inhibits their success and acquire compensatory skills, knowledge, and most importantly; the experiential learning to help Latino leaders reach a mind shifting process that will ultimately help them become resilient Latinos that are socialized into a field dominated by the mainstream culture (Urrieta, 2007). The development of future Latino school

superintendents merits a focus on quality and not merely an attempt to increase the quantity of Latino educational leaders.

The development should not be solely focused on Latino leaders as an effort to create cultural pride. It should be grounded in an in-depth understanding that the best qualified Latino superintendent candidates must possess effective leadership skill sets, a deep understanding of pedagogy, competent instructional and curriculum leadership, and be politically savvy servant leaders. Mulkeen and Cooper (1992) stated that there is "a lack of attention to practical problem-solving skills," particularly in educational leadership, and there is a need for a framework that can ultimately be used to create a cadre of skilled Latino leaders who can overcome inhibiting and self-depreciating experiences to increase the support systems focused on their problem-solving skills and many other formative and developmental areas of Latino leadership.

This chapter includes an elaborative literature review of the urban school superintendent within the phenomenological context of the research on Latino school superintendents in urban school districts. Additionally, this chapter consists of an examination of the efficacy of Latino leadership, an analysis of the social and professional environment for Latino educational leaders, an introduction to Latino leadership theories and, a review of mentor-protégé scholarly findings. In short, this chapter provides a more in-depth historical context as it relates to the evolution of the role of the superintendent and an elaborative literature review of the current state of Latino school leadership.

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The Urban Superintendency

White (2007) described large urban school superintendents as leaders that need to develop a keen ability to navigate the social and political landscape to survive their tenure as superintendents of a large urban district. Pascopella (2008) described the findings from a recent report from the CGCS indicated that the average tenure of urban superintendents in 2010 was at an all-time high of 3.6 years indicating an increase of 56 percent from the 2.3 average documented in 1999. Urban school superintendents must be willing to relocate and at times, move their families in less than five years and as Pascopella (2008) presented, the tenure of urban school superintendents in the United States is plagued by accountability procedures. The tenure phenomenon has created a group of successful large-urban superintendents that have failed in one large city and succeeded in another politically favored city. The deciding factor between success and failure seems to be in mayoral support and board stability (Glass, 2003). White (2007) described the challenges of becoming a successful urban school superintendent, identifying that the biggest challenge is the ability to focus everything and everyone on the primary purpose of educating children over the incessant navigation of turbulent politics.

The twenty-first century finds one-third of America's public school children attending one of ten large urban (large-city) school districts (Glass et al., 2000; Harvey, 2003). Glass et al., (2000) stated that by 2020 approximately one-half of public school enrollments will be clustered in twenty districts and urban districts are typically considered to be those located in the inner core of metropolitan areas having enrollments of more than 25,000 students (p. 10). The large-city superintendency is a position

defined by high expectations, intense stress, inadequate resources, and often a highly

unstable politicized board of education (Hoyle et al., 2005). As stated by Glass (2003),

> The greatest failing of large-city superintendents is their inability to be political
>
> leaders. Large-city schools many times consume more than half of the tax dollars
>
> in the city, are a major employer, and provide a critical public service.
>
> Competitors for the public tax dollars, such as the city council and agencies, have
>
> elected officials with political constituencies with forceful lobbies. The large-city
>
> superintendent has to be a keen political observer and be able to form alliances,
>
> and work quietly and effectively with the city political power structure. An
>
> examination of past and present successful large-city superintendents proves this
>
> to be the case. Behind-the-scenes political maneuvering can be more beneficial in
>
> obtaining badly needed resources than being a high-profile school reformer
>
> making frequent appearances at meetings, conferences and media events (p. 10).

Archer (2003) concluded that the politics of the large urban school

superintendent's job, along with limits on those executives' authority, make it almost

impossible for district leaders to significantly improve their school systems. In the

report, "An Impossible Job? The View from the Urban Superintendent's Chair," Archer

(2003) documented that district leaders in the study cited a litany of challenges that they

say conspire against them. Nearly half of those polled agreed that responding to public

demands was difficult because those demands keep changing. More than 60 percent said

micro-management by school boards was a problem and one of the subjects was quoted

saying that "superintendents are constantly choosing between initiatives that might work,

but would get you fired, and initiatives that are too weak to do much, but might survive

long enough to make a little bit of difference" (p. 8). In its most recent survey of urban superintendents, The Center on Reinventing Public Education determined that many urban superintendents found political pressures and internal conflicts to be difficult to manage and detract from the time that could be spent working on improving student achievement (Fuller, et. al, 2003). Superintendents are cognizant of being held uniquely accountable for meeting student achievement goals in their districts (Snider, 2006; Hunter and Donahoo, 2005). While instructional leadership is integral to the role of superintendent, the increasingly complex political aspects of the job must be handled as well (Hoyle et al., 2005).

Archer (2003) documented that researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle captured candid talks in a report on the superintendency and their interviews and surveys with superintendents in 100 of the country's largest districts conclude that the politics of the job, along with the limits on those executives' authority, make it almost impossible for district leaders to significantly improve their school systems. Archer (2003) also described that all but 3% of the respondents said they wanted the power to close underperforming schools and reopen them with new staff members and management. In Archer (2003), large school superintendents stressed the need to address low performing schools and the vast majority agreed that school boards should stay out of personnel matters, except for hiring the schools chief, and focus instead on setting performance goals and budget priorities.

In large urban school districts that are primarily comprised of Hispanic students, the inability to recognize and deal with educational needs is partially attributed to the cultural disengagement that exists between school administrator and the population that

they serve (Bjork & Keedy, 2001). The needs of Hispanic students in large urban school

districts are subsequently dismissed or pushed to the side further alienating Latino

students from the learning process; as a result, Daniel (2006) stated that students are

shortchanged because educational needs are not understood or taken into consideration

by the elected officials and school board members. Elizondo (2005) stated that there is a

tremendous underrepresentation of Latino educational leaders when you consider the

student population of the communities they serve. In California, for example, there is a

tremendous underrepresentation of Latino educational leaders and "it's important for

Latino students to have ethnic leaders they can look up to and identify with. For many,

the presence of a Latino superintendent or administrator may serve to contend against a

history of low expectations" (Elizondo, 2005, p.40).

The Efficacy of Latino Superintendents

One solution to this dilemma of disparity between the growing Latino student

population and the percentage of Latino superintendents may be found in the notion of

representative bureaucracy. Scholars maintain that "bureaucratic power can be made

more responsive to the public if personnel who staff administrative agencies reflect the

demographic characteristics of the public they serve" (Sowa & Seldon, 2003, p. 700).

Representative bureaucracy, when applied to Latino superintendents, presumes an

understanding of the Latino milieu and its impact on the achievement of Latino students.

Latino superintendents' experience and characteristics of race, ethnicity, and classism are

key to defining their values and beliefs, and these values and beliefs are manifested in

representative bureaucracy; wherein, the Latino superintendent's values and beliefs

coincide with those of their constituents. The needs of their constituents would be

reflected in their actions and behaviors. Alternately, constituents likely feel a connection

with leadership, and are provided with symbolic equal access to those in power, and a

better belief that deficiencies in the system can and will be alleviated (Meier, Wrinkle, &

Polinard, 1999; Rocha & Hawes, 2009).

There are two types of representative bureaucracy: passive representation and

active representation. Passive representation is the presence of a workforce that reflects

the demographics of the constituents. It satisfies the concern of disparity in numbers and

percentages; however, arriving at parity between bureaucrats and constituents does not

necessarily guarantee advocacy by bureaucrats on behalf of the constituency. Active

representation maintains that such characteristics as race, ethnicity, class, and gender

shape the values and attitudes of individuals. These individuals, as bureaucrats and

administrators, behave and act in such ways; whereby, their discretion in providing

guidance, direction, and advocacy do mitigate and improve inadequacies, and create

equal access for historically underrepresented constituencies (Meier, Wrinkle, &

Polinard, 1999). The theory of representative bureaucracy provides a framework through

which the efficacy of Latino superintendents may be realized; however, before they

occupy the superintendency, there exists the concern to have potential Latino candidates

be first considered for the position.

The Social Environment of the Latino Superintendent

Increasing the percentage of Latino superintendents to be in proportion to the

increasing Latino student population implies equal access and opportunity for Latino

superintendent candidates. They must be considered as equally qualified as their White

counterparts to ascend to the superintendency. Latino superintendent candidates must

necessarily breakthrough the proverbial glass ceiling. The term "glass ceiling" first

entered America's public conversation when The Wall Street Journal's "Corporate

Woman" column identified a puzzling new phenomenon:

> There seemed to be an invisible—but impenetrable—barrier between women and
>
> the executive suite, preventing them from reaching the highest levels of the
>
> business world regardless of their accomplishments and merits. The phrase
>
> immediately captured the attention of the public as well as business leaders,
>
> journalists, and policy makers. The metaphor was quickly extended to refer to
>
> obstacles hindering the advancement of minority men, as well as women (Federal
>
> Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995).

The glass ceiling metaphor and its expansion to include minorities argues there are

barriers, long suspected as unwritten policy, which negate the socioeconomic

advancement of all minorities (Conde, 2010, p.5). Kerr, Miller, and Reid (2008) posit

that stereotypes and attribution shape power relations in organizations, and groups with

power in organizations want to maintain that power. Maintaining power is typically

manifested in policies, practices, or positions that favor the power holders, and most often

negatively impacts underrepresented or disadvantaged groups. The placement of a Latino

in an executive position may well challenge and make vulnerable the current power

structure within the organization. The glass ceiling metaphor also suggests bias

inasmuch as employers are challenged to consider minorities, since a review of top-level

managers and executives often includes very few if any minorities (Gilgoff, 2009). The

challenge persists to raise consciousness within current systems of power; whereby,

Latinos are equally considered for positions of executive leadership, including the

superintendency (Bauman, 2012).

In a study conducted by Hudson (1991), the author noted that 62% of all school superintendents had learned about their jobs through informal contacts. Hudson in referencing Granovetter (1974) stated "those without the right contacts are penalized in the job market and that contacts are of paramount importance in connecting people to jobs. The better jobs are found through contacts, and the best ones are found through many contacts" (p. 132). The findings in Hudson's (1991) study indicated that when controlling for minority (women and Blacks) and majority (White men) superintendents, minority superintendents depended more (69.3%) on the use of informal sources to learn about jobs. Hudson (1991) also postulated that one of the reasons why nearly two-thirds of minority superintendents acquire their jobs through networking is due to the fact that they must prove themselves before they will ever be considered for the superintendency. Traditionally the superintendency has been held by white males, preserved primarily through the "old boys' network" (Hudson, 1991).

Increasing Latino superintendent candidates' opportunities implies addressing the hegemony of the White population, the historically dominant culture and group in school district leadership. Unlike the social environment of the dominant culture of executive positions in the field of education, Latinos are not inherently trusted, therefore, being scrutinized and as Hudson (1991) noted, minorities functioned within more limited employment areas. According to Hudson (1991) seventy-five percent of White males were able to secure employment in districts where they had never worked, while minority candidates were typically place-bound, getting their jobs in school districts in which they currently worked or had been previously employed.

In a study conducted by Campbell-Jones (2000), it was found that superintendents needed to join networks for administrators, but that it was also necessary to join, or if necessary, to create networks that focused on their special needs as minorities. Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogan (2000) in their study indicated that having access to networks was especially important to people of color who must negotiate entry into an environment that is dominated by White males. Access into the white-male dominant networks leads to access into different school districts, and thus leading to different social capital and interviewing opportunities. Enomoto's (2000) account on the good old boy network that arbitrarily segregates Latino leaders was emphasized by, "opening doors and gaining access are probably as important for female aspirants seeking to enter an oldboy network, but . . . it is even more important for persons of color who must negotiate entry into a White-male-dominated hierarchy" (p. 572). Ortiz (1998) supported this notion by stating that of the 12 Hispanic superintendents that were studied in her paper, 9 of the superintendents had been appointed in school districts that utilized search committees; and that although the search committees had served to find them and legitimate their applications, their appointment was nevertheless linked to someone who knew them personally (p. 5).

Social Capital, Pedagogy of the Oppressed and the Latino Superintendent

Campbell-Jones (2000) noted that there were several factors that posed the greatest challenge to minority superintendents. They also indicated that racial prejudice was a constant reality and preconceptions about their abilities, leadership, effectiveness, and qualifications were ever present by members of the organization they led and by the

community at large. The preconceptions and the self-depreciation are aligned with

Iglesias' (2009) position that:

> The influences of race and racism in the United States played a critical role in the
>
> lack of Latinos at the superintendency level within the K-12 system, even though
>
> the numbers of Latino students continued to grow at a rapid rate. (p. 33)

Expanding the opportunities for Latino superintendent candidates to be

considered worthy applicants, and opening doors and gaining access, requires developing

the social capital that Bourdieu (1986) posits. According to Bourdieu, social capital

> is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession
>
> of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual
>
> acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group –
>
> which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned
>
> capital, or 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the
>
> word (p. 51).

Social capital provides the wherewithal for individuals to act with the social

currency of those who share similar values and beliefs. It provides foundational support

for one's ability to act in society, with an assurance that their movements will be

supported. It provides an assurance that what has been one's behaviors when reflecting

the values and beliefs espoused by the holders of the social capital will engender and

create a legacy that the institutional mores will continue (Bourdieu, 1986). It provides a

vehicle to perpetuate a social institution's current hegemony, that social, cultural,

ideological, or economic influence exerted by the dominant group – the traditional White

majority.

The acquisition of social capital by Latino superintendent candidates is situated amidst the socio-cultural context to which Latino educational leadership is heir, and represents oppression and the challenge "to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 17). It is creating a worldview to mitigate the social construct where "self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them" (p.63). The pedagogy of the oppressed, as a humanist and liberation 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 cases, it is always through in depth action that the culture of domination is culturally confronted (p. 54).

At the heart of Freire's (1970) work, lies a view of education that calls for critical consciousness or *concientización*. This term meaning, consciousness raising, is about understanding the social and political contradictions of the world and taking action against them in one's own life, a calling to "pursue the right to be human" (Freire, 1970, p. 56). The type of *concientización* needed for aspiring school leaders to better utilize self-confidence as they pursue to become large urban school superintendents. This pursuit of human rights is interpreted by Freire as "confidence in the future" (p.59), and as working for the future, and thus, is subordinated once more to the history of class conflict. Voices that do not represent the current hegemonic system are challenged to develop a way of thinking, acting, and doing -- a praxis; whereby, the current hegemonic

system is disturbed to create opportunities for those who have historically not been represented in the current hegemony (Bourdieu, 1986; Freire, 1970). The marginalized and subjected voice is transformed, "the peasant begins to get courage to overcome his dependence when he realizes he is dependent. Until then he goes along with the boss" (Freire, 1970, p. 61). It challenges classism.

LatCrit Theory and the Latino Superintendent

Classism represents how people are separated according to class, and imbued with expected societal behaviors share an ideological framework with issues of race, gender, ethnicity, immigration, language, and sexual orientation. This separation situates Latinos in a particularly challenging position to develop their voice and agency – that confidence and skills to act on one's behalf -- in order to experience equal opportunities to fully participate in society, especially as it relates to educational endeavors. LatCrit theory provides a framework; wherein, Latinos can examine the ways in which they are separated from and challenged by the dominant group, and their explicit and implicit impact on the educational structures, processes, and discource that affect them (Perez Perez Huber, 2010; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001; Yosso, Villalpando).

Important to the LatCrit theoretical framework is a challenge to the hegemonic ideology, which supports deficit notions about Latinos' wherewithal. It is a framework to process and address the accompanying oppression that presumes neutrality and objectivity, yet demonstrates differently. The LatCrit framework in education is conceived as a social justice project that attempts to link theory with practice; thereby,

empowering and emancipating the community (Yosso, Villalpando, Delgado Bernal, & Solorzano, 2001).

Solorzano and Delgado Bernal (2001), posit five themes that form the basic perspectives, research methods, and pedagogy of a LatCrit framework in education:

1. The centrality of race and racism and intersectionality with other forms of subordination – including gender, language, sexual orientation, and immigration status;

2. The challenge to dominant ideology – the traditional notions that suggest race neutrality, color-blindness, and equal opportunity;

3. The commitment to social justice – wherein, racism, sexism, and poverty are eliminated and underrepresented minority groups are empowered;

4. The centrality of experiential knowledge – wherein, strength and understanding is gained through the lived experiences of people of color;

5. The interdisciplinary perspective – that includes a recognition that extends the inherent issues outside the educational enterprise to converge with historical and contemporary contexts (p. 314).

Understanding the experience of oppression and marginalization specific to Latinos, and how this has impacted their lives is an important aspect of the LatCrit framework. Central to this understanding is hearing Latinos' stories, and allowing for Latino leaders to visualize themselves through their lived experiences on the margins of society (Perez Huber, 2010; Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). The method of telling these stories is known as counterstorytelling. The counterstory is

a tool for exploring, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of

privilege. Counterstories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant

discourse on race and further the struggle for racial reform…these experiences

can [also] help strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and

resistance (Yosso et al., 2001, p. 95).

Counterstory and its intersection with any of the five basic LatCrit themes

challenges the traditional paradigm and discourse on race, class, gender, language, and

immigration status by offering insight into ways that Latino behaviors offer resistance to

the hegemonic forces at hand, which lead to transformative responses. These responses

represent ways by which individuals negotiate and struggle with cultural and institutional

structures and create their own meaning (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). They

validate the experiential knowledge of Latinos, which recognize the power of collective

memory and knowledge, and how their responses are guided by larger goals of

transformation and empowerment (Perez Huber, 2010).

Social Justice, Faith, Ethics, and the Latino Superintendent

According to Freire (1970), transformation and empowerment, the essentials of

social justice, are supported within a transformative pedagogy, which includes the need to

identify individuals who will lead the charge on behalf of the collective body. These

leaders' actions create a momentum, giving voice to the subjugated culture through

praxis. Praxis, the process of enacting a transformative pedagogy, depends upon

liberation theology as an integral part of critical pedagogy discourse. In liberation

theology, the tenets of Christianity are infused with a critical consciousness to act on

behalf of those underrepresented, marginalized, or oppressed by the dominant culture. It

is utilizing faith as a foundation for dialogue and change, which "requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be fully human" (Freire, 1970, p. 71). Liberation theology and its focus on social justice empower leaders to investigate and find solutions for problems that generate and reproduce inequities (Dantley & Tillman, 2010). Educational leaders grounded in liberation theology and social justice make it a moral commitment, "the morality that is at the center of social justice is a transformative and critical responsibility. A moral responsibility that leads transformative leaders to serve as social activists with a commitment to schools and society" (Ek, 2010, p. 40).

Edmonson, Fisher and Polnick (2003) documented that "the importance of having an ethical administrator, and being able to recognize this person as such, is inherent to the success of the school {district} as a social entity" (p. 9). Boleman and Deal (2001) suggested that ethics is rooted in identity and faith and "that's one reason that spirit and soul are at the heart of the most successful leadership" (p. 42). In a survey of 85 students enrolled in graduate level coursework, Edmonson, Fisher, and Polnick (2003), used the results to define the behaviors and characteristics of ethical administration. The behavior that was most often cited as being relevant was fairness and the most commonly mentioned characteristic was honesty.

Similarly, Borja (2005) described school leaders as having ethics issues by landing in murky ethical waters for their ties to for-profit companies. Compared to the fairness and honesty characteristics found in Edmonson, Fisher, and Polnick (2003) the highlights in Borja (2005) describe the temptations administrators face as industry and

education increasingly intersect, and identified superintendents that experienced

problems with ethical dilemmas by citing:

> Questionable judgments by superintendents from accepting company-paid trips to
>
> failing to disclose income from district vendors. These actions have sparked
>
> proposed legislation in at least two states to curb some of the dealings educators
>
> may have with companies that market to school districts. In suburban Houston,
>
> for example, Superintendent Yvonne Katz of the Spring Branch Independent
>
> School District recommended Energy Education Inc., an energy-conservation
>
> company based in Wichita Falls, Texas, for a lucrative five-year contract with the
>
> district to improve energy efficiency. But she neglected to tell the school board
>
> that she worked for the company on the side as a consultant and had done so for
>
> several years. In addition, a close subordinate she brought into the district, former
>
> facilities and transportation associate superintendent Michael C. Maloney, has
>
> been indicted for alleged mishandling of at least $627,000 in school construction
>
> and consulting contracts (p. 4).

In 2012 a Texas large urban Latino school superintendent waivered from his ethical and

moral compass and landed in the middle of a public corruption investigation by the

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The unethical practices led to the TEA removal of

the entire El Paso Independent School District board and the superintendent was

removed. Similarly, the first Latina school superintendent in Dallas ISD plead guilty to a

misapplication of funds allegation back in 1998 for purchasing furniture for her

apartment. The superintendent was sentenced to fifteen months in federal prison and

similar to the El Paso situation; the criminal acts have degraded the credibility and

perception of Latino school superintendents. The culture sharing phenomenon has created a set-back due to the loss of trust and respect by the public.

The relational trust among Latino educational leaders necessarily reflects culture sharing values, highlighting those that encourage praxis of transformative processes. Praxis includes alignment with individuals who are practiced. Magdaleno (2006) stated:

> for Latina and Latino educational leaders, mentoring by an experienced educational leader is a priority; mentoring by an experienced educational leader who understands and shares common experiences, a common language, similar racial and equity concerns, and who can also relate to the specific cultural experiences of his or her protégé is even more crucial (p.13).

Developing Latino Leadership Theories, Vocational Servants, and Neuroplasticity

Campbell-Jones (2000) indicated that minority administrators that work with low-income communities are more adept at offering insights about the educational process and needs for their students in a way that others may miss, because they were most likely members of that same community at some point in their lives. Magdaleno (2006) also adds that Latino leaders are readily conscious of the obstacles and issues members of their ethnic group face, and that due to the long history of Latinos not assuming the role of the supeintendency, the number of positive role models for Latino students is very limited. Magdaleno (2006) also adds that the scarcity may contribute to the poor academic achievement of Latinos. Bordas (2013) stated that many times oppressed people believe they can't change their situation; but they must be leaders, a person must heal his own wounds – find out how past circumstances have made them stronger.

Bowman (1997) stated that for many years, servant leadership was viewed as a conceptual, but rather elusive construct, lacking a consensus framework and empirical rigor. However, Greenleaf (1970) coined the phrase servant leadership by arguing that true leadership emerges from those whose primary motive is a deep desire to help others, which encourages the leader to place the well-being of the followers before self as a primary goal. Similar to being a servant educational leader, Rieser (1995) and Solomon (2007) defined conceptualization as the leader's ability to convey a larger vision, which can inspire people to act creatively on their own behalf. Spears (1995) adds that an attribute of a conceptualizing leader is showing the way for others and being better than most at pinpointing the best direction to take.

Greenleaf (1970) described servant leadership as a practical method of leadership, which encourages the leader to be a good steward towards others first and then lead as a way of increasing continued service to others within a group or organization. Greenleaf (1970) indicated that servant leaders and servant leadership can be practiced at all times and it is not strictly designed to be used among those with formal leadership titles and positions. Greenleaf (1970) described servant leadership by starting with a definition of the leader as a reflective leader:

> The servant leader is servant first…It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. He or she is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve after leadership is established. The leader first and the servant first are two extreme types. Between them are

shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. The

difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that

other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult

to administer is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served,

become healthier, wiser, free, more autonomous, more likely themselves to

become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will

they benefit, or at least will they not be further deprived? (p. 27)

The modern genesis of servant leadership is credited to Robert Greenleaf's

seminal essay on servant leadership that later became a book, *Servant leadership: A*

journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness (1977). Greenleaf's writings

contained numerous, repetitive themes. It was these themes that many subsequent

authors focused on, seeking to use them to define and measure servant leadership. These

themes formed the core to a basic understanding of the philosophy of servant leadership.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2002) added calling to the themes in an effort to elaborate

on the servant leaders' need and desire to create positive development in individuals,

organizations, communities, and societies. Similar to Greenleaf's (1977) altruistic calling

as the fundamental conscious choice to serve others; Barbuto and Wheeler (2006),

described emotional healing as the ability to recognize when and how to facilitate the

healing process through a leader's ability to foster a follower's spiritual recovery from

hardship and trauma. Schlosberg, Irby, Brown and Yang (2010) summarized the findings

of their research on what Mexican American educational leaders valued within four

significant findings; (a) solidarity, sharing, and citizenship; (b) setting the example; (c)

commitment, love, and care; and (d) sacrifice and hard work. These values, attitudes, and

beliefs helped to develop organizational norms which guided and expected appropriate behaviors.

Spears (2004) identified ten characteristics of the servant leader. These characteristics include awareness, building community, commitment to the growth of people, conceptualization, empathy, foresight, healing, listening, persuasion, and stewardship. As Spears (2004) described, "awareness is not a giver of comfort, it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace" (p. 9). A qualification I have observed as an educational leader in great colleagues, supervisors, and mentors is that they are able to tolerate a wide span of awareness and carry out intuitive emotional healing processes, they naturally develop others' skill sets, and they are gifted with an innate ability to build a community of stewardship. In short, I have had the pleasure to observe servant leaders that created a safe environment that enabled their followers to voice personal and professional concerns (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Pujadas (1968) provides context to the need to work interdependently with all cultures, including all levels of economic status, and most, importantly; all children in an effort to provide others with the neurplasticity process described in Cain and Cain (2011). Neuroplasticity as defined by Cain and Cain (2011) is a biological phenomenon that without the study of ethics and moral values we can derive that the nature and origin can best be elucidated in a biological framework. Cain and Cain (2011) also provide that neuroplasticity is perceptual information from the external environment and the internal milieu of the body as transmitted and processed in the brain, leading to cognition, emotion, and behavior, is the essence of human experience. Possible blockade and

liberating neuroplasticity strategies are further researched in Cain and Cain (2011) as necessary experiences to cope with and acquire appropriate information for solving tasks and removing negative life experiences. Schwartz and Begley (2003) defined neuroplasticity as offering convincing scientific evidence of human free will, and thus of man's inherent capacity for moral choice.

Pujada's (1968) description of servant leadership and calling is in the *vocación emproista,* that every life is lived as a vocational calling*. Vocación emproista* is paralleled with Bowman's (2005) description of servant leadership ideologies as the humility, the service to others, and the needed community building. Additionally, v*ocación emproista* is similar to how Bowman (2005) definition of businesses and corporations, as well as religious organizations, as systems that have begun to exercise the principles found in servant leadership and recognize the open style of servant leadership as a moral principle. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) documented on group and organizational stewardship by describing the extent to which leaders prepared their organization to make a positive contribution to the community and society. Similarly, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) supported leaders with the development of servant leaders that demonstrated a strong sense of social responsibility and encouraged their organization to implement moral and ethical actions that benefited all stakeholders. This emphasis was accomplished by reaching out to the community through community development programs, outreach activities, and facilitating company policies that benefited the surrounding community, society, and environment. In short, Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) believed that servant leaders' ideology advocated that their organizations

create value for the community. The literature detailed above echoes the need to always be in community with the community.

Practicing School Superintendents as Mentors

Latino educational leadership programs are rare and Hispanic student demographic increases support the need to recruit, support, and develop the next generation of school leaders. The journey to the superintendency requires great mentors and protégées willing to accept the feedback and guidance particularly when it is focused on possible inhibiting factors. However, the mentors need to always promote the mentee's success and establish a relevant culture-sharing phenomenon of optimism and envisioned achievements. Durant's (1961) elaboration of the will and desire to be strong and supported states, "the intellect may seem at times to lead the will, but only as a guide leads his master; the will is the strong blind man who carries on his shoulders the lame man who can see" (p.405). The Latino culture-sharing superintendent group should not want something because they have reasons for it, they should find reasons that can appeal to their interest, their desires, and their will to serve communities in need. As stated earlier, the protégée must welcome the guidance of the wise and experienced superintendents, while maintaining the risk-taking and innovative entrepreneurial mindset of the next generation of Latino leaders.

The importance of quality mentorships for current and aspiring Hispanic/Latino educational leaders cannot be overstated. Many educational scholars have alluded to the need for Hispanic mentors to promote the new generation of Hispanic/Latino educational leaders (Magdaleno, 2006; Ramirez, 2006). Although Hispanic/Latino leadership organizations exist, there is a growing need for mentorships that focus on the importance

of understanding social capital and networking opportunities. Understanding the

mentor/mentee relationship and the expectations for both parties is critical for the growth

of Hispanic/Latino educational leaders. Bordas (2013) in her analysis on Carlos Orta

states that good leaders have empathy and they put themselves in other people's shoe.

Always supporting the notion that great leaders go beyond caring, they seek to

understand where people are coming from and how decisions made will impact their

world view and their leadership skill set.

  Yosso (2006) described the ability to maneuver through social institutions as

"navigational capital" (p. 44) and considering that large urban education systems have

become dynamic social organizations, Latino school superintendents in large urban

school districts need to serve as active mentors to aspiring leaders. Many Latinos appear

to lack the navigational capital required to be successful in large urban school districts.

Aspiring Latino leaders need to work with a mentor who can ensure that their leadership

wounds are used to define their core values within their leadership style. Navigational

capital is driven by the political dynamics found within the experiences of practicing

school superintendents. The Synergistic Leadership Theory (SLT) is a 21st Century

leadership theory that provides a framework to examine and reflect on the feminine voice

in educational leadership (Irby, Brown, & Yang, 2009). This particular theory gives

consideration to the necessity of the alignment and harmony of four interconnected

elements of leadership. These elements include: (a) organizational structure, (b)

leadership behaviors, (c) external forces, and (d) beliefs, attitudes and values.

  The usage of a mentor-protégé informal or formalized system allows for

practicing school superintendents to naturally support the development of the next

generation of leaders. Latino school superintendents fall from the helm often times by their poor response to a time of crisis, both on the job and as a defamation of their character. Latino superintendents have been removed from their jobs for their inability to respond to accusations ranging from marital problems, theft, corruption, and poor-decision making. Many of the swords that wound Latino superintendents stem from the cultural inability to use the time of crisis as an opportunity to explore and question their fundamental ontological, axiological, and epistemological existence. Lugg's (2002) positioned that nationally, there is a need to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of school personnel.

The extant literature on mentoring provides many clues to a quality mentoring process. During the Latino leadership growth process, the mentor and the mentee should define clearly espoused theories and be receptive to feedback when inconsistencies occur with espoused theories and theories-in-use. The mentor and protégé plan should include feedback opportunities that can allow both leaders to articulate what they "say they do and their explanations for their actions" and "what they actually do and the real reasons for their actions" (Robinson & Lai, 2006, p. 99). Latino school superintendents experience competition both within the culture-sharing group for status and within the dominant cultures for acceptance. The need to mentor Latino leaders could break competitive barriers by developing a cadre of leaders with the ability to demonstrate good judgment and the pedagogical competence in the field of education. Tallerico (2000) suggests that the barriers that females face in the acquisition of the superintendency parallel those faced by those who are of racial and ethnic minorities. Manuel and Slate (2003) summarized that when minority superintendents are given the opportunity to lead,

they are often recruited to non-solvent and/or disadvantaged school districts. In similar studies, Latino superintendents possessed the characteristics and attributes that warranted their continuance as superintendents and Latino candidates possessed what it takes to be superintendents; however, they were not given the opportunity as readily as their White male counterparts (Cisneros, 2011; Enomoto, Gardiner, & Grogan, 2000; Hunter & Donahoo, 2005; Magdaleno, 2004; Manuel & Slate, 2003).

Current Latino educational leaders need to emphasize a moral sense of urgency to support and mentor Latinos through their journey of educational service. Garcia (2011) recognized that, "every month, at least 50,000 Latinos turn 18 in this country" (p. 12); therefore, I describe the need to develop Latino educational leaders as a policy making commitment and a moral responsibility to address the need as a phenomenon. According to Garcia (2011), members of ALAS, "are actively encouraging some of those 18-year-olds to become educators themselves, and part of a public school system that makes Latinos active, engaged and successful citizens" (p.21). Elizondo (2005) supported, "the need for a formalized process that identifies and supports a top cadre of bilingual educators through an enriched mentoring program will result in a pool of ready candidates for administrative positions" (p.24). The Latino leadership community needs an effective cadre of bilingual educators that can unite to address the needs of Latino communities in need of positive role models. Elizondo (2005) also addresses that "this type of program would promote formalized professional opportunities through the different career chairs" (p.24). Additionally, Garcia (2011) represented the need to support Latinos through ALAS by emphasizing that, "we are working to serve them better with well-supported Latinos who are running those schools" (p.40).

Cross (1981) believed *andragogy* is premised upon four assumptions. As a person matures, that person (a) moves toward being a self-directed human being, (b) becomes a resource for learning, (c) moves toward the evolving demands of his or her social roles, and (d) moves toward knowledge application and problem centeredness (p. 223). According to Knowles (1970), *andragogy* is defined as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 38). Effective mentor and protégé plans include a movement toward self-directed humans that follow a social justice commitment to apply the knowledge and skills acquired to serve communities in need. Practicing Latino school superintendents and educational leaders can mentor and guide the next generation of leaders through the current landscape of Latino leadership to position themselves as aspiring successful superintendents.

In applying Argyris's (1993) notions, the minds of young Latino leaders might be considered *tabulas rasas*, blank slates, ready to be formed by the experience and knowledge of current Latino leaders. Current Latino educators play an integral part of the future of Latino educational leadership capital by crafting and prioritizing the skills, knowledge, and professional decisions that novice Latino leaders must take to be successful in large organizations, such as urban school districts. The professional development of Latinos has fallen into a regressive nature foreshadowed by the need to remain politically correct and to subscribe to the status quo. It is the responsibility of Latino leaders in positions of influence to support the development of young Latinos, particularly those serving impoverished student populations.

Argyris (1993) made the case that effectiveness results from developing congruence between theory-in-use and espoused theory. Espoused theory is focused on

action, and Latino leaders need to connect the action with their individual and collective

truth in an interchangeable manner. In line with this theory, Latino leaders are called to

act in ethical and moral ways that reflect espoused theories of action. Espoused theories

communicated by Latino leaders should result in actions that promote the development of

and future success of the Latino communities they represent. Robinson and Lai (2006)

argued that effective professional conversations involve the use of learning talk that is

focused on, and designed to improve, teaching and learning. They identify three

interrelated categories of learning talk, each of which is essential to the inquiry process.

Latino instructional leaders can replicate Robinson and Lai's (2006) learning talk model

to develop leaders by focusing on analytical, critical, and challenging talks to develop "an

ideal relationship with a mentee in which different points of view are respected and

treated as a resource for reciprocal critique and learning" (p. 53). Latino educational

leaders then could follow a framework for coaching and developing the next generation

of superintendents.

Argyris (1990) first developed the concept of a learning conversation as compared

to controlling conversations. According to Argyris (1990) in controlling conversations,

the advocates of change push their ideas without inquiring into or even acknowledging

the theory of action that explains the practices they want to change. They are driven by

the need to protect their own views from challenge. On the contrary, the learning

conversation is described by Argyris (1990) by people treating different accounts of a

problem as a resource for learning better ways to think about and resolve it. The

development of a strong cadre of leaders is supported by Argyris (1990) as a group that

needs to be open to learning from others about the adequacy of their beliefs, assumptions, and values. Their drive is for a reciprocity of better quality thinking and reasoning.

Therefore, practicing Latino school superintendents are positioned to take on the active representation to support and demonstrate a commitment to help the novice group of Latino educational leaders be successful. Tallerico (2000) also describes that the barriers include systemic biases, professional socialization patterns, tokenism, and cultural exclusion. The barriers suggest that there is great concern in the process used by school districts to hire superintendents, and the hiring process also limits the advancement of women and of people of color. The dimensions included in Tallerico (2000) are as follows: how "best qualified" is defined, stereotyping and cultural dynamics, and the role of "good chemistry" in determining interview success. By using a gate keeping model as a conceptual framework, superintendent selection committees and school boards have historically looked at candidates who fit a specific mold in terms of career experience.

The path taken to ascend to the role of school superintendent as a Latino can shape how they approach their practice, what they are able to accomplish, and how they think about their work; most importantly, it shapes what they feel and believe the role permits them to feel (Akalin & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2002, p.8). This research seeks to fully understand phenomenological inhibiting experiences from practicing Latino school superintendents to ultimately support the need to address the phenomenon at the early entry points of teaching, as neophyte leaders in upper administration, and eventually make an attempt to identify and properly mentor Latino leaders. Palmer (2000) presented a clear justification for the need for a sitting superintendent to support the emerging role

of the leadership journey of novice leaders by stating that "the insight we receive on the inner journey is that chaos is the precondition to creativity; as every creation myth has it, life itself emerged from the void. Even what has been created needs to be returned to chaos from time to time so that it can be regenerated in more vital form" (p. 89). The Latino student growth in large urban school districts could support the need to live out and mutually share the fundamental philosophies and educational leadership inhibiting experiences to become increasingly engaged in their environments as educational leaders.

For the purpose of this research, *juventud* is described as novice educational leaders that transition into the educational practice without proper mentorship, self and professional maturity, and educational advice and guidance. Goleman (1998) described professional maturity as a "self-awareness, or the ability to recognize and understand one's moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others" (p.112). The art of helping Latinos develop should be of utmost importance to current and future Latino educational leaders. Goleman et al. (2002) exposed several studies demonstrating discrepancies in executive self-evaluations as compared to evaluations by others and corporate performance.

The future success of the cadre of Latino educational leadership is dependent upon the mentor and protégé with a focus on the quality of the protégé new mentor cycle. Magdaleno (2006), documented the adversity faced by Latinos in the field of education;

Having encountered years of lower expectations and the continued presence of a career "glass ceiling," Latina and Latino educational leaders frequently find it difficult to ascend to, and sustain, positions at subsequent levels of school administration. As a result, the number of positive role models in leadership

positions for Latina and Latino students is limited, and the educational system

runs the risk of reduced legitimacy in the eyes of the Latino educational

leadership community and the millions of students it serves (p.12)

Therefore, the mentoring of Latino educational leaders through this research will be

addressed as a national crisis and a need to focus on effective professional development

and mentorship programs. The inhibiting and promoting findings will address the need to

develop mentoring programs as Dreher and Cox (1996) stated, "the formation of a

mentoring relationship has clearly been shown to have positive career effects for the

protégé. Previous research has found that mentoring is related to advancement in

organizations, organizational influence, salary attainment, and satisfaction with salary

and benefits" (p.22). The public and private school systems are large organizations;

therefore, it is our responsibility to properly mentor and create protégé plans. The need

to mentor and create protégés must be supported by a developmental plan that helps

Latino educational leaders, principals, and future superintendents of schools achieve great

success for both their careers and the communities they serve.

Magdaleno (2006) described that, with the increasing number of Latino students

in the State of California, there was a clear need to develop mentoring programs that

increased the growth of, and retention rate of, Latina and Latino school superintendents.

The author also stated that Latino superintendents have encountered years of lower

expectations and the presence of a career glass ceiling. It is evident by analyzing the

number of current superintendents in the state of Texas and California that the scarcity of

Latino educational leaders at the helm has made it difficult to ascend to, and sustain,

positions at the various levels of school leadership. Magdaleno (2006) supports that

implementing and sustaining a same-race administrator mentoring program that improves the probability of being a successful Latino educational leader is essential to the future of the educational system. The need to develop a purposeful Latino leadership community needs to be well documented, evaluated, and implemented in a mentor-protégé process. The Latino educational leadership community often responds in a resistant matter instead of a resilient nature.

Fernandes (1988) described that a theory of resistance starts from the concepts of classification and whose objective is to oppose schools' social and cultural reproduction from their different forms (of class, race, ethnic groups and gender) and the reproduction and inculcation of the dominant ideologies. Barrett (2010) supported the need to be resilient by focusing on educational resilience, attainment and achievement of established life-long goals. Although little is known about factors behind the relationship between religious involvement and educational outcomes especially for those students most often marginalized within the mainstream education system, Barrett (2010) focused on exploring the influence of religious involvement on the educational outcomes of urban minority adolescents, particularly on how religious involvement served to promote positive educational outcomes among minority urban students. A significant amount of educational research is needed to fully address and identify the needs from the scarcity of Latino educational leaders. Given the limited amount of research conducted in this area, this research will provide a baseline of information and strategies that can be used to create a moral sense of urgency to address the inhibiting factors and begin to solve the problems with the scarcity of Latino leaders.

The Role of the Latino Superintendent

The critical role of the school superintendent in the twenty first century has evolved to include Latinos at the helm of some of our nation's largest public school systems. Magdaleno (2006) defines the role of Latino leaders as being readily conscious of the obstacles and issues members of their ethnic group face. Magdaleno (2006) also believed that due to the long history of Latinos not assuming the role of the supeintendency, the number of positive role models for Latino students is very limited and that this may contribute to the poor academic achievement of Latinos. Feagin and Eckberg (1980) defined the historical context of Latinos by stating that there is a virtual disappearance of traditional legal segregation that has caused most discrimination to take on new forms that are subtle, informal, and thus, both difficult and expensive to document. Feagin and Eckbeg (1980) stated that "racial discrimination remains a bedrock feature of this society and that only the research documenting the dimensions of discrimination seem to be on the decline" (p. 386). Lindsey (1999) described how, in many areas of the country, any desire for placing people of color into formal leadership positions has been preceded by actual legislation or by precedent-setting court cases. Lindsey (1999) concludes her arguments by adding that gender and race still correlate very highly with who gains formal leadership positions in schools.

The role of the superintendent continues to adapt to the nuances of the innovative and entrepreneurial thinking of school boards and the influences from corporate, philanthropic donors, non-profit leaders, and the political sectors. Campbell-Jones (2000) wrote that respondents in one study identified institutional mechanisms that were designed to keep minorities out of the superintendency, while still others felt that the

greatest barrier to overcome was the temptation to view oneself as not worthy of the position of superintendent. The study participants also spoke of an inner dialogue that helped remind themselves of their worthiness of holding the position of superintendent. The demands of the job will continue to create apprehensiveness in our aspiring Latino school leaders; however, the focus must shift to the development of the required skills, habits, and pedagogy preparation to meet the academic needs of all of the children being served in public education.

Enomoto (2000) noted that both race and gender factored into feelings of self-doubt about their capacity to do their work and be successful as educational administrators were the leading contributing factors to the scarcity of Latino school superintendents. The political dynamics and the growing social demands require superintendents to be much more astute in relational and intellectual power. The modern demands of the role of the superintendent have created a gate-keeping mechanism that only allows access to those that are polished and well mentored professionals.

The scarcity of Latino superintendents continues to cast a shadow on the development of well prepared truly bilingual leaders in the field of education. Glass (2000) noted that nearly half (46.9%) of the minority superintendents that participated in his study indicated that there were discriminatory hiring practices. However, aspiring Latino superintendents must overcome the institutionalized racism in some hiring practices and begin a culture-sharing healing process. Greenleaf (1991) and Solomon (2007) described a healing process as a full involvement that ensures wholeness in oneself. Healing includes taking opportunities to restore wholeness to others. Consequently, the road map to success will require superintendents that can overcome

inhibiting factors and become persistent and tenacious leaders which border pedagogy gurus, political navigators, and skilled managers that can compete with the existing, yet, unacceptable hiring practices. In short, the role of the large urban school superintendent is evolving, and the modern role will require proficient politically inclined educational leaders that can overcome the inhibiting factors documented in this research.

Therefore, the consciousness-raising (c*oncientización*) can be understood as a rapid growth of Latino students in public education and the growing demand for bilingual educational leaders can also be the platform to the removal of the self-doubt found in the research cited above. Iglesia (2009) states that the steps to the next level have more to do with how well one is a team player and does not rock the boat, than the skills, knowledge and dispositions that one possesses to get the job done and be successful. The Latino educational leadership culture-sharing group must move from being docile, to the inherent responsibility to represent an active representation to future generations of leaders.

Harris (2004) noted that men and women of color are seriously underepresented in the superintendency with only 5% of the positions being held by members of a minority. Harris also added that for many years now, it has been known that minority superintendents served in districts where students of the same ethnicity were present in significant numbers. The historical record of Latino superintendents is sparse and Glass (2000) noted that much of the historical record of minority superintendents is centered around African-Americans, but added that recent studies of Hispanics in school administration have enlightened our understanding of those who serve as school chiefs.

Historical Context: Identifying, Recruiting, and Developing Latino Administrators

It is essential to understand the historical context of educational leadership within the constructs of the current state of Latino school superintendents in the country. The role of the superintendent began to be defined in the late 1800s when the National Education Association (NEA) created a superintendent's division which focused on the creation of developmental programs to serve the needs of a fast growing profession, teaching. The division adopted the name of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), an organization that continues to serve school superintendents today. In the early 1850s, state superintendents were created to monitor monetary data and distribute state funds as needed. Similarly, state departments of education were created to establish equal opportunities through state funding mechanisms and systems that ensured minimum expenditure standards. By the end of the 19th century, most superintendents in cities had shed this role of supervisor of students and teachers to become managing administrators (Glass, 2000). They were typically responsible for the operational aspects of the district, and early superintendents worked with Boards of Education in order to be able to reform schools.

Glass (2000) indicated that the superintendency as we know it today, evolved from superintendents struggling to become professionals during the early part of the 1900s. The first superintendents were officially created in 1837 and by the 1870s, many of the large cities in the United States were led by school boards that assumed the responsibility to hire the superintendents. The school boards did not have any legal responsibility, nor was there a policy that granted them the right to follow any particular

process; however, boards implied their power in the hiring process, and the superintendents complied with the demands created by the board members.

In the 1970s, Cuban (1976) studied the ever-changing skills required of successful superintendents, and noted that the first role or conception of the superintendent was that of a teacher-scholar, because the most important role of the superintendent was to make good teachers out of poor ones. Kowalski (2005) writes that by the 1980s, most states had in place laws or policies that required superintendents complete a prescribed course of study in order to qualify for licensure, although the pendulum has swung in the other direction, and most states have either changed or eliminated the minimum requirements for this important position.

Over the years, the scrutiny found within the daily actions of school superintendents has ended many careers. It is safe to conclude that the expectations of a school superintendent continue to increase while the social and professional complexity along with social media makes the role of the CEO of schools a complex profession. Carl Candoli (1995) in his work, *The Superintendency: Its History and Role*, summarized the role of the modern superintendent thusly;

> The superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer of the school system appointed by and directly responsible to the Board of Education for the discharge of his or her responsibilities. The superintendent acts in accordance with the policies, rules, and regulations established by the board and the laws and regulations of the state and federal government. Lastly, the administration of the entire school system is delegated to the superintendent. (71)

As aforementioned in the introduction of this research, the Hispanic student population is rapidly growing in the nation's public schools. And to better understand the scarcity of effective Latino school superintendents and the underrepresented scholarly research, we must begin with the notion that over the last two centuries our public school system has created an academic and informational gap as it relates to the phenomenon of Latino school superintendents. The future of public education is going to represent a predominately Hispanic student body, therefore, it is extremely important to identify and begin to understand the role of the superintendent through the lens of Latino leadership. In the educational environment of Latino superintendents, Campbell-Jones (2000) indicated that minority administrators that work with low-income communities are more adept at offering insights about the educational process and needs for their students in a way that others may miss, because they were most likely members of that same community at some point in their lives. Domenech (2010) documented that "ALAS is poised to become a national player as an advocate for quality educational services for the nation's Latino youth, a group that will make up 25 percent of the country's school-age population by 2025." ALAS also wants to focus on providing professional development for Latino school administrators as well as for administrators who work with Latino children. Elizondo (2005) supported the body of knowledge and informed ALAS board members by stating,

> Recruitment can start in the early identification of bilingual teachers in our
> universities and colleges. As superintendents, we should start earlier
> conversations with those in higher education to identify the best candidates and
> help us incorporate them into a school district's classrooms. This can be

completed through university service credit requirements or their graduate

credentialing programs (p. 24).

Magdaleno (2006) focused on leadership skills, behaviors, traits and virtues;

focusing on the notion that several traits shape the many aspects of cultural assets for

Latinos, which make a same-race mentoring program more likely to succeed. Of these

assets, *familialism* is consistently at the forefront. This denotes a cultural value that

involves a strong identification with, and attachment to, their nuclear and extended

families (Cortes, 2002). Strong feelings of loyalty, reciprocity, authentic collaboration

and solidarity are shared among members of the same professional family (Magdaleno

2006). Cortes (1995) reported that education was the variable most strongly related to

beliefs in *familialism* for both the younger and older generations. This value appears to

help protect individuals against stresses by providing natural support systems (p.13).

Education consistently diminished the beliefs of *familialism* within the two family

generations and that the more education family members had, the more they moved away

from traditional patterns dictated by their culture.

The development process of Latino school superintendents is equally as important

as the identification. Developmental processes have been supported in an entrepreneurial

approach by Goleman, et al., (2002) who stated "self-awareness of leadership abilities

was greatest for CEO's of the best performing companies and poorest for CEO's of the

worst performers" (p. 94). Goleman, et al., (2002) also included an analysis of over

compensation of self-awareness by stating that "people tend to over-estimate their

abilities to some extent, it's the very poorest performers who exaggerate their abilities the

most" (p. 94). Goleman also generated five basic emotional and social competencies of

emotional intelligence at work, which include: (a) *Self-awareness:* the ability to

recognize and understand your moods; (b) emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on

others; (c) self-regulation, the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and

moods; the propensity to suspend judgment—to think before acting; (d) Motivation: a

passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status; a propensity to pursue goals

with energy and persistence; (e) empathy: the ability to understand the emotional makeup

of other people; skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions; and, (f)

social skill: proficiency in managing relationships and building networks; an ability to

find common ground and build rapport (Goleman, 1998, p. 95).

Latino Superintendents as Policy Advocates

The findings from this research might influence further agendas and support local,

state, and national policy makers to develop programs to mentor, recruit, and develop the

future cadre of Latino school superintendents. Freire (1970) supported the need to have

Latino political power through the idea that "the implementation of a liberating education

requires political power and the oppressed have none, how then is it possible to carry out

the pedagogy of the oppressed?" (p.54) Lobbying positioning plans can be created from

the findings of this research to support the immediate need to advocate for educational

leadership grants, state, and local initiatives. Moreover, a non-profit organizational and

philanthropic plan will also be created to sustain the effectiveness of the professional

mentorship plans. According to Garcia (2011),

> Every month, at least 50,000 Latinos turn 18 in this country, according to the
>
> American Bar Association Commission on Hispanic Legal Rights &
>
> Responsibilities. We know the majority of these kids are coming through our

public schools, and at ALAS we are working to serve them better with well-

supported Latinos who are running those schools. We also are actively

encouraging some of those 18-year-olds to become educators themselves, and part

of a public school system that makes Latinos active, engaged and successful

citizens. (p.48)

Similarly, Elizondo (2005) noted, "but a second critical element for sustained

improvement is the assignment of more bilingual educators in policy development

positions and high-level administrative roles" (p. 24). Latino leaders are needed even

beyond the classroom and the political games of school boards and hierarchal leadership

positions within the school system.

The needs are enormous enough that we need local, state and national policy

makers. Elizondo (2005) stated, "the achievement gap among our student subgroups is

very real and challenging for most of our nation's school districts. This is especially true

in districts serving the nation's fastest-growing population: Latino school-age

youngsters." Therefore, the need to have more business partners, more philanthropists,

and well-rounded Latino educational leaders has never been more important than today.

Elizondo (2005) stated, "better representation of well-trained Latino teachers and

administrators in K-12 education alone cannot close the gap in achievement between

Latino students and others" (p.23). Theobold (2004) states that with the increase of

minority teachers, there has also been an increase in minority student achievement, much

like police forces with more women are more responsive to rape allegations. Theobold

(2004) suggests that these improved outcomes are a function of active representation, and

that minority bureaucrats are utilizing their discretionary powers on behalf of their

minority clientele. The author also stated that in a related study it was found that the effect of bureaucratic Latino representation in schools benefitted Latino students. Although Theobold (2004) was looking at the linkages between Latino superintendents and English Language Learners programs, the generalizations can easily be applied to the scarcity of bilingual teachers, school superintendents, and ELL advocates.

Latino leaders might be considered behind in adaptation to cultural dominance in the education field. Although changes might become evident in the representation of Latinos to board of education seats, appointment to a superintendent position often is dependent upon voter turn-out as much as school board representation. However, according to Domenech (2010);

> Statistics that describe the performance of our Latino youth in our schools provide a sad commentary on how badly Hispanic students have fared over a 40-year period. According to the Census Bureau, in the 1960s only 3.6 percent of the U.S. population was Hispanic. In the 1970s, that segment grew to 6 percent, and the high school graduation rate of Hispanic youth was 32 percent, with only 5 percent going on to graduate from college. By 2007, Hispanic students had become the largest minority population in our schools with a 19 percent share (compared to 15 percent for black students) (p. 45).

Magdaleno (2006) stated that "there is a clear need to increase the number of Latina and Latino school leaders, and to provide mentors to help sustain their success in the job" (p.12). This is the time to establish consultancy groups, mentorship groups and to create a line of presentations and research article circulations regarding the development of Latino leaders. Magdaleno (2009) detailed "the notion that one

generation can guide the next is certainly not new and seems fundamental" (p. 14).

Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how modern civilization would have evolved, or even

survived, if each successive generation did not build effectively on the lessons of the past

(Reinarz and White, 2001). The ALAS organization has taken an impressive step toward

building a coaching and mentorship program that can support future leaders with the

network that is needed to be successful. According to Garcia (2011), Latino leaders met

for a week long to create a "launching point of the Association of Latino Administrators

and Superintendents." They collectively recognized the need and took action to prepare

policy shaping Latino leaders.

Additionally, Garcia (2011) documented an astounding statement, "Latino

students are now the fastest-growing sector of the student population, but out of 14,000

school districts across the nation, only about 250 of them have a Latino superintendent."

The demand is so high and the supply is incredulous that in 2010, "ALAS sent Latino

administrators to Oregon and Colorado, places that have experienced a surge of English

language learners, to help school districts connect with experts as they deal with issues

such as bilingual education, how to include Spanish-speaking families in the school

community and what to do about undocumented students" (Garcia, 2011, p. 29). And the

problem has yet to be defined at the lower levels of educational leadership, particularly,

in the role of the principal. It never seizes to amaze me that when we are in search of

effective bilingual Latino leaders, we often face the reality of a scarcity in the human

capital.

Theory of Action and Knowledge

In an effort to create a comprehensive leadership theory that can eventually lead to effective practice, this research was designed to utilize educational and life experiences of current large urban school district superintendents in an effort to support the development of compensatory skills in Latino leaders, principals, and school superintendents. Escobar (2009) reemphasized that active representation at all levels of management is needed, but particularly in the superintendency. Research has shown that when "students have a leader of their own race or ethnicity they tend to achieve at higher levels academically, because these leaders are able to approach their work via a culturally relevant pedagogy" (Escobar, p. 24). The intent of my research is to create a professional development plan that can support practicing and future Latino educational leaders through their journey of seeking educational leadership positions. In essence, "the act of knowing involves a dialectical movement that goes from action to reflection and from reflection upon action to a new action" (Freire, 1972). If Latino school superintendents are not aware about what to improve, then how can the collective body of oppressed leaders reflect about possible solutions to fix the problems they face today while anticipating the challenges of the future?

Knowing the challenges Latino school superintendents face while serving at the helm will help develop skills needed to address emerging themes. In the section titled "Anatomy of a Wound," Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2002), use their book *The Wounded Leader: How Real Leadership Emerges in Times of Crisis*, to identify the need to develop listening, analytical, and processing skills prior to feeling obliged to fix a

problem in an unreasonable time frame. The skills needed are identified as a time factor and situational leadership natural skills by Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2002):

> The community expects the leader to act quickly and to exert power. We have seen that a leader must tap an enormous amount of energy to hold back and not rush in to be the fixer. It is a powerful act of leadership to wait, listen, and not solve the public problem, but rather serve to support the community in owning the problem and struggling to confront it collectively. This requires the patience to wait and the willingness to take time for a process to work. This goes against the norm (p.33).

The unique perspective of Latino superintendents includes their mistakes, wounds experienced, the success stories, and the process of reaching a realization and an understanding of what inhibits their success at the helm. This perspective and the ability to develop a new way of thinking and acting, manifest the notion of nueroplasticity. Neuroplasticity, the brains' ability to change and adapt to environmental events and actions initiated by the individual, becomes part of the means by which Latino superintendents develop the requisite compensatory skills to be effective leaders (Schwartz & Begley, 2003). The timing of decision making is as critical as the content and the value of the decision, therefore, documenting the learning process and creating a body of knowledge that supports a collective culture-sharing problem is of essence. The action and reflection model must be followed by effective usage of the Neuroplasticity process.

Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2002), utilized similar frameworks to address the process experienced during the downfall of leaders within three core understandings;

The first is that leadership roles often do not support, confirm or resonate with the psychic needs of the person who becomes a leader. The second is that wounding is an inevitable art of leadership. This leads to the third, that woundedness is a double-edged (at least) sword. A wound has the potential to be a catalyst for the leader to grow or to be enmeshed in crisis. The wounds present the leader an opportunity to explore and question the actual foundation of her leadership and herself. How a leader responds to being wounded can define her as a leader. The wound, at its best, can lead her back to her own true story (p.7).

In addition to healing, grit and tenacity, Bordas (2013) noted that the hallmark of Raul Izaguirre was that the leader has to build his self-confidence. You have to believe in yourself first. You have to convince yourself you can do it before you can convince others. Bordas (2013) adds that Latino models of leadership are by the many and that leaders must build people's faith so they can take action. The new actions should include the knowledge gathered of the scarcity of Latino leaders in our country, with effective skill sets that can improve the delivery of educational services. According to Magdaleno (2009), "In today's challenging times, as the pool of district and school administrators shrinks and fewer people are willing to carry on the role of educational leadership, a new generation of leaders must step forward and serve" (p. 40). In short, Bordas (2013) states, "the *familia* and *comunidad* cooperate for the common welfare. Values such as reciprocity, sharing, and generosity encourage collaboration. Collectivity, in fact, has been a survival tactic" (p. 132). Bordas (2013) messaged it perfectly; Latino leadership is *of*, *by* and *for* the many.

Summary

In this chapter, a review of the relevant literature pertaining to organizations developed to support Latino school superintendents was reviewed and documented. The culture-sharing of Latino school superintendents as educational leaders was defined through mentorship programs, policy advocacy, and some implications for future research was included. Literature was included to support the need to identify, recruit, and develop Latino school administrators and the purpose of this study was supported by the documentation of the scarcity of Latino school superintendents in large urban school districts. Latinos face a unique set of circumstances as they go about fulfilling their roles as superintendents and they must begin by identifying and overcoming inhibiting factors. A review of the literature included topics that should serve as the core of a developmental framework such as; ethics, vocational and servant leaders, and the social environment of Latino school superintendents. The review of literature provided a framework for understanding Latino school superintendent success by examining theories and extant research that inform culture-sharing phenomenon.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The fast growing Hispanic student population will need skilled, credible, and prepared Latino school superintendents to serve the needs of the communities they represent. Hispanic administrators aspiring to the superintendency of large urban school districts are necessarily faced with not only obtaining the necessary education and certification, but are inherently challenged by particular social and historical contexts. In addressing the research questions in this study, I utilized a qualitative approach that combined phenomenological and narrative inquiry. Because phenomenological research design is best suited for a study where the participants lived experience is its locus, I enlisted five participants. Qualitative researchers in education continually ask questions of the people they are learning from to discover what they are experiencing, how they interpret their experiences, and how they structure the social world in which they live (Psathas, 1973). Data were collected through interviews with each superintendent and sorted according to categories of analysis to identify emerging themes and interpret findings.

In this study, I applied Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological approach in exploring the lived experiences of five Latino large urban school superintendent participants. The objective of analyzing shared experiences is to obtain a comprehensive understanding of a specific group of people (Moustakas, 1994). This qualitative method helped to understand a group's shared experiences through interpretation of original data expressed by the participants because most phenomenological data are collected from a

series of open-ended questions and discourse between the researcher and participants (Moustakas, 1994).

In this phenomenological research study, I also utilized a narrative inquiry approach, which has been employed in educational research because of its power to elicit voice (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 1998). This approach was selected to present the collective voices of the Latino superintendents as documented by their experiences that inhibited or promoted their success. This approach is defined by Creswell (1998) as "an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social human problem" (p.15).

The primary purpose for utilizing a narrative inquiry approach was to gather data from the participants who shared their stories in an ongoing dialogue and re-told their stories as they reflected upon their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), noting:

> Narrative inquiry carries more of a sense of a search, a 're-search', a searching again. Narrative inquiry carries more of a sense of continual reformulation of an inquiry than it does a sense of problems, definitions, and solutions. As researchers we think about the phenomena in a narrative inquiry, we think about responding to the questions: What is your narrative inquiry about, or what is the experience of interest to you as a narrative inquirer? (p. 124)

According to Creswell (2012), "the researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting" (p. 15). The Latino superintendents were interviewed in naturalistic settings. The natural setting was a mutually agreed upon location. Utilizing the narrative inquiry techniques in my study allowed for openness and depth during the interviews. I then analyzed the

experiences of the superintendents as revealed through the interviews and interpretted emergent themes related to the experiences, skills, and behaviors that they reported inhibited or promoted their success as large urban school superintendents.

Purpose of the Study

In large urban school districts, a superintendent's discretion and background knowledge influences the decisions made and ultimately reflects the values and norms of those he or she represents (Meier, Wrinkle, & Polinard, 1999; Rocha & Hawes, 2009). The need to develop a requisite cadre of well-qualified Latino school superintendents is rooted in social and historical phenomena that might impede potential superintendent candidates from opportunities to ascend to the superintendency. The purpose of this study was to identify Latino superintendents' experiences that have contributed to or inhibited their successes as a superintendent, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills superintendents believe were necessary to be effective in their role.

Research Questions

This study consisted of one central research question and five subquestions. The central research question was: What are the lived experiences of Latino superintendents who work in urban school districts? The five subquestions were:

1. What behaviors do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

2. What skills do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

3. What factors do Latino school superintendents perceive inhibited their success as a superintendent?

4. What do Latino school superintendents perceive as important social network experiences that contributed to their success as a superintendent?

5. What do Latino urban school superintendents perceive are the compensatory skills needed to experience success as a superintendent?

Research Design

In this study, I utilized both phenomenological and narrative inquiry approaches, which allowed me to explore the lived experiences of Latino superintendents, while also attempting to collect rich data from the participants by using an interview protocol. In this chapter I describe the data collection method, which is designed to capture the behaviors, leadership traits and virtues, skills, and the personal, professional, and cultural identities along with the collective lived experiences of the five participants. The following sources of data were used in this study: (a) field notes, (b) interviews, and (c) a background questionnaire.

Context of the Study

Five school superintendents were selected to participate in this study. They represented urban school districts with enrollment of at least 30,000 students. Table 1 lists the five districts (enrollment, Hispanic enrollment, and ELL enrollment) represented by the five participating superintendents (see Table 1).

The school superintendents all had successfully led districts with diverse groups of students and staff. The school districts represented included enrollment that ranges from the smallest, District A with 45,672 students, to the largest, District E, with 353,516

students. The skills and behaviors associated with the service to districts with large

numbers of Hispanic student populations will create fidelity to the implications for

further research (see Table1).

Table 1

Participating Superintendents Districts' Demographic Information

	Enrollment	*Percent of Hispanic Students*	*Percent of English Language Learners*
District A	45,672	90.9	20.4
District B	52,989	23	27
District C	*60,193	71	58
District D	*60,108	83	30.3
District E	*200,000	74	24

Data retrieved from state published district reports

*Numbers were slightly modified to ensure confidentiality

Participant Selection

Erlandson et al. (1993), asserted that purposive sampling is central to qualitative

and naturalistic research. Purposive sampling creates that heterogeneous context where

the selected participants' experience is pertinent to the purpose of the study at hand, and

not generalized to the larger population. The sampling allowed maximum opportunity to

identify patterns and themes, as well as problems that may occur in the particular context.

It allowed the researcher the maximum opportunity to take adequate account of

contextual conditions and cultural norms. In order to fulfill the research project it was

important to select participants whose reality would meet the selection criteria.

Superintendents who met the criteria for participation were selected for participation in

this study. A total of five superintendent participants were researched and interviewed;

each participant self-identified as Latino.

Informed Consent

Approval from the Institutional Review Board at Sam Houston State University

was acquired prior to initiating this study (see Appendix E). Acceptable practices to

obtain permissions to conduct this study were followed. Prior to the commencement of

any interview, informed consent forms were obtained from each participant and

participants were provided with a description of the study (see Appendix C).

Data Collection

Taking into account the purpose of this research and the questions posed, it is

appropriate to encapsulate this study within the epistemology of interpretivism and from

the theoretical perspective of phenomenology. This study followed the protocols of a

phenomenological study. New forms of qualitative data continually emerge in the

literature, but all forms can be grouped into four basic types of information: observations

(ranging from nonparticipant to participant), interviews (ranging from close ended to

open ended), documents (ranging from private to public), and audiovisual materials

(including materials such as photographs, compact disks, and videotapes) (Creswell,

2007). Therefore, interviews with each participant served as the primary source of data.

The interview questions and survey were created according to Patton's (1990)

qualitative methods (see Appendix D). As Patton described, qualitative methods include

data collection such as: (a) in depth, open-ended interviews; (b) direct observations; and

(c) written documents. The data from interviews consisted of direct quotations from

different superintendent participants about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and

knowledge. The data from observations were also consistent with "detailed descriptions

of people's activities, actions, and the full range of interpersonal interactions and

organizational processes that are part of human experiences" (Patton, 1990, p. 9). A documented analysis of the responses obtained from the Latino school superintendents in this qualitative inquiry "yielded excerpts, quotations, or entire passages from organizational, clinical, or program records; memoranda and correspondence; official publications and reports; personal diaries; and open-ended written responses to questionnaires and surveys" (p. 10).

The interviews occurred at a time and in a place away from district facilities and in a location mutually agreed upon by the superintendent participants. Each participant's interview was scheduled for 60-90 minutes. During each interview participants were asked to respond to selected questions (see Appendix E). Each interview was voice recorded; subsequently, a verbatim transcript was created of selected passages from each recording. Additionally, as needed, follow-up phone calls and emails were made to participants to seek further clarification and/or elaboration on responses.

The information acquired from the participants was used to establish a baseline for the requisite compensatory skills to encourage the development of the collective Latino school superintendents serving large urban public school districts from around the country. Each participant completed a survey and participated in a 60-90 minute interview. The interviews were recorded and selected snippets transcribed as part of the collection of data to fully document their culture-sharing inhibiting and promoting factors. Each superintendent was interviewed with a prescribed interview question guide (see Appendix D, Appendix F, and Appendix G).

The selected interview questions addressed a broad range of Latino educational leadership experiences that espouse inhibiting and promoting factors. Each interview

was conducted with the intent of using the interview guide as a way to steer the questioning process, thus allowing the interview to be guided by the participants. Questions were designed and ordered to represent a chronology of each participant's life, beginning with childhood experiences and proceeding through professional life challenges as school leaders that inhibited or promoted the success of each of the participants. This process allowed for the participants to seamlessly engage in a discussion about specific topics included in the questioning process. At the conclusion of each interview, participants were invited to collaborate with me to re-tell their life experiences and allow for fuller participation in all phases of the research. The instrumentation allowed me to utilize different means by which the Latino superintendents may have the optimal opportunity to self-identify as well as elaborate on experiences or professional challenges that had a significant impact in their personal and professional lives. The field notes, and other related documents and artifacts collected throughout the research project were reviewed. The review served to substantiate, clarify, or identify trends and anomalies that emerged during the interviews.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher for this study, I am currently serving as a School Support Officer in the Houston Independent School District; this role allows me to work directly with schools in the role similar to an Area Superintendent of Schools. Most recently, I served as the Superintendent of Schools of the Lockhart Independent School District (LISD) in Caldwell County, Texas. The district I served was a mid-sized fast growing school district and I managed the education standards and student achievements, planned budgets, and allocated resources to better serve all of the children of LISD. Additionally,

I oversaw the planning and expenditures of bond monies, operational systems, and the district's budget process. I led all aspects of curriculum, assessment, and At-Risk student programing district-wide and I collaborated with school board members, Lockhart Chamber and Austin Chamber of Commerce, the Greater San Marcos Partnership and our Education Foundation.

In my role as a School Support Officer (SSO) in HISD I utilize my diverse experiences and knowledge of elementary, middle, high school, and charter schools to be responsible for helping principals to create high quality instructional teams and programs focused on student academic growth, to establish and achieve bold and measurable goals, and most importantly; I support principals with their work and service to their school communities. In my leadership experiences I have been blessed with the opportunity to oversee elementary schools, supervise middle schools, manage and lead futures academies, and I was also the immediate school support officer over the K-8 schools in HISD. It has been a privilege to serve and learn from my instructional leadership opportunities in such a diverse city as Houston, the seventh largest in the country.

I have aspirations to become a superintendent of schools in a large school district, especially in one of our largest Latino populated cities in the country. I was born and raised in Houston, Texas and my blue collar father passed away when I was only nineteen years of age and my hard-working mother served as a custodian of two different schools. My servant educational leadership vocational calling commenced during my formative years by serving as my mother's informal custodial assistant at both Hogg and Hamilton Middle Schools in Houston, Texas. My experience in cleaning schools and sweeping the halls in the late night hours taught me to be humble and service-oriented; however, it has

also served as the catalyst reminder for me to do extraordinary things in life. I was a second language learner in Houston's public schools, and I experienced challenges and adversity with the crime-infested culture of inner-city Houston during the 1980s and 1990s. The fact that my mother was a custodian reminds me of my need to work hard and have a tenacity to do great things for others. My life experiences have helped me maintain a high sense of urgency for all of our students and respect the work ethic of all of our teachers and staff.

I have to admit that it was a struggle for me as a second language learner and I experienced some significant life-changing challenges up until I completed middle school. My middle school years can be summarized simply—if I wasn't in the in-school suspension center, I was being chased by gangs in their attempt to initiate me, and ultimately end up serving a school suspension penalty. By the end of my seventh grade year, my mother moved me to the school where she was employed as a night shift custodian. I worked with my mother; we cleaned up the school and I washed up my behaviors, and my focus was quickly shifted to keeping up with the competitive students in a much nicer neighborhood of Houston, the Heights area, and attending school with Vanguard School students (academically advanced students) at Hamilton Middle School. Although I attended ESL classes, I was inspired by the studious and well-prepared students I encountered in the hallways, and by participating in extra-curricular activities. Great teachers and God-sent counselors and staff began to notice me as a good kid with potential and by the end of my eight grade year I was exited ESL, an accomplishment that only those labeled could ever appreciate; it was like being all but dissertation and

finally reaching the finish line. Ironically by the end of my first semester as a ninth grade student at Reagan High School, I was privileged to be scheduled into honors classes.

I formally describe myself as a Mexican-American educational leader. I lived and attended public schools in both, Monterrey, Nuevo León México and the predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods in Houston's North side. My formative years were in two large cities in both Mexico and the United States and my urban upbringing combined with my small town university studies and my small town superintendent experience have led me to be intrigued by the phenomenon described in this study. I am an experienced educational leader and I feel confident to lead as a school superintendent. My experiences cover an array of areas as a teacher in HISD, a middle school assistant principal, a charter school leader, the principal of John J. Herrera Elementary School, the founding principal of the Ninth Grade College Preparatory Academy, the principal of the top ranked and Blue Ribbon Nationally Recognized, Eastwood Academy High School, and as a school superintendent of Lockhart ISD.

My role as the researcher has led me to serve on Hispanic leadership professional organizations such as the Association of Hispanic School Administrators (AHSA) and the Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS). I was the board president of the Houston based AHSA with an administrator and principal membership of well over 200 Houston area Latino leaders. I am also a former board member and president elect of the Houston Association of School Administrators (HASA) where I served as a mentor to principals throughout the city of Houston.

I was actively involved in the creation of the Texas affiliate of the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS) and I strive to bring the findings

from this dissertation to life on a daily basis. For this reason, I selected the five

participants in an effort to address the phenomenological needs of the culture-sharing

group and address the inhibiting and promoting factors both through research and my

leadership journey. My educational leadership opportunities have been centered on the

commitment to develop servant leaders within the framework from my formative

Emproista family, Encuentros de Promoción Júvenil (EPJ). My formative Catholic

experiences and the professional observations of the Latino educational leadership

landscape have led me to the phenomenon of the scarcity of Latino school

superintendents in large urban school districts. I passionately seek to develop and nurture

the next generation of educational leaders to serve as helmsmen and helmswomen of

public education. My personal ascending process has led me to witness the numerous

adversities and oppressive situations that my colleagues, mentors, mentees, and I have

overcome to simply provide an equal representation of Latino leaders in public education.

Creswell (2007) stated, "a phenomenology provides a deep understanding of a

phenomenon as experienced by several individuals" (p. 62). As the researcher, I seek to

provide an unbiased account on my experiences, my worldview, and research-based

interpretations of the Latino educational leadership phenomenon, especially as it relates

to Latino school superintendents.   The social world in which I live has led me to become

the primary investigator into the phenomenon of the inhibiting and promoting factors as it

relates to the scarcity of Latino school superintendents in large urban school districts. I

sought to provide a road map for future research in an effort to develop and nurture the

next generation of leaders. Therefore, I support the ontological results as described by

Onwuegbuzie (2009) that "multiple contradictory, but equally valid accounts of the same

phenomenon [will] represent multiple realities" (p. 122). I hope to inspire ontological

realities and a new vision for the next generation of Latino leaders in an effort to promote

their own pursuit of leadership in large urban school districts.

Confidentiality and Security

All information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be

identified with any participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with

the participant's permission or as required by law. The information collected about each

participant was coded using a pseudonym, or initials and numbers. The information that

includes identifiable information was kept separately from the rest of the research data.

Only members of the research team will have access to the data associated with this

study. The data was stored in the investigator's office in a locked file cabinet/password

protected computer. The data also will be stored for one year from date of successful

final oral defense of this dissertation, at which time all pertinent data will be destroyed.

Data were only shared with the dissertation committee chair. Should any other use of the

data present itself, no release of data or any other information will occur without written

authorization having been secured from the particular participant. Each interview will be

recorded and the respective participant will have the right to review and/or edit the

recording. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no

information will be included that would reveal a participant's identity.

Data-storing methods

With the permission of the interviewees, all interviews were recorded (Arkley &

Knight, 1999; Bailey, 1996). Each interview was assigned a code, for example

"Participant, August 2014." Each interview was recorded by at least two devices per

session. Recording with multiple devices ensured against loss of data, should one device malfunction during a session. The recordings were labeled with the assigned interview code as soon as the interviews were transcribed. As the researcher, I transcribed key words, phrases and statements in order to allow the voices of research participants to speak. The interview setting was free as possible from background noise and interruptions.

The transcripts were scanned, uploaded, and configured into pdf files labeled for the various interviews. The following relevant documents were included in the file: (a) the informed consent agreement, (b) notes made during the interview, (c) any additional information that the participant offered during the interview, (d) notes made during the data analysis process, (c) a draft transcription and analysis of the interview that I presented to the participants for validation, and (e) the confirmation of correctness and commentary by the participant about the transcript of the interview. Van Kaam's (1966) method of analysis will be followed with each of the following steps being utilized to analyze the transcribed interview of each research participant: (a) explication of the data, (b) bracketing and phenomenological reduction, (c) delineating units of meaning, and (d) clustering of units to form themes.

Data Analysis

This study utilized the criteria for judging quality and critically analyzing qualitative research as suggested by Mertens (2005). I audio recorded each interview, and subsequently download them onto an iPad and tranfered the recordings to Wave Pad sound editor software. This allowed me to easily listen to each interview, and develop an appreciation for the subtleties and nuances present by the respective participant's tone of

voice and inflections. A transcript of selected passages from each recording was prepared based on emergent themes that were revealed. The audio recordings were analyzed not only by listening and re-listening to them, but they were interfaced with digital technology that assists to identify recurring phrases, words and ideas, and these will be used to identify emergent themes to represent the phenomenon with fidelity. A coding process was followed to identify themes and analyze patterns apparent from repeated listening to the recorded interviews, and compare with those identified by the digital technology. The coding and nodes process was conducted by using the NVIVO11 software, which allowed me to create comparison charts and classifications to facilitate the process. The coding process followed Saldana's (2009) model to identify patterns with similarities, differences, frequency, sequence, correspondence, and causation.

Explication of the data

The data was analyzed in order to provide a detailed and logical understanding of its context and substance. Hycner (1999) addresses the loss of the whole phenomenon by supporting an explication of the data implying that an investigation of the constituents of a phenomenon be conducted while keeping the context of the whole (p. 161). The explication process was followed to identify the research themes with validity to the phenomenon.

Bracketing and phenomenological reduction

The term reduction, coined by Husserl, is regarded by Hycner (1999) as unfortunate, because it has nothing to do with the reductionist natural science methodology. It would do a great injustice to human phenomena through over analysis, removal from the lived contexts of the phenomena and worse possibly reducing

phenomena to cause and effect. Phenomenological reduction "to pure subjectivity"
(Lauer, 1958, p. 50), instead, is a deliberate and purposeful opening by the researcher to
the phenomenon "in its own right with its own meaning" (Fouche, 1993; Hycner, 1999).
It further points to a suspension or 'bracketing out' (or epoche), "in a sense that in its
regard no position is taken either for or against" (Lauer, 1958, p. 49), Holloway (1997)
and Hycner (1999) recommend that the researcher listens repeatedly to the audio
recording of each interview to become familiar with the words of the interviewee in order
to develop a holistic sense, the *gestalt*. Zinker (1978) explains that the term
phenomenological implies a process, which emphasizes the unique experiences of
research participants. The here and now dimensions of those personal experiences gives
phenomena existential immediacy.

Delineating units of meaning

This was a critical phase of explicating the data, in that those statements that were
seen to illuminate the researched phenomenon were extracted or *isolated* (Creswell,
1998; Holloway, 1997; Hycner, 1999). As the researcher I made a substantial amount of
judgment calls while consciously bracketing my own presuppositions in order to avoid
inappropriate subjective judgments.

Clustering of units of meaning to form themes

I intended to bracket the presuppositions in order to remain true to the
phenomenon. I elicited the essence of meaning of units within the holistic context by
clustering meaning and creating themes. Hycner (1999) remarks that this calls for even
more judgment and skill on the part of the researcher. The artistic judgment evolved in
the clustering process, "particularly in this step is the phenomenological researcher

engaged in something which cannot be precisely delineated, for here he is involved in that ineffable thing known as creative insight" (Hycner, 1999, p. 150-151).

Clusters of themes were typically formed by grouping units of meaning together (Creswell, 1998; King, 1994; Moustakas, 1994) and I identified significant topics, also called units of significance (Sadala & Adorno, 2001). Both Holloway (1997) and Hycner (1999) emphasize the importance of the researcher going back and forth to the recorded interview, and ultimately summarize each interview for validation and modification. A summary that incorporates all the themes elicited from the data gives a holistic context. Each individual has his own way of experiencing temporality, spatiality, materiality, but each of these coordinates must be understood in relation to the others and to the total inner 'world' (as cited in Hycner, 1999, pp. 153-154). I conducted a validity check by returning to the informant to determine if the essence of the interview was correctly captured (Hycner, 1999). Any modification necessary was done as a result of this validity check. The aim of my investigation was to reconstruct the inner world of experiences of the subjects by creating a coding system, identifying themes, clustering general and unique themes for all the interviews and developing a composite summary.

I concluded the explicitation process by writing a composite summary, which reflects the context and horizon from which the themes emerged (Hycner, 1999; Moustakas, 1994). According to Sadala and Adorno (2001) the researcher, at this point transforms participants' everyday expressions into expressions appropriate to the scientific discourse supporting the research. However, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) emphasize that "good research is not generated by rigorous data alone … [but] 'going beyond' the data to develop ideas" (p. 139). Initial theorizing, however small, is derived

from the qualitative data I gathered and it followed a thematic coding process. Saldana

(2009) relates to theoretical coding as a process that profiles methods for progressing

from codes toward a central/core category that suggests a grounded theory at work in the

data.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

I was compelled to substantiate that the information in this study was trustworthy

and credible to be able to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon. I provided a

comprehensive research design with a detailed method for data collection, and reliable

analysis procedures for the interpretation of the collected data. Credibility is one of the

most important components in qualitative research that substantiates its trustworthiness

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each criterion was met, to assure that the study was credible

because it measured what it proposed to measure (Shenton, 2004). Moreover, Eisner

(1991) recommends that to demonstrate credibility, the weight of evidence should

become persuasive. Eisner (1991) further illustrated, "we seek a confluence of evidence

that breeds credibility that allows us to feel confident about our observations,

interpretations, and conclusions" (p.110). Accordingly, I looked for recurring behaviors

that would support trustworthiness and credibility to eventually create persuasive themes

that were needed for Latino superintendents to experience success in large urban school

districts. The criteria I used were credibility, transferability, dependability, triangulation,

authenticity and fairness, and confirmability.

In an effort to ensure that participants understood the purpose of the study and the

importance of being truthful in their responses (Creswell, 2007), I carefully selected the

Latino school superintendent participants based on their current and prior experiences in

large urban school districts. Johnson (1997) recommended "cross-checking information and conclusions through the use of multiple procedures or sources" (p. 161). Following the transcriptions of interviews, I emailed the verbatim transcripts to the interviewees to allow them the opportunity to member check and verify that the transcribed information was accurate (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Member checking added to the credibility of the study because it allowed the participants to confirm the researcher's conclusions and helped guarantee the accuracy of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition to member checking, I established a trusting relationship with the participants to increase the level of trustworthiness as they answered the interview questions openly (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The participants received a copy of the interview questions prior to the official interview in an effort to ensure the trustworthiness of the research and build credibility with the subjects. By having the questions in advance, the participants had the opportunity to be aware of what was to be asked of them, and aid them in responding honestly and concisely. The interview questions were the same for all participants (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, by having expert guidance with the interpretation of the interview data, the transcription of the rich answers from the participants reflected a description of the phenomenon that the participants experienced and ultimately gave the phenomenon meaning (Williams & Morrow, 2009).

I attempted increased the trustworthiness and credibility of the study by consulting with qualified researchers, current practitioners, my dissertation committee, and professors, allowing them to guide and direct me in establishing the interview questions. I gathered expert guidance from my dissertation committee with the analysis

and the interpretation of the interview data, the transcription of the answers from the participants and the identification of the reflected phenomenon. Input and guidance was acquired to identify the proper themes and coding procedures. The coding manual for qualitative researchers from Saldana (2009) was utilized, following the first and second cycle method and ultimately lead me to conduct a coding process by using the nodes options in the NVivo11 system. The content analysis approach included a coding process and a thematic coding system that transformed the final set of codes into themes to draw out a code's truncated essence and elaborated its meaning (Saldana 2009).

<div align="center">**Ethical Considerations**</div>

Creswell (2007) noted that ethical credibility and validation in "all research agendas must question their underlying moral assumptions, their political and ethical implications, and some practical answers to questions" (p. 205). The findings of this research serve as a "generative promise" (Angen, 2000, p. 389) that contributed to the body of knowledge, influenced new policy making, raised new questions, and identified a phenomenon through the lived experiences of Latino school superintendents in large urban school districts. The generative promise was presented as a prolonged engagement and persistent commitment to identify the compensatory skills needed for the next generation of Latino leaders to be able to overcome inhibiting experiences. The political and ethical implications were presented in an ironic validation process to interpret the truth as a problem (Cresswell, 2007, p. 205). Prior to conducting interviews with the six participants, I completed the *Protecting Human Research Participants Training,* a web-based training course from the National Institute of Health.

Creswell (2007) stated that a qualitative researcher will encounter moral dilemmas and many "ethical issues that surface during data collection in the field and in analysis and dissemination of qualitative reports" (p. 141). To ensure ethical matters did not arise, I maintained confidentiality by completing a statement of consent and additional documents (see Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C). Lipson (1994) identified ethical issues as (a) informed consent procedures, (b) deception or covert activities, (c) confidentiality toward participants, (d) benefits of research to participants over risks, and (e) participant requests that go beyond social norms. Each participant completed a consent form prior to the interviews, and their names were supplemented with pseudonyms. Changing the names of participants and keeping the information confidential are ethical considerations for the researcher and the participants as well (Creswell, 2007). The participants who agree to participate in the study did not experience any risks from the research, and the participant requests did not go beyond social norms in this study. Lastly, it is my ethical commitment not to share any personal experiences with the participants, as this may reduce the researcher's *bracketed biases*, which will be "essential to construct the meaning of participants' responses" (Creswell, 2007, p. 142).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore Latino superintendents' experiences that have contributed to or inhibited their successes as a superintendent, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills superintendents believe to be necessary to be effective in their role. The emergent themes were placed in categories such as tenacity, grit, preparation, language and culture

as an asset, Latino relational capital, inhibiting factors and promoting factors. Each

category included the emergent themes and resultant findings that inhibited or promoted

the participants' progress and the skills needed to be developed as Latino

superintendents.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

There is a disparity demonstrated by the data (U.S. Census, 2010; CGSC, 2013) between the increasing Hispanic student population and the number of Hispanic superintendents, and it has been suggested that Latino superintendents provide the best advocacy on behalf of Latino students and ultimately the support of all students. The implied advocacy is grounded in the notion that superintendents, as bureaucrats, are assumed to be individuals who want to maximize their own ability, and they have the discretion to make decisions about policy and services, which reflect their own values and norms. As discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2, in some large urban school districts, school leaders' discretion and background influences decisions made and reflect the values and norms of the groups they represent. In addressing the need to develop a requisite cadre of well-qualified Latino school superintendents, scholars point to the need to acknowledge social and historical phenomena that might impede potential superintendent candidates from opportunities to ascend to the superintendency. The purpose of this study was to explore Latino superintendents' experiences that have contributed to or inhibited their successes as a superintendent, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills superintendents believe to be necessary to be effective in their role.

This chapter presents an analysis of the data that were collected throughout the course of the study. It is organized into four sections: (a) Participants' Background; (b) Participants' Interview Protocols; (c) Meta-Themes Analysis, including subthemes; and (d) Summary. The participants' backgrounds follow.

Participants' Background

A demographic questionnaire was distributed to each participant (see Appendix F). It was designed to collect background information data for each of the five participants: one woman and four men. The participants each identified as Latino or Hispanic, and each was a superintendent of an urban school district with a student enrollment of at least 30,000. The participants' tenure as superintendent ranged from three years to 28 years. Their ages were 44, 49, 51, 58, and 55. Table 2 provides a summary of demographic characteristics (see Table 2). The responses to the questionnaire, as well as data collected during the respective interviews, provided the basis for the biographical sketch of each participant.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Superintendents Who Participated in the Interviews

	Gender	*Age*	*Years in Public Education*
Superintendent Elizondo	Male	44	18
Superintendent Compeán	Male	49	17
Superintendent Márquez	Male	51	19
Superintendent Lemus	Male	58	30
Superintendent Sandoval	Female	55	30

Data retrieved from superintendent questionnaires.

Superintendent Elizondo

Superintendent Elizondo self-identified as a novice superintendent in leading a large urban school district. The formative years as a school leader were followed by a principal supervisory role in one of the largest school districts in the country. It was within the school supervisory role where Superintendent Elizondo first understood urban school

districts were directly associated to his upbringing and personal experience as a student in a large urban school district. Prior to ascending to the superintedency, he served in a supervisory role in the school district he resided in as a student. Superintendent Elizondo was raised in a predominantly Hispanic community with some experience in small towns, but most of his leadership experience was centered in a large urban school district and in the suburb of one our largest cities in the country. Superintendent Elizondo is in his early 40s and the district he is leading is the fourth school district he has experienced working with. Superintendent Elizondo is a former teacher, assistant principal, principal, and central office leader. He was a school principal at both the elementary and middle school levels.

Superintendent Compeán

Superintendent Compeán is a first time superintendent. At the age of 49, Superintendent Compeán has some phenomenal previous leadership experiences including large urban school districts in three different states. Prior to the appointment to the superintendency, Compeán served as an assistant principal, principal, regional superintendent, and deputy superintendent in three different urban school districts. He is a former two-time high school principal, each in different states. Superintendent Compeán attended school in the district that offered the opportunities to ascend through the administrative ranks.

Superintendent Márquez

Superintendent Márquez is an experienced school superintendent and his educational leadership repertoire ranges across many district sizes—large urban school districts, small school districts, and mid-size fast growing school districts.

Superintendent Márquez has led school districts in two different states; he is a large urban school district product, with a depth of experiences ranging from leading mid-sized fast growing school districts, suburbia large urban school districts, and leading one of the largest urban school systems in the country. Superintendent Márquez has led six different school districts across two states, each diverse in school demographics ranging from ten percent Hispanic student populated districts to school districts where more than 90 percent of the student populations are Hispanic.

Superintendent Lemus

Superintendent Lemus is a non-traditional Latino educational leader, currently in his first superintendency in a large urban school district. His experience in educational leadership positions is limited, but his background experiences are centered on serving in many capacities within the education system. His educational experiences are in the area of policy making, legal counsel, and educational consultancy. Although Superintendent Lemus is considered a non-traditional superintendent by some, the visibility, relational capital, superintendent preparation programs, and understanding of the education system sufficed to allow access to the superintendency. Most importantly, Superintendent Lemus participated in a year-long superintendent academy that allowed access to search firms, head hunters, school board members, and leaders in executive leadership. A wealth of experience combined with former teaching experience, political astuteness, and educational entrepreneurial practices allowed for Superintendent Lemus to become one of the leading superintendent candidates in large urban school districts.

Superintendent Sandoval

Superintendent Sandoval is a former large urban school leader and superintendent of two different school districts, with overall professional experience in three different states. Superintendent Sandoval has a wealth of experience in large urban and mid-size school districts in several states. The experiences range from being a teacher, bilingual education administrator, central office leader, and school superintendent totaling over four decades of experience in the field of education.

<div align="center">

Participants' Interview Protocols

</div>

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant (see Table 3). The interviews took place in locations that were amenable to each participant and me, and the second interview took place in a location different from the first. For example, four participants and I were attending the same conference, which made it a convenient location to meet for the second interview. Two participants' first interview, due to location and schedules, was conducted via video conferencing, and one participant's second interview was conducted via phone call. Each interview was conducted in a closed space in order to avoid interruptions, and was recorded for subsequent analysis.

Table 3

Participants' Interview Schedule

	Interview #1		Interview #2	
Participant	Date	Location	Date	Location
Elizondo	May 13	Office	June 25	Conference
Marquez	May 27	Office	June 25	Conference
Compean	June 3	Office	June 26	Conference
Sandoval	June 2	Video Conf.	June 29	Phone Call
Lemus	June 5	Video Conf.	June 26	Conference

Data Analysis and Meta-Themes Identification

The data collected through the demographic questionnaires and the interviews were reviewed. The questionnaire responses yielded straightforward facts, which did not require special consideration to understand their meaning. While certain facts appeared curious, such as the participants' age range and years of service in education, they did not infer special conditions, and did not directly contribute to emerging themes. The interviews, however, yielded extensive data to be reviewed and considered for meaning. The interviews provided opportunities for participants to elaborate on a thought, belief, or practice. The interviews allowed the participants to contextualize their experience and provide details regarding why or how their practice is influenced by their worldview. Specific to the study, the interviews allowed participants to share their experiences as Latinos to develop skills that serve to navigate the superintendency. The interviews revealed that the participants' Latino identity was fundamental to their experience as a superintendent.

The interviews were recorded; subsequently, transcripts of selected passages were created, and the NVIVO11 software program for data analysis was utilized to identify words or phrases that were frequently mentioned during the interviews. While listening to the interview recordings and utilizing NVIVO11 helped to identify emerging themes, my personal notes and observations of the participants' body language and voice inflections were important to capture nuances into the meaning and value of their experiences. I interviewed Superintendent Sandoval, for example, via video conference. While she did not sit before me as the other participants did, the tone and volume of her voice was noticeably changed as she responded to certain questions. When discussing

her experience as a woman ascending to the superintendency, and her struggles therein, she was loud. Superintendent Marquez, when discussing his experiences became quite animated. The tone of voice and body language displayed by these two participants demonstrate how important these variables were in analyzing the interview data. These variables added a vital dimension to understanding the participants' experiences, which was not available when analyzing their responses to the demographic questionnaire.

The second interview with four of the five participants took place while they and I were attending the same conference. Witnessing these participants interact with their superintendent peers provided yet another dimension to understanding their experiences, which I had not anticipated. Throughout the conference I mingled as they did, often times participating in the same conversations with peers. While not scheduled as part of the study, listening to the participants engage with their peers to discuss the rewards and challenges of the superintendency nonetheless added to understanding their experiences, and why or how they do what they do as superintendents.

My notes and observations from the conference, the focused analysis of the interview data, and analysis of the responses to the demographic questionnaire when considered in combination, yielded three meta-themes with several subthemes (see Table 4). The meta-themes are: (a) Inhibiting Factors; (b) *Entre Amigos y La Familia*: Latino Superintendent Networks; and (c) Grit, Attitude, Skills, and Behaviors. The themes were derived utilizing Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological study design.

Table 4

Meta-Themes, Constructed Meaning, Subthemes, and Codes for Cross-Case Synthesis

Meta-Themes	Constructed Meanings	Subthemes	Relevant Codes
Inhibiting Factors	Inhibition is basic cognitive suppression that contributes to task performance by keeping task-irrelevant information from entering and being maintained in working memory. Inhibiting factors make leaders feel self-conscious and self-depreciated, which in turn prevents a person from behaving or speaking freely and ultimately resulting in a social cognition block. (Dempster, 1993; Luria, 1973)	Self-Depreciation	Okay, where's the Latino representation? Am I not worthy? Oh man, am I… Should I be in this room? What am I doing here?
		Self-Imposed Impediments	That guilt that you have with yourself. I used to have that feeling many times, like, how did I get here?
		Imposter Syndrome	I really don't belong on the decision-making table. Coming from where I am, you feel like an imposter, like you don't belong. People say to me "you only got that position because you're Latino."
		Compensatory Skills	I'm always conscientious of communicating ideas in a less loquacious way. I find myself thinking in Spanish. When I'm passionate it is difficult to be succinct
Entre Amigos y La Familia: Latino Superintendent Networks	Professional networks formed to create culture-sharing and to promote a mentor/protégé network of educational leaders.	Professional Networks ALAS, TALAS, CALSA, and AHSA	I like being around Latino superintendents. We can share our stories and we can grow from our stories.
		Active Representation and Cultural Relational Capital Mentorship Programs Connecting with like-minded leaders	I'm proud of who I am. It is who I am. The way I greet people, the way I look at the world, my *dichos* and my upbringing are the things that make me. I tell people right away that I'm an immigrant. *¡Soy como soy!*
Grit, Attitude, Skills and Behaviors	Skills, innate abilities, and behaviors needed to overcome inhibiting factors as elucidated in the study to promote success as a Latino large urban school superintendent.	Self-Confidence Adversity Tenacity	People will look at you knowing that you're the Latino superintendent, but you need to have the people skills to work with all of the sub-groups. Tenacity is a personal quality that has contributed to my success
		Feisty	You belong there! You speak up! Don't be the quiet one at the table. You're well prepared, articulate your views.

Inhibiting Factors

The participants were not hesitant to discuss how they deal or dealt with the sense of being inhibited in their role as superintendent. They discussed their feelings of self-doubt, not necessarily in their abilities, but in their belief that as Latinos they are eligible to be a superintendent. Each participant shared a variation of *How did I get here? Should I be here?* Their remarks presumed an ongoing scrutiny of their work, practices, and behaviors by representative parties of all constituencies. Responses suggested an omnipresent sense of self-consciousness and self-depreciation. The participants expressed a heightened awareness that as Latino superintendents they were the exception. Superintendent Sandoval stated:

> As a person of color sitting at the table with a different experience from my growing up, that makes me feel like, do I really belong here? Do I belong? That's an impediment, that's an impediment you place on yourself. Yeah, you belong there! Of course you belong there!

Superintendent Marquez elaborated on his experience as superintendent in two states, each with boards comprised primarily of Whites. He believes every time he walks into a room he is being scrutinized. He is very purposeful in his language and behaviors. He stated:

> I don't cuss. Everyone around me can cuss all they want, they can cuss like sailors, but I won't do it. I believe the first time I do it, the stereotype will be applied to me, the idea of 'that's the way those people talk' will be at the forefront, and I won't feed that. I refuse to feed their stereotype.

There was a resonance among the participants in their belief that as Latinos they had to work harder to prove themselves. Some participants shared the need to compensate by code-switching in English and Spanish to deliver and connect with the shared cultural responsibility to avoid being viewed as acquiescing too much to mainstreamed leadership as a *vendido*. The participants shared a need to empower the disenfranchised through language appropriate strategies. Other participants addressed institutionalized racism and stereotypes of Latinos as reasons to overcompensate with academic language. There was a sense of *we're giving you a chance, let's see what you do with it, if you can handle it.* The participants shared the sentiment that their success or failure, especially failure, would not reflect only on them but all current and potential Latino superintendent candidates; their failures would be generalized to all Latinos. The participants shared their collective responsibility not to embarrass the culture-sharing group, *no nos vallan a averguenzar.*

Three of the participants recounted episodes in Dallas and El Paso, where the superintendents, each Latinos, were accused of mismanagement of district funds. In Dallas a Latina superintendent had used district funds to purchase furniture for her personal use; this made national news and she resigned. In El Paso, the superintendent was arrested for allegedly showing favor and awarding a half-million dollar contract to a woman with whom he had a personal relationship. The Dallas incident occurred nearly 20 years ago, while the El Paso incident occurred very recently; regardless of timeline, these incidents are believed to inhibit Latino superintendents' opportunity for success at the helm. Superintendent Marquez stated, "these incidents set us [Latinos] back

decades," and further elaborating that the unethical behavior by one leader will resemble the collective culture-sharing group of all Latino school superintendents.

Imposter Syndrome. As participants discussed experiences, which inhibited their ascendance to the superintendency, the notion of self-depreciation, that they maybe weren't worthy or eligible surfaced in a variety of ways. One notion that was repeated during the interviews and was best articulated by Superintendent Sandoval was the imposter syndrome. She stated, "The imposter syndrome that some minority groups have and they question themselves, like saying 'I really don't belong on the decision-making table.' Coming from where I am, you can feel like an imposter." This notion is an example of one that the participants are sure to include when working with people they mentor as something they must get beyond. Superintendent Sandoval stated, "Now I say that to people I mentor, you're going to feel like an imposter, you're going to feel like this, and they'll say, yes, I feel that! And I'll go, Get rid of that feeling!" The imposter syndrome encourages the sense of self-doubt, that while one may be a superintendent and chief executive of the district they think, "I really don't belong at this decision making table."

Throughout the interviews, the participants never doubted their knowledge and skills related to educational administration and leadership; any inhibition that they felt or believed existed was embedded in the notion that being Latino carried a stigma. The inhibition came disguised by doubting their eligibility to occupy the superintendency. How can a Latino be eligible to occupy the highest office in a school system? The negative messages and voices were internalized by the participants. The participants unilaterally agreed that race, power, and identity were at the forefront of their

consciousness. Each participant shared a variation of *How did I get here? Did I get this job only because I'm Latino? Do I really deserve this job? Being Latino, I have so much to prove. God, please don't let me mess this up. If I fail, it will look bad for all Latinos.* One of the participants indicated that while ascending through the ranks in a large urban school district high levels of discrimination were experienced. Further elaborative comments addressed transcending multi-cultural experiences and described feelings of not being accepted by both the mainstream culture and the Mexican-American community were shared.

Race and Ethnicity. Superintendent Elizondo noted with a firm voice, leaning in, with a pointed finger in my face, and a much higher tone of voice, "I'm gonna be honest with you. I know that race plays a factor in many cases." Each participant agreed race and ethnicity was a consideration in the selection of a Latino superintendent. Some participants expressed being Latino is a liability, while others were firm that being Latino was secondary to proving oneself as the best choice for the job. Superintendent Márquez identified a need to focus on quality rather than race with a no excuses attitude,

> [R]ace is what you make of it, that's what I'm talking about, don't take it as a chip on your shoulder, don't think, 'well, they're not going to hire me because I'm Latino,' I don't believe in that. If you're good, you have a chance, and in some districts, if you're Latino, you have a great chance…in one of the districts I led, it was a big asset to be a Latino, while in another, it was a liability, but they hired me anyway. I served in districts where Latinos weren't the largest student population.

Experiencing a cross-over was viewed as a valuable experience. Superintendent

Compeán stated:

> when I was ascending through the superintendent process, I applied in a very
>
> affluent area and I had to overcompensate as I learned to operate and deal with a
>
> new structural level of communication. I had to stretch my skill-set and
>
> eventually learn to navigate a new political environment.

On the other hand, Superintendent Márquez expressed, "people love to see if you can

deliver and people thought I could deliver, even if I was a Latino, so, it didn't necessarily

help me in those communities, it hurt me to be a Latino."

Superintendent Sandoval's comments were based on the historical context of the

school board's selection process in the previous appointments of new superintendents, "if

they haven't had a Latino school superintendent and their student demographics continue

to increase, I guarantee you they talk about it. Whether they see us as the best candidate

or not, that's different." Superintendent Márquez noted, "they knew I could handle the

job and that's why they hired me. One of those is a very conservative community in

another state; they knew I could handle the job, that's why they hired me."

On the flip side, two of the superintendent participants made reference to the

Texas, Arizona, and California borders by stating, "in some of our predominantly

Hispanic school districts, like those found in the valley of Texas with 96 % Latinos, it is a

liability to have a White superintendent that doesn't understand the culture. So it cuts

both ways." Superintendent Lemus referred to the topic of race by stating,

> I believe it is important for a majority Latino district to have Latino leaders at the
>
> helm and have leaders that embrace the culture, the heritage, and the language.

> Most importantly, the leader needs to be *humilde* and reflect a hard-working friendly person to the community that they serve. With that adage of I'm here to serve, *para servirle*."

The humbleness was also referenced as *conciencia* or a consciousness raising process, where a person's intention is the central core from which other actions flow. Race matter for Latino leaders, as Greenleaf (1970) concluded that leaders who have made the greatest contributions to humankind sought to serve first and then became leaders in order to expand their capacity to serve. By 2050, the number of Latino school superintendents in large urban school districts will and statistics show that Hispanics will make up well over a quarter of the overall population in the country. Bordas (2013) noted that five hundred years have passed since Columbus first docked the Santa Maria in Hispaniola. But just now, in the initial two decades of the twenty-first century, Latinos are ready to be a dominant influence in shaping our multicultural nation.

Entre Amigos y La Familia: **Latino Superintendent Networks**

The second meta-theme that emerged addressed the notion of professional networks. These are not networks in the usual sense of expanding connections with assorted people; the networks discussed were specific to Latinos and their incumbent support. The Latino professional organizations mentioned during interviews, which were referred by initialisms: ALAS, CALAS, TALAS, and AHSA. The inhibitions that were discussed were assuaged by these affiliations with other Latinos. The network allows superintendents to learn from one another, to develop necessary mentor-mentee relationships, they acknowledge and celebrate with one another, and as necessary, ask for

guidance as mentor-protégé when facing a challenge. In the words of Superintendent Márquez,

> I like being around Latino superintendents, that's why I love being on the ALAS board, and one of the reasons I got on the board is that Carlos Garcia, former superintendent of San Francisco, invited me. The organization was suffering, so he asked the urban superintendents of the largest urban districts in the country to be on the board, because ALAS had a bad reputation.

Superintendent Lemus stated, "I've always been part of five different superintendent organizations. Not only do I participate in Latino organizations, but to be honest, when you cross over, people respect you, and you have a bigger impact." Superintendent Elizondo emphasized,

> we have to make sure that we get out there, and we begin to present at conferences and ultimately familiarizing ourselves with the research and academic writing imbedded in our business of leading school systems. When we start presenting at conferences, we get to know the superintendent search firms, we get to market our school district, we are able to be on that stage. In short, we have to get our name out there.

Superintendent Marquez stated, "I believe it's very important to be involved with other superintendents, you learn from them, you learn from each other and it helps Latino superintendents get our work done." Such networks were non-existent prior to 2003 and as Superintendent Sandoval stated, "We really didn't have the type of programs available for development when I was ascending through the ranks."

Although CALSA was established in California, the Latino leadership networks, academic research, and theories were scarce and absent, representing practicing superintendents until after 2003. One of the superintendent participants stated, "We saw the need in California when we formed the council of Mexican-American administrators. It was all about mentoring and helping other Latinos develop and ultimately, opening the door of opportunity for them." Superintendent Compean's comments on the psychological and sociological phenomenon and the ethos shared were, "wherever there's a bunch of Latinos in educational leadership positions, that space and that time of sharing is very liberating for me"

Superintendent Márquez shared with great passion his experience as one of the founding board members of the national conference ALAS:

> we had several others step up because we knew that it was important to have the Latino trade organization. Another reason I participate in Latino organizations is because we have to operate in hostile environments and we can share our stories, we can grow from our stories.

In a similar study conducted by Campbell-Jones (2000), it was found that superintendents needed to join networks for administrators, but that it was also necessary to join, or if necessary, to create networks that focused on their special needs as minorities.

Quality over quantity. As the participants discussed the importance of Latino networks, the notion of mentoring and modeling good practice emerged. Each participant acknowledged the hope and desire to exponentially increase the number of Latino superintendents, but there was caution expressed that they be individuals of strong character and be well prepared; it is a matter of quality over quantity. Superintendent

Márquez made several comments regarding the need to be adequately represented by Latino superintendents, "I would rather have no role model than to have a negative role model. If you have someone that does something bad, illegal or unethical, it is harder for us Latinos to overcome it, the mistakes of that individual are reflective and representative of my leadership." Superintendent Sandoval stated, "it has to be someone who, you know, has the skill set to lead the system forward, being Latino and not being impactful may be worse than having someone of another group who has the passion and commitment for the community." Superintendent Compeán stated, "I don't think it is absolutely necessary; however, it is important for students in communities to see a representation of themselves in positions of authorities. I think it is important to have a Latino leader, provided that they are qualified and they do a good job, and they need to be a positive role model for that community."

Incumbent in this quest to develop a cadre of well-qualified Latino superintendents is the requisite preparation, which includes providing appropriate mentorship. Superintendent Sandoval associated good mentorship with good experiential learning processes from cabinet level experience to adequate preparatory systems:

> just opening that door of opportunity, a lot of it relates to who's the best, and, unfortunately, I think, if you're Latino, you have to stand out, you know, you have to be that person who goes the extra mile, who's well-prepared, who can communicate the vision, who knows what it takes to run an organization effectively and I think you need mentoring to get there.

Superintendent Sandoval further described her previous involvement with a mentorship program, "we started mentoring others to get them into cabinet-level positions, and then

on to the superintendency, it felt good to give them those *consejuitos* and *empujones*."
Superintendent Compeán reported on the notion that the identification of mentors
transcends districts and "it is those little *consejos* that remind me that you don't have to
wait until you are a superintendent to really and truly mentor a cadre a leaders. My
mentor, was about to retire from the superintendency, but he knew the superintendent in
another state and they must have had a conversation about me because all of a sudden, I
felt a safety net and I began to receive a lot of feedback and guidance."

Mentorship does not always come about through a prescribed or organized
manner. Participants discussed some of their enriching mentorship relations developed
spontaneously. Superintendent Márquez stated, "when I was a young baby, a novice
superintendent, I have to admit that there but by the grace of God, I found a gentleman
that shaped my thinking, his name is [masked], he was a class act, a true gentleman who I
have a lot of respect for." He holds this view today after failed assigned mentors, "any
mentor who was assigned to me didn't work out. I pick my own mentors and I pick
people that I respect as superintendents, then I pick their brains, even after years of
experience in being a superintendent, I pick their brains. I grew up with superintendents
that I respect and I ask them about stuff so I can learn more." Superintendent Compeán
shared,

> I would not be a superintendent if it wasn't for S and C. Being able to pick up the
> phone and call them, even when I'm about to catch a flight. They guide me.
> They have walked me through the business and taught me ways to play the game.
> Ten years ago when we had ALAS in Chicago. That's when they, C, S, M, all
> began to mentor me. The ability to sit next to a sitting Latino superintendent and

pick their brains is priceless. For them to take an interest in mentoring me is humbling. Those little *consejos* if I will, the little *consejitos que me dan. Son los consejitos los que me motivan.* The advice they give me inspires me to do great things for children.

Mentorship was closely aligned with the need for effective preparation. Superintendent Sandoval stated, "we need to get individuals who have in their mindset to lead a district and get them the preparation tools to see the total package of what a leader does. We need to do so to keep pace with the Hispanic student growth. More needs to be done in terms of mentoring and preparing them for those pivotal roles." On a similar note, Superintendent Lemus stated, "there's little pockets, it's not enough to keep pace, so more needs to be done, um, I think when I look at, like, doctoral programs I see the number of Latinos that cross the stage and I'm really encouraged, but just me having the doctorate is not gonna be enough. It's an important credential, but it's those experiences that you need to have, and we've got to have a sense of urgency across the nation, there has to be a sense of urgency." In the words of Superintendent Sandoval, "the gap between student population and Latino leaders prepared to be superintendents is going to get bigger and bigger and I think that the success of our nation rests on the ability to produce the leadership that *can* represent the fastest growing student population."

Representing the fastest growing student population carries a price, as stated by Superintendent Marquez, "it is harder for us Latinos to experience success. Part of the scarcity of Latino leaders is supply and demand. The pipeline is getting bigger but even if we get Latino leaders in the right seat, they have to deliver. When people get to these big cities and lead, they can't embarrass us."   The price of preparation also includes

willingness on the part of potential superintendents to adapt and change as necessary in order to best develop their competencies. On several occasions during the research, Superintendent Sandoval stated,

> I remind leaders all of the time, to broaden their experience and be willing to make some changes in where you work and live; and address the kind of role you have within the organization to be able to broaden your expertise…we have to have a sense of urgency across the nation. More needs to be done. The success of our nation rests on our ability to produce the leadership that can represent the students…kids need to see the success of people that are like them. We have to have far more Latino superintendents than we currently have.

Superintendent Márquez provided the context of the evolution of Latino leadership in the state of Texas, "even before TALAS, there was the association of Hispanic School Administrators in Texas that was developed in the 1990s and it didn't last long, but there were many of us that participated in that group." Defining a need to be culturally responsible and culturally sensitive within the Critical Race Theory described in this research, Superintendent Marquez noted, "like I said, I'm very proud to be a Latino, I'm very proud of my culture, so, I always participated."

Superintendent Márquez referred to the collective efficacy as "it's going to have to take a worldview of success and focusing on the positive and the additive. The abundance instead of letting the negative or the militant bring you down, so I would encourage everyone to be appreciative. I'm pretty confident that's really what's helped me, and you know, like, I said you have to network so you can be better, and be *around* people, so you can do this job in a very good manner."

Grit, Attitude, Skills, and Behaviors

The third meta-theme to emerge reflected the participants' innate abilities, characteristics, and behaviors, which help promote their success as a Latino superintendent. The terms most often spoken by the participants during the interviews that capture their leadership include: grit, attitude, skills, and behaviors. The mention of these terms took place when discussing superintendent-board relations, engaging district constituencies, and providing vision and direction. Superintendent Lemus stated,

> we have to really work hard and feel confident. Unfortunately, there are different parts of the city, where people would think, that because you're Latino you may not be capable and you don't have the skill set or the intelligence to represent them and lead the organization.

Superintendent Lemus re-emphasized the point by stating, "I really believe that we have a less margin of error than an Anglo superintendent might have in the same situation," elaborating on how Latino school superintendents get stereotyped as not being able to do the work. Duckworth (2016) described how critically important it is to keep going after failure. Duckworth (2016) also included the following essential thoughts to demonstrating grit: constantly be driven to improve, be your own harshest critic, be a paragon of perseverance, have a passion that is enduring, maintain ferocious determination and have direction.

Similarly, Superintendent Compeán stated, "There is a subterranean trend that runs through an undercurrent. We don't necessarily expect the White Anglo-Saxon superintendent to innately be crooked or a thief or a criminal. You just don't expect that. Oh, how unfortunate that he fell for this or that mistake. We are under greater scrutiny.

There is still in the fabric of America, this sublevel expectation that even though they are brown, they got the job because they are Latino and they had to fill a quota." Superintendent Lemus was firm with the notion that we have to really be prepared and "be careful about our word selections and our actions. I know it doesn't sound fair, but we cannot be naïve about the reality. It is something we need to be processing on a constant basis." Superintendent Sandoval noted, "you have to go into it knowing that you are going to have to be better than everyone else." Participants agreed they go into the superintendency facing a higher standard and they must be resilient—possessing courage, tenacity, inner strength, and perseverance. Superintendent Márquez stated,

> I make mistakes at full speed, in real time, but you know, at least I'm trying to get something done. So people make mistakes, but you have to learn from mistakes. However, you can't make fatal mistakes all the time. I'm one of the few superintendents that got away with laying off a thousand teachers one October, and survived it. I was very depressed and down on myself when I had to do that, but I had to bounce back. People were looking for me to solve problems, and make the right decisions and come up with a solution, and we did.

Superintendent Sandoval stated, "it kills me when a Latino superintendent fails. I want to go in a room and pound on the wall, *me quita el corazón*, because I know that the superintendent's role can be very unforgiving for Latinos and individuals of color." The stakes are high for Latino superintendents. Bordas (2013) stated that many times oppressed people believe they can't change their situation; but they must be leaders, a person must heal his own wounds – find out how past circumstances have made them stronger and make a concerted effort to grow as leaders and develop professional skills to

overcome adversity. Knowing that it only takes one false move to end one's tenure in a district; effective superintendent-board relations are equally as important and essential for a Latino superintendent to have as the value given to the relational capital built with staff.

Las Movidas: A Power Play, Smooth Political Moves, and Risky Negotiations

Consistent references were made by superintendent participants to a term referred to as _las movidas_. I define _las movidas_ as power plays, smooth political moves, and a navigational capital tool. The term is used by Latino superintendents to identify situations where risky negotiations are included, especially as they relate to school board members' needs, wants and desires. _Las movidas_ were consistent in the language of the participants as they referenced superintendent-board relations.

Superintendent Márquez provided context behind the political pressures experienced by the board members and how it relates to the need to understand the role of the superintendent. Superintendent Márquez stated,

> some school board members are looking for someone who can help deliver jobs
>
> and contracts to their friends and companies, but that is something that as a Latino
>
> leader, you need to understand that you should _never_ let them be your primary
>
> focus. Your primary focus is to help _all_ students, especially Latino students, to
>
> learn, and to achieve great things in life.

The politics involved with superintendent-board relations encourages the use of navigational skills in order to best handle the _movidas_. Superintendent Márquez stated, "what goes with it is that every school district in every community is in the top three as far as resources. Budget wise, largest employer in the city, therefore, some board members are looking for you for _movidas_ to try to get their friends jobs."

Superintendent Sandoval referenced the *movidas* as a phenomenon associated with ethnic politics that are designed by generations of disenfranchising,

> the larger the district, the more *movidas* there will be. In one particular district
> that I worked in and during the era that I came up the ranks, we had our first
> Latino superintendent selected. At that time, it was a brokering deal to determine
> if it was going to be an African American or a Latino. I knew that there were a lot
> of behind the scenes *movidas* that became very evident to those of us in the
> central office.

All of the participants shared commonalities as it relates to the role of the superintendent as a political and brokering master. Strong comments were made on the lack of preparation in formative educational programs on the reality faced by school superintendents as they felt that some decisions threatened their professional, moral, and ethical compass. Superintendent Sandoval shared:

> we could see a lot of things play out. There are still a lot of ethnic politics that
> relate to wanting to move the opportunity agenda for kids of color and sometimes
> that happens in districts that have large ethnic populations. The politics of urban
> environments are not only about ethnic divisions, it is about the complexity of the
> politics.

The complexity of the politics was clearly described by Superintendent Lemus, "one of the things that makes me successful is being able to deal with complex situations. Superintendents need to be able to handle very stressful situations and maintain your composure to lead a large team and make difficult decisions when needed. It requires agility, decisiveness, and full composure under pressure." Superintendent Lemus

associated the complexity of board member relations with the ability to discern big issues

with things that are not as critical as others. Superintendent Lemus elaborated on the skill

by stating, "discerning is critical because it's easier to follow your intuitiveness. I've

learned that the superintendent position has a lot of power and I have to be more

judicious, and reflective about what I say, the way I respond to situations because

everyone on staff will automatically follow my lead."

Superintendent Sandoval described the *movidas* in relation to the superintendent

candidates selected to lead large cities, "knowing the person, I mean, knowing who is

going to be in the role of decision making and determining who else gets moved up in the

organization is powerful." The *movidas* were political moves influenced by both school

board members and the cadre of leaders in a large bureaucratic organization.

Superintendent Sandoval stated,

> in one particular experience, both the Latinos and the African American
>
> communities were advocating about who was going to be promoted within the
>
> two groups. Learning to navigate the *movidas* is part of what we do, how to read
>
> it, how to see it when it's happening, and knowing that you can't necessarily
>
> control it, is part of the preparation into being a superintendent.

The *movidas* were inclusive of hiring practices influenced by school board members,

other elected officials, and internal staff member influencers. *Movidas* were also

associated with the hiring of board member friends, relatives, and even their campaign

contributors. Other topics such as contracts given and contracts earned, construction

contracts, timing of decision making as it relates to political elections, bond elections,

incumbent board member elections, past board member staffers, and the overall

configuration of the board were dominant themes.

Movidas were decisions influenced by many external factors and not necessarily

as driven by the needs of the students and the communities served. Superintendent

Sandoval summarized the *movidas* by saying, "the winds and the undercurrent that

change; prior to, during, and after school board elections, can completely change the

direction of a school district, and at times devalue the hard-work ethics and well-intended

efforts of great leaders." The power play and smooth political moves, *movidas*, were

often associated with the daily decision making process of large urban school

superintendents and coined as a term to identify risky negotiating situations presented by

the board-superintendent relationship. Most importantly, all of the participants referenced

a moral compass, ethicality, servant and good steward of taxpayers' monies, and, or, a

high level of professionalism when discussing these matters.

Summary

This chapter presented an analysis of the data collected during the study. The

analysis revealed three meta-themes: Inhibiting factors, *Entre Amigos y La Familia*, and

Girt, attitude, skills, and behaviors. The next chapter will discuss these themes in context

of the literature, and draw conclusions from the study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The Pew Hispanic Center (2013) documents that "Hispanics are the nation's largest minority group, making up more than 50 million people, or about 16.5% of the U.S. population." The Council of the Great City Schools [CGCS] (2006) reported that nine percent of superintendents are Latino. There is a significant disparity in the proportion of Latino superintendents to the general Latino population. While large urban school districts throughout the nation are experiencing a rapidly growing Spanish-speaking student population, few Latinos hold superintendent positions across the United States. This scarcity of educational leaders creates a service gap as there is a need to develop a cadre of well-prepared Latino administrators to ascend to the superintendency.

The purpose of this study was to explore Latino superintendents' experiences that have contributed to or inhibited their successes as superintendents, including membership in social networks and the acquisition of compensatory skills that superintendents have reported to be necessary to be effective in their roles as top school leaders. This study consisted of one central research question and five subquestions. The central research question was: What are the lived experiences of Latino superintendents who work in urban school districts? The subquestions were:

1. What behaviors do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

2. What skills do Latino school superintendents perceive contributed to their success as a superintendent?

3. What factors do Latino school superintendents perceive inhibited their success as a superintendent?

4. What do Latino school superintendents perceive as important social network experiences that contributed to their success as a superintendent?

5. What do Latino urban school superintendents perceive are the compensatory skills needed to experience success as a superintendent?

Five superintendents participated in this study. Each participant completed a demographic questionnaire, and was interviewed twice. The study followed a phenomenological research design utilizing a narrative inquiry approach, which has been employed in educational research because of its power to elicit voice (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 1998). This approach was selected to present the collective voices of the Latino superintendents interviewed about experiences that inhibited or promoted their success in large urban districts. Data collected were analyzed utilizing a modified phenomenological reduction process to include constant comparison and narrative analysis using NVIVO as an analysis tool.

In conducting this study, I never intended for new theory to emerge regarding the paucity of Latino superintendents leading U.S. school districts. At best, I hoped this study would add to the literature base regarding the lived experiences of Latino superintendents and how those experiences inhibited or promoted their ascendance to the superintendency. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a summary of the meta-themes revealed in my study, followed by the implications and recommendations of the results of this study on practice, policy, and future research.

Relevance to the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual frameworks of Latino critical race and social capital theory were

applied in my study to guide my exploration of inhibiting and promoting skills,

behaviors, beliefs, and virtues of the select Latino urban school district superintendents.

Additionally, Bandura's (1993) social cognitive theory was also utilized in this research.

The experiences of my participants were analyzed using these theories as frames of

reference for understanding the internal and external drivers and barriers in each

superintendent's success story.

Critical Race Theory and Latino Critical Theory

LatCrit theory, which expands critical race theory, situated the participants'

experiences as Latinos and their struggles to evoke societal and individual transformation

within various social contexts. According to Solorzano and Bernal (2001), LatCrit theory

moves beyond the notion of the oppressive aspects of society, and proposes that Latinos'

identity is multidimensional – language, culture, racism, sexism, classism and other

forms of and reasons for oppression. LatCrit theory allowed me to understand and

interpret these multidimensional factors in the Latino superintendents' described

experiences and how the participants fulfilled their individual commitment to social

justice. The superintendent participants were engaged in ways that served and

empowered those who would follow in their career path.

Critical race theory proponents assert that race and ethnicity are predictors of

academic and school success (Aleman, 2009a). Tate (1997) suggested that race is a

motivating factor in all decisions both social and political, including decisions made in

educational systems. Some educational theorists (e.g., Powers, 2007; Tate, 1997) have

linked CRT to the extent of opportunities and access afforded students in various educational systems but have not scrutinized adequately the implications pertaining to minority school leadership (Stovall, 2006). Although many U.S. school districts have touted an equal opportunity atmosphere and a focus on equitable access, administrative demographic data have indicated the presence of a severe lack of minority school administrators (Ortiz, 2000). This shortage of educational leaders from underrepresented groups has left minority students with few successful role models in school systems with whom they can identify racially and ethnically and deprived all students of non-white leadership models (Nieto, 2006). Critical race theory is a relatively new concept, which includes race and ethnicity as predictors of academic and school success. The theory undergirds how imperative it is that our next generation of large urban school superintendents rightfully includes Latinos and Latinas. Therefore, we need to begin addressing the career pathways for Latina educational leaders as well. As stated in Tamez (2011), few women make it to the executive level in the field of educational leadership. Both men and women need particular knowledge and skills to manage and lead in a given industry. What continues to be a variable is a woman's ability to move up the promotion ladder and into executive level leadership positions (Tamez, 2011). All of the participants in this study mentioned similar sentiments elaborating the need to have Latinos actively represented in cabinet level positions.

Understanding the inhibiting factors participants' experienced in their ascendency to the superintendency was also situated in the cultural capital theory of Pierre Bourdieu (2006). Bourdieu's theory of culture capital was developed to break the presuppositions of the theory of human capital, stating that a dominant class is able, in effect, to impose

its definition of reality upon all other classes. Inhibiting factors and personal experiences

were utilized to define the self-depreciation concept inherent in Latino leaders.

Promoting factors were identified to replace the self-depreciation or deficiency model

and create a new framework of compensatory skills. This theoretical perspective allowed

me to understand how the participants' behaviors and thoughts were substantiated

because of their own experience of self-doubt, feeling like an imposter who may not truly

belong in the superintendent role, or simply feeling less than one's White peers. The

participants' experiences, which energized them to move beyond their experiences and be

empowered and empower others, created the intersection of the LatCrit framework and

social capital theory. This created a research-based road map for me to examine the

preparation and continued development of culturally self-aware future Latino

superintendents. Research based findings that support the notion for educational leaders

to be culturally adaptive and socially responsible.

Discussion

The primary research question was fundamental to conducting the study; wherein,

the data collected allowed for the development of rich descriptions of how Latino

superintendents' lived experiences have inhibited or promoted their superintendency.

Three meta-themes emerged in the study: (a) inhibiting factors; (b) *Entre amigos y la

familia*; and (c) grit, attitude, skills, and behaviors. Each theme will be discussed, and

where they appear, subthemes will also be discussed.

Theme I: Inhibiting Factors

Participants' responses and discussion during the interviews suggested an

omnipresent sense of self-consciousness and self-depreciation. The participants

expressed a heightened awareness that as Latino superintendents they were the exception. Superintendent Sandoval stated, "As a person of color sitting at the table with a different experience from my growing up, that makes me feel like, Do I really belong here? Do I belong? That's an impediment, that's an impediment you place on yourself. Yeah, you belong there! Of course you belong there!" The participants did not mention overt prejudice in any discussion, yet their self and cultural awareness promoted the notion that their eligibility to fill a superintendent position was extraordinary. Similar preconceptions and self-depreciations were aligned in a comparable study conducted by Iglesias (2009) where the influences of race and racism in the United States played a critical role in the lack of Latinos at the superintendency level within the K-12 system.

The self-imposed impediments recorded in the transcriptions of this research represented a hindrance that was expected or innate to the superintendent participants. The lived experiences of the participants reflected culture-sharing characteristics within a socio-cultural context to which Latino educational leadership is heir, and represented many factors of oppression and the challenge "to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 17). The participants collectively shared a common passion to create a worldview to mitigate the social construct where "self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them" (p.63).

Subtheme: Imposter syndrome. One notion that was repeated during the interviews and was best articulated by Superintendent Sandoval was the imposter syndrome. She stated, "the imposter syndrome that some minority groups have and they

question themselves, like saying 'I really don't belong on the decision-making table.' Coming from where I am, you can feel like an imposter." Each participant shared a variation of *How did I get here? Did I get this job only because I'm Latino? Do I really deserve this job? Being Latino, I have so much to prove. If I fail, it will look bad for all Latinos.* Clance and Imes (1978) utilized a definition of the imposter phenomenon to describe the feelings an individual experiences when he or she rightfully achieves a level of success but does not feel deserving of said success. Although early studies of the phenomenon isolated it as a problem among high-achieving women, subsequent research showed that Hispanic and African-American men experience these feelings at a comparable rate and that gender is not a contributing factor.

Subtheme: race and ethnicity. Each participant commented on his/her awareness of race and ethnicity, and how they affect his/her performance as a superintendent. While there may be limited if any overt experiences of racism or bigotry toward them, the participants acknowledged their sensitivity to the issue, especially as it relates to the selection of a Latino to serve as a superintendent. Superintendent Elizondo noted with a firm voice, leaning in, with a pointed finger in my face, and a much higher tone of voice, "I'm gonna be honest with you. I know that race plays a factor in many cases." The participants discussed their hopes that as the number of Latino superintendents increases, their voice, their message will presume to imply greater influence. In the near future, the power structure will include Latino leaders in the field of education; therefore, as the group prepares for the shift "all leaders should be ready for that change and understand how cultural and racial differences affect those with whom they share the future of education" (Magdaleno, 2009, p. 40).

Theme II: *Entre Amigos y La Familia:* **Latino Superintendent Networks**

  The second meta-theme that emerged addressed the notion of professional

networks. These are not networks in the usual sense of expanding connections with

assorted people; the networks discussed were specific to Latinos and their incumbent

support. The participants discussed their involvement with Latino professional

organizations such as ALAS, the Association of Latino Administrators and

Superintendents. ALAS, as one example, provides not only official conferences, but the

opportunity to interact with other Latino superintendents and exchange ideas, discuss

challenges, learn ways to enhance performance as a superintendent, and develop a

network of peers to call upon as needed. The efficacy of these networks in best captured

by Superintendent Campeon who stated, "I would not be a superintendent if it wasn't for

S and C. Being able to pick up the phone and call them, even when I'm about to catch a

flight. They guide me. They have walked me through the business of the game. Ten

years ago is when we had ALAS in Chicago. That's when they, C, S, M, all began to

mentor me."

  In their article titled, The Shaping of Culturally Responsive Leaders, Franco, Ott,

and Robles (2011), reflect upon their Latina leadership journeys and the need to

participate in culture-sharing experiences. They noted three Latina superintendents and

described how they were all baby boomers who have lived through major societal

changes, including integration, demographic shifts in the nation's population, and the

focus on accountability to address achievement gaps. It was clear that as they answered

questions about their early years, their years as teachers, their early years as

administrators, and ultimately their leadership roles as superintendents. They became

bonded in their shared passion and commitment to provide equitable learning opportunities for all children.

     Subtheme: Quality over quantity. As the participants discussed the importance of Latino networks, the notion of mentoring and modeling good practice emerged. Each participant acknowledged the hope and desire to exponentially increase the number of Latino superintendents, but there was caution expressed that they be individuals of strong character and be well prepared; it is a matter of quality over quantity. This notion of quality over quantity was captured by Superintendent Sandoval who stated, "it has to be someone who, you know, has the skill set to lead the system forward, being Latino and not being impactful may be worse than having someone of another group who has the passion and commitment for the community. *Alguien que lo haga con orgullo."* Someone that will do it with pride, a leader that represents quality, eloquent, professional and inspirational, with a focus on quality over quantity of Latino leaders. This notion of quality is supported by the literature.

     In Franco, Ott, and Robles (2011), Dr. Maria Ott responds to a question regarding her being viewed as a leader who succeeds on merit by describing how others wanted to define her as a Latina rather than a qualified administrator. Ott wrote,

> I was proud to be Latina, but I wanted to be viewed as a leader who had succeeded based on merit. It has always surprised me when comments are made about increased numbers of people of color at the leadership level. There were few complaints when district leaders were predominately represented by white individuals; however, when too many people of color advance to that level, questions surface regarding the shift in leadership (p. 13-14).

The second idea that emerged when discussing quality over quantity was regarding mentorship, which was considered very important in preparing effective Latino superintendents. Each participant offered examples of how mentors have helped them navigate the journey to the superintendency. An example of this was offered by Superintendent Marquez, "I pick people that I respect as superintendents, then I pick their brains, even after years of experience in being a superintendent, I pick their brains. I grew up with superintendents that I respect and I ask them about stuff so I can learn more." Superintendent Sandoval offered an additional perspective when she stated, "we need to get individuals who have in their mindset to lead a district and get them the preparation tools to see the total package of what a leader does. We need to do so to keep pace with the Hispanic student growth. More needs to be done in terms of mentoring and preparing them for those pivotal roles."   The literature is replete with the value of mentorship and exemplified by the work of Magdaleno (2006), which supports implementing and sustaining a same-race administrator mentoring program that improves the probability of being a successful Latino educational leader is essential to the future of the educational system. Magdaleno (2009) further supports "the notion that one generation can guide the next is certainly not new and seems fundamental" (p. 14).

Theme III: Grit, Attitude, Skills, and Behaviors

The third meta-theme to emerge reflected the participants' innate abilities, characteristics, and behaviors, which help promote their success as a Latino superintendent; the ways in which the participants remain steadfast amidst the daily experiences as a superintendent. The shared experiences of the superintendents reflected a need to celebrate their individual and collective grit. The references to grit,

perseverance, resiliency and tenacity were evident in the needs to overcome adversity, racial tension, and discriminatory experiences. All of the participants shared multiple examples of how submissive they felt as it relates to intellect, a sense, or lack thereof, belongingness and acceptance. Grit combined with a positive attitude emerged as a common survival skill in a field that represents mostly Hispanic students, yet dominated by a mainstream culture. Duckworth et al., (2007) defined grit as perseverance and passion for long-term goals noting:

> Grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress. The gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon; his or her advantage is stamina. Whereas disappointment or boredom signals to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course (p. 1087).

Duckworth et al., (2007) documented the importance of intellectual talent to achievement in all professional domains as being well established, but less is known about other individual differences that predict success. The participants shared individual needs to overcome their disillusionments with the public education system by relying on the tenacity and grit from learned behaviors during their experiences as students. Participants referred to their grit in both opportunities for success and dissatisfactions. All of the participants shared that their motivation and internal locus of control to pursue educational leadership had been shaped by their recollection of the hindering experiences within the public school systems they attended as students.

In Duckworth et al., (2007) research findings did not relate positively to IQ, but there was a strong correlation with grit as it relates to the need to demonstrate

incremental predictive validity of success over and beyond IQ and conscientiousness. Collectively, Duckworth et al., (2007) noted that the achievement of difficult goals entails not only talent, but also the sustained and focused application of talent, skills developed over time, and courage. In short, the participants often used words such as; *ganas*, *ánimo*, *entusiasmo, adelante, determinación,* and *valor*.

Ernesto Nieto is the founder of the National Hispanic Institute (NHI), an organization that fosters future community leaders for the expanding Latino community throughout the country and Latin America. In his book titled Third Reality: Crafting a 21stCentury Latino Agenda, Mr. Nieto coined the phrase, "one false move" by defining that at no time before did he ever feel more intimidated and outside of his element than during his first attempts to run an organization. It became a "learn-as-you-go" experience where "one false move meant a long way down to the bottom with little to no chance of recovery" (p.100). The notion of *one false move* and its implications were acknowledged by the participants. They were concerned to possess the wherewithal to withstand whatever might come their way as a superintendent; they named such characteristics as tenacity, courage, and fortitude as necessary to endure and thrive in their jobs. The participants discussed their trajectory from their first to their current superintendency. While they each acknowledged the role of mentors in their careers, they were nonetheless sensitive to the fact that at any time one incident could affect their tenure; it would take only one false move. This sensitivity was situated in their cultural awareness, and a belief that they are scrutinized differently than their White peers. A hindering phenomenon was often identified by the participants' tenacity to overcome adversity. In order to function, despite this awareness, the participants drew upon their grit, a positive

attitude, and skills and behaviors they acquired through networking with other Latino superintendents.

The participants' grit, tenacity, persistence or courage is best tested in their superintendent-board relations. As one participant observed, it is the "care and feeding of the board" that calls for the best attitude and behaviors. Since the superintendent serves at the will of the board their relationship was viewed by some participants as the most important to successfully navigate. The participants agreed that as Latino superintendents, the board may scrutinize them differently than if they were White; thus, their skills and behaviors must necessarily be impeccable.

Limitations

I included this section to address limitations, curiosities, and inconsistencies with my original study intentions. When I proposed this topic and research project, I included prominent mention of compensatory skills; specifically, which compensatory skills Latino superintendents utilize to navigate their job. The participants' responses to being asked about compensatory skills did not result in a defined list of specific practices or skills. Rather, participants offered anecdotal experiences, whereby, they came to develop ways of interacting in difficult and varied contexts and situations. One participant talked about how the board hired him for his first superintenency. There was one White board member, who the participant was convinced did not like him. When the participant began his tenure at that district, he purposefully worked to develop a cordial relationship with the board member, which he did successfully. The interviews were filled with similar examples of the participants crafting behaviors and practices to address situations, but no recurring practices or skills were identified. Although I did not find a defined

protocol of compensatory skills that the participants possessed and practiced in their roles as superintendents, I did find a consistent ethos which was situated in a commitment to social justice.

The study was designed to protect the identity of its participants. If this was not the case, and the interview recordings or transcripts were not redacted, there would be numerous additional stories included to demonstrate how masterfully participants have navigated the superintendency as Latinos. The stories would illustrate how, despite the social-cultural stigmas that substantiate inhibiting factors, the participants might well be considered *rock star* Latino superintendent. If anonymity were not a consideration, additional specific examples would have been included in this study that demonstrate how participants have been cognizant of their Latino ethos and responded to situations, accordingly.

Four of the five participants are, at a minimum, in their second superintendency position. The fifth participant is serving in his first superintendency. As I analyzed the data, it seemed curious that the fifth participant did not possess the same degree of knowledge, understanding and a certain wisdom about the superintendency as the others. While I do not believe this negatively impacted the study, it is something I wished to note.

Implications for Practice

The need to increase the cadre of well-prepared Latino superintendents is apparent (Cisneros, 2008; Ortiz, 2000; Ramirez, 2006; Tellerico, 2000). This need is not merely predicated on mathematical proportionality, it is predicated on the incumbent research that suggests leaders who share in the cultural experience of their constituents

possess an awareness and sensitivity, which situates them to best develop programs and services to serve their community. The implications for identifying and preparing potential Latino leadership candidates to meet this continuing challenge are numerous. Following are a few that were revealed by this study.

Implications for Superintendent Preparedness

 Mentorship. Two means of superintendent preparation were discussed: formal and informal. The formal programs are those offered by such places as universities and local educational service centers. The programs include regular classes, conferences, and seminars coordinated to best prepare candidates to obtain state superintendent certification. Formal programs were mentioned by the participants; however, the emphasis on the informal preparation received extensive attention, specifically the notion of mentorship. The opportunity to develop a relationship with a peer whose journey, whose trajectory both personally and professionally, resonates with one's own is invaluable.

 It was through mentorship that some participants were recipients of another Latino superintendent's experience; it was through mentorship that these participants heard their mentor's *war stories*, the sometimes difficult and humiliating experiences that taught them lessons of how to relate to people, especially Whites, and how the participants feel duty-bound to impart same to others. Mentorship personalizes superintendent preparedness, it allows an experienced superintendent to share with an aspiring or new superintendent one's own experience of navigating the educational leadership landscape as a Latino.

The mentor shares personal stories of how language and culture are assets, such as when they engage in community events and can be at one because their constituencies are of their own heritage—they can speak the language and participate because it is their own, not a learned, experience. The participants expressed how they were able to receive *consejos*, advice and guidance, from their own mentors and in-turn pass this wisdom along to others. Mentoring is the relationship in which one who has ascended to the superintendency might feel self-doubt, feels the sense that maybe they don't belong, that they are an *imposter,* yet has someone with whom they can share this angst and confide their fears and insecurities—to be reassured that such feelings are normal, especially for Latinos, yet we remain focused and strengthened in the knowledge that we do not travel this journey alone. Mentorship is where a veteran Latino superintendent can guide an aspiring or new superintendent in developing their own ways, their *movidas*, to meet one of the greatest challenges to a superintendent—the care and feeding of the board.

The study revealed the significant implications that mentorship has for practice. Mentorship, while a good opportunity for a veteran superintendent to share best practices regarding the mechanics and administrative necessities of the job, most especially encourages a relationship that nurtures the characteristics, attributes, and skills necessary for a Latino to possess in order to be an equal player at the table, regardless of race or ethnicity. The fortitude that is born of mentorship is embedded in relationship—that no superintendent is alone—there are others who have been or may be currently going through the same or similar, and there is strength in numbers.

Professional networks. The challenges of the superintendency are numerous. These challenges may be considered exacerbated when a superintendent is Latino. My

study suggests it is imperative that a potential Latino superintendent prepare for the superintendency by developing a network of Latino peers who currently serve as superintendents. The challenges that accrue to a Latino superintendent may be assuaged through active participation in Latino professional organizations and engaging with its members. The number of Latino professional organizations has increased, and include groups such as the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS), state affiliates and local organizations. Membership in these organizations has also increased, which, according to the participants, indicates an awareness and need for such groups, since they provide numerous opportunities for aspiring, new, or veteran Latino superintendents to participate in continuing education, as well as interact with peers from throughout their own region or the country.

Participation in professional networks provides Latino superintendents' opportunities to participate in the organization's conferences. The conferences provide professional development that is academic and research based, with an emphasis on leadership as it pertains to school systems addressing the unique needs of the Latino student population. The conferences allow superintendents to consider their own experiences, how they have changed and acknowledge persistent opportunities for growth. Ultimately, participation in these conferences provides Latino superintendents with necessary knowledge and skills to identify and overcome their own impediments, and enhance their practice.

Similar to mentorship, participation in professional networks allow aspiring, new, and veteran Latino superintendents to recognize that they are not alone, that they are part of something bigger, and there are resources available to support them in their work.

According to the participants, this sense of connection is crucial for Latino superintendent success. One area where this network of support has proved to be beneficial relates to developing political and navigational capital. The manner in which Latino superintendents navigate school district politics is different from their White peers. The tools, the capital to navigate political machinations are well-presented and learned in professional networks such as ALAS. The participants were unanimous in their position that developing political and navigational capital particular to being Latino was imperative. The way in which a Latino superintendent deals with the board or any district constituency—their manner, language, personal style, grooming—these are contributing factors to develop political and navigational capital. These are very important variables to consider and address.

Implications for Aspiring Latino School Superintendents

Implications for aspiring Latino superintendents also were revealed in this study. In particular, those Latino school leaders who are interested in or invited to consider the superintendency would benefit from considering where to take appropriate action. These suggested actions are outlined below.

Understanding the current landscape for Latino superintendents. The participants discussed the need to encourage Latino colleagues to consider the superintendency, and incumbent with this the need to provide support and guidance along the way. The superintendency may not be an immediate goal or appear to be a practical reality; however, the importance of *planting the seed* and nurturing the idea in the minds of potential Latino school leaders is important. The superintendency is considered the pinnacle of educational leadership so should be presented as a possible career goal for

Latinos. The apparent lack of Latino superintendents does not imply that there are a few,

if any, qualified Latinos to fill the superintendent role. There is a need to develop an

ethos that implies Latinos are unequivocally worthy and eligible to be superintendents,

regardless of the current trends. It is incumbent upon current Latino superintendents to

assume their place, not only as role models, but also as active recruiters of potential

Latino superintendents. Current Latino superintendents must necessarily demonstrate to

others, especially potential superintendents, that despite the presumed challenges to being

Latino, being a superintendent is a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Latino

superintendents are encouraged to share personal stories of their journey to and through

the superintendency to inspire and encourage others to follow suit. While the

superintendency, like being CEO of any organization, is not for everyone; it is

nonetheless a possibility for Latinos.

Search firms and gate keeping. The study also suggests that the role search

firms play in filling superintendent vacancies has implications for practice. According to

the participants, search firms, specifically search consultants, often play an important role

in which candidates are considered; many consider them the *gate keepers* of the process.

The participants stressed the importance of having those who aspire to the

superintendency, as well as current superintendents, could identify potential candidates

and make concerted efforts to become familiar with superintendent search consultants.

Participants also mentioned the need to serve as *padrinos* y *madrinas,* utilizing the terms

of endearment as godparents or helmsmen and helmswomen, expected to assist when a

need arises, which ranges from promoting them with search firms to providing emotional

support during stressful situations. The same *compadrismo* applies to current

superintendents because the average tenure of a superintendent is short and points to the need to be prepared to begin the job search every three to five years. Whether one is an aspiring, new, or veteran superintendent, remaining familiar with search firm consultants and having great guiding mentors are prudent professional exercises in the landscape of Latino educational leadership.

Implications for School Districts

The study revealed that school districts whose student population and personnel include a majority of Latinos bear a responsibility to encourage Latino personnel in the districts to consider the superintendency. In pursuing the development of highly effective human capital, it is incumbent upon districts to intentionally plan for district executive level leadership, especially the superintendency as a component of its professional development program.   Participants in this study suggested that districts identify and invite professionals to seek advanced training and certification for other administrative positions. School districts ideally should be compelled to include the superintendency among in their support of certification programs.

Job embedded professional development. The participants shared the idea of providing professional development to Latino leaders who aspire to or who have been targeted as potential candidates for the superintendency, particularly professional development that is embedded in their current worksite or district offices. Some participants referred to the opportunity to serve in cabinet level positions as the best type of job-embedded training to understand the policy making process, as well as working with the demands and political dynamics of a school board. Participants also discussed having the districts assume responsibility to design and implement superintendency

academies, similar to the principal academies that are common in many districts. Districts identify or invite those interested to participate in district organized superintendent focused preparation. Districts might consider entering into cooperative agreements with leadership development companies, the regional education service centers or university think thanks and preparation programs. At the conclusion of specified professional development, potential leaders might be qualified to take the state's superintendent certification examination. When professional development is not possible, an introduction to the superintendency job occurs, which might allow attendees to realize that holding such a job is possible. Job-embedded training can also lend itself to the opportunity to compensate for impoverished vocabulary and skills and address any particular self-deprecating experiences. This type of training could address the importance of Latino culture-sharing as part of a formative leadership development process by addressing any self-imposed impediments, along with possible signs of imposter syndrome and self-depreciative thinking prior to focusing on the required skills, knowledge, and political astuteness needed to be successful in a high level district leadership position.

Create internal mentorship programs. Aligned with job embedded professional development is the need to create district mentorship programs. The participants shared that cohort of district employees, who would participate in superintendency professional development, typically are small, making it possible for district superintendents to serve as cohort mentors. Limited numbers of cohort participants provide opportunities to sit with superintendents to discuss strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the job. Most importantly, the internal mentorship

program would allow local personnel to consider the superintendency to be professionally within reach for them. An internal mentorship program additionally would allow Latino personnel to best learn from a Latino superintendent about the incumbent cultural experience and challenges; therein, creating Latino relational capital. Additional consideration should be given to self-selected mentorships or those mentorships that are fluid and authentic in nature and not appointed by a supervisor. Participants shared their preference for people they connected with over people they were told to listen to and learn from.

Implications for School Boards

The degree to which a local school board understands, appreciates, and embraces diversity, and specifically Latinos as educational leaders, will have serious implications for district leadership. The challenge is to develop the board in such a manner that board members possess cultural awareness and support the notion that it is in the students' best interest to employ Latino superintendents. The intent is for the board to be committed to hiring the best candidate for the position, while including among its top criteria for a superintendent the opportunity to meeting, interviewing and considering Latino candidates. No decision must be made for political expediency, nor is the implication assuming that hiring should only be done due to the candidates being Latino. It is always a matter of quality. But some consideration should be given to the fact that dominant search firms keep great Latino candidates out of their inner-circle. The board must engage the services of a search firm that also understands and appreciates the value of having a Latino superintendent who can add to the work of the district. Central to these implications is the notion of cultural competence; wherein, board members appreciate

that the cultural experiences a Latino superintendent can bring to the position and the city

they will serve, is equally as important as their political stance. Along with a wealth of

opportunities and vision of the district, school board members are obligated to consider

the cultural implications and advantages in hiring a Latino leader. Board members often

need raised awareness, consciousness raising, tolerance of cultural and racial dynamics of

Latino leaders, and a deep understanding of the possible inherent inhibiting factors that

school systems and society have imposed upon Latino leaders.

It is incumbent upon current school board members to make the development,

support, and promotion of Latino educational leaders into cabinet level positions and

other similar essential leadership positions, a priority. Large urban school district school

board members must understand and embrace the responsibility to cultivate future

leaders. It is the obligation of school board members to create a strategic agenda to

maintain meticulous tracking systems of Latino leaders who could, at the call of a search

firm or a call from a colleague board member in another city, step into the role of school

superintendent in a large urban school system. The need to develop and produce future

Latino school superintendents is beseemed as a moral and ethical responsibility of every

school board member in every major large urban school district in the nation.

Implications for Future Research

The process to complete the study revealed a few items that gave me pause to

consider further research in a particular area might be beneficial to the ongoing work to

add knowledge to this phenomenon of Latino superintendents. I was first struck by the

participants' discussions regarding their own struggles to feel worthy and eligible to

become a superintendent. Their examples with inhibiting factors and the imposter

syndrome imply a need to further research psychological and sociological implications. I read peer reviewed literature and other dissertations that addressed this issue eight and ten years previously; however, the struggle persists, today. It may well serve scholars to investigate by means of a longitudinal comparative analysis of the struggles inherent for a Latino ascending to the superintendency over the course of a ten-year period.

A second area, which may deserve further research, is mentorship models and practices, if any, that exist among districts with high-Latino student populations. This research might well serve Latino professional networks that strive to provide enriching information and research-based models for implementation in its members' districts. The research would provide a model for districts to use in assessing its mentorship programs, if any, as well as introduce a mentorship model to districts whose student and employee demographic is changing and are located in outlying areas with no immediate support, a way to incorporate practices that reflect cultural competence.

A third area that might deserve further research is models of superintendent preparation programs. A comparative analysis of these models and programs could elucidate best practices among superintendent preparation practices. There are many superintendent preparation programs in place, but how do they, if at all, address the unique Latino perspective. It is equally important to participate in partnerships and formative programs internally with Latino subgroups and externally with the mainstream group. Specific consideration needs to be placed on the fastest growing student population and the scarcity of Latino leaders prepared to serve as superintendents in these districts.

An additional area that deserves further research includes cultivating models, succession plans, and Latino leadership development cohorts, if any are actually found, of cabinet level positions in large urban school districts. A comparative analysis of these models and programs could expound future policy implications for school board members at the helm of large urban school districts. There are many cabinet level positions to analyze, but how do they, if at all, address the unique Latino perspective emerged from the findings of this research. It is extremely important to analyze formative programs in the university preparatory programs, superintendent certification programs, as well as internal school district succession plans. Specific consideration needs to be placed on cultivating programs, individualized professional development plans for aspiring superintendents, and pipeline models for the development of future Latino leaders. School board members need to understand that there are a handful of Latino leaders that can skip several ranks and opportunities for growth and go straight to the superintendent position; however, those situations are extremely rare. Therefore, it is incumbent upon large urban school board members to own their responsibility to conduct employee development and engagement initiatives to grow their own leaders in real-time on-the-job training.

Similarly, an area that would contribute to the field of Latino school superintendents in large urban school districts is grit and tenacity. A comparative analysis of various superintendent experiences of Latino leaders as it relates to their psychological reactions to being fired, undergoing separation agreements and other job-related exposures with failure. There are many superintendents at the helm, but how do they, if at all, address the unique experience of being in a position where hiring is quickly

followed by a firing agenda. The participants shared stories related to the firing

phenomenon and in summary; there are three types of superintendents, those that have

been fired, those that will be fired and those that will be asked to resign. Specific

consideration needs to be placed on how grit relates to other variables known to predict

experiences with failure, achievement and success, self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), locus

of control, and tenacity. Future research is necessary to test whether cultural experiences,

self-depreciation, the imposter syndrome, hindering and inhibiting experiences, and other

related variables are factors that have an effect on achievement via grit. Duckworth et al.,

(2007) assert that one possibility is that the propensity to pursue long-term goals with

perseverance and passion may be determined in part by beliefs about one's capabilities,

attributions of positive and negative events, and beliefs about the relative influence of

external causes. However, Duckworth et al., (2007) pose that it is also possible that the

effects of these other variables are mediated by some other mechanism and that grit is a

mere epiphenomenon. More generally, further research is needed to elucidate the specific

processes or behaviors set in motion by grit and other variables associated with Latino

superintendent success.

Finally, participants acknowledged this study's focus as particular to urban school

districts; however, they suggested it is important to recognize that the number of districts

considered suburban, with increasing Latino demographics, will benefit from similar

research. Superintendents in smaller, non-urban (suburban or rural) districts may or may

not have similar experiences to share regarding their ascendency to the superintendency.

Nonetheless, knowing this phenomenon exist, board members can compensate by

deliberately broadening their focus of attention to the culture-sharing characteristics and

ultimately increase their tolerance by being aware of the inhibiting factors detailed in this research. Research particular to this group of superintendents may well benefit the overall study of Latino superintendents and the needed superintendent — board member relations.

Recommendations for Latinos Aspiring to the Superintendency

Throughout the study, one participant after another shared amazing stories and examples of how each navigated the journey to ascend to the superintendency. The participants shared heartwarming and thrilling stories that manifested the adage, *where there is a will, there is a way*. The participants demonstrated tenacity, grit, and passion in their pursuit of the superintendency; the position was never guaranteed or inherited. The milieu into which a Latino aspiring to the superintendency would enter is essentially unchanged from that of the participants, which implies the need to nurture and demonstrate the same tenacity, grit, and passion. A Latino aspiring to the superintendency must necessarily identify role models and pursue getting to know them, to learn about opportunities for professional development, and understand the navigational capital needed to experience success. It is recommended aspirants develop a keen awareness of superintendent preparation programs, and become aware of current needs and requirements. They are encouraged to get involved in professional networks, such as the Association of Hispanic School Administrators (AHSA), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, and the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), even though they may not believe their current position or role qualifies them for membership; developing a network is essential, regardless. However, more than any

single event or behavior, the most essential recommendation for a Latino aspiring to the superintendency—examine your heart and become a servant leader. The participants in the study and their successes reflect excellent preparation and leadership capacity; however, it is their commitment to social justice and the Latino community that places them not as good superintendents, but great superintendents. A Latino aspiring to the superintendency must necessarily possess a commitment to social justice.

Final Thoughts

When I began my doctoral studies I had a fledgling idea that I wanted to study the Latino superintendent phenomenon. I was curious to study and learn about the journey, the trajectory, of these superintendents, especially those who were at the helm of large urban school districts. As a first generation American, I experienced cultural challenges to ascend to the principalship and several upper administrative roles, I could only imagine what it must be like to be Latino and become a superintendent in a large urban school district. I wanted to learn what these superintendents encountered to ascend to the superintendency, and I wanted to know how they did it—I wanted to know their stories.

What an amazing honor it has been to meet and engage with the participants in my study. While I hoped and expected they would share interesting and compelling stories of their journey, I could not anticipate the degree of openness, the intimacy, with which they would tell of their struggles and delight. I could not imagine they would make themselves available and accessible by building a rewarding mentoring relationship. The study's research question prompted discussions of challenges and struggle, and while participants' certainly shared of these struggles, they were balanced against stories of the delight they experience as Latinos, as superintendents. Each

participant displayed confidence, but not arrogance. They acknowledged their success, yet remained humble, feeling like an *imposter* to have achieved as they have. They shared many *war stories*, revealing that racism, classism, and sexism are alive and well, yet they remain steadfast in their conviction that what they are about is something much greater than any one of them.

The study revealed to me that Latino superintendents of large urban school districts do not ascend to such prominence due to belligerence, arrogance, or political manipulation. Their success is situated in a strong commitment to social justice, hard work, and perseverance. There is a collective level of respect, *un gran respeto,* and a reverence for leaders for their past contributions that made today's opportunities happen. A cultural understanding, admiration, and respect for their tireless efforts and; an acceptance of the struggles our community of Latino leaders have faced with a shared belief that our past guides us. Their success does not only reflect their professional ethic, but their personal ethic— their collective community ethos. The stories of the participants bring to life the work of Freire (1970) and the LatCrit (2001) theoretical perspectives— they want to eliminate the experience of oppression for the marginalized, the Latinos, and they are engaged in ways to use their own experience to serve and empower those who would follow in their career path.

At the heart of Freire's (1970) work, lies a view of education that calls for critical consciousness or *concientización*. This term meaning, consciousness raising, is about understanding the social and political contradictions of the world and taking action against them in one's own life, a calling to "pursue the right to be human" (Freire, 1970, p. 56). The participants did not refer to themselves as trailblazers, yet this is what they

are. They shared a common need and excitement to include me as part of the *familia*, to join in the singing of a popular song, to share that collective and elastic affinity as an endearment of *hermanismo*, and to celebrate my *destino* with them. There have been Latino superintendents, but the participants in this study are among the first generation of Latino school superintendents in urban districts who have not acquiesced their culture, but claimed their place as models for other Latinos to follow. Theirs are the shoulders upon which a new legacy rests, one that is being revealed as the final edition of this manuscript is prepared. It is a legacy that is being very publicly acknowledged in Texas, where eight superintendents of the ten largest school districts in the state are Latino. It is a legacy that is giving voice to the *familia* via a step-by-step approach, *paso a paso*, that collaboratively instills a sense of pride and commitment.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

This chapter began by summarizing the orientation, purpose, and questions that provided the direction for the study. It presented and discussed the meta-themes revealed in the study: (a) inhibiting factors; (b) *Entre amigos y la familia*; and (c) Grit, attitude, skills, and behaviors. Subsequent to the discussion of the meta-themes, the implications of the study were presented. The implications address several areas: (a) they address the need for well-developed preparation programs, which includes mentorship and participation in professional networks; (b) they address the need for aspiring superintendents to remain aware of current trends and develop a relationship with search firms; (c) they address the need for school districts to provide job embedded professional development that encourages district administrators to consider the superintendency; and, (d) they address the need for school boards to become increasingly aware of

demographics and capable Latino superintendent candidates. The chapter included a section on implications for further research, which included the consideration of replicating similar studies that are expanded to include suburban school district superintendents. The chapter concludes with recommendations for Latinos aspiring to the superintendency, encouraging them to be proactive in their efforts to identify role models, get involved with professional networks, and examine their purpose, which must be grounded in a commitment to social justice. The implications for further research, recommendations for aspiring Latino leaders and shared lived experiences, serve as a compass to continue to pave the road, *abrir camino,* for the next generation of leaders.

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APPENDIX A

LATINO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN LARGE URBAN SCHOOL

DISTRICTS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is to introduce myself and to request that you participate in a survey related to large urban Latino school superintendents. I am currently working on my dissertation at Sam Houston State University and my study focuses on the inhibiting and promoting factors that can be analyzed to develop skills needed to experience success as Latino superintendents. This research will provide aspiring Latino large urban school superintendents with the information they will need in order to make informed decisions regarding the direction of their careers, reflections on the behaviors often associated to their culture, suggestions to overcome inhibiting factors, and complete development of compensatory skills needed to succeed in large urban public education systems. This research will also describe the personal, professional and cultural identities experienced by large urban school district Latino superintendents.

Your responses and additional input will be carefully reviewed, analyzed, and reported to explore inhibiting and promoting factors to experience success as a Latino in large urban school districts.

Please read the attached information sheet and complete the survey instrument if you are willing. In addition, please complete the Invitation to Participate in Oral Interview form which indicates if you are willing and available to participate in an in-depth interview. The interview will be conducted in person and please be assured that all information will be kept confidential. Your participation in this study is voluntary. An abstract of the findings can be forwarded to you at the completion of the study. I know how valuable your time is and I truly appreciate the effort you are making in completing the survey. I, as well as my dissertation chair, Dr. Stacey Edmonson, thank you very much for your assistance.

Please return the survey, Statement of Consent, and the Invitation for Participation in Oral Interview (if you so desire) forms in the enclosed stamped envelope that has been provided for you convenience. *¡Muchísimas gracias!*

Sincerely,

Rolando Treviño

_____

APPENDIX B

LATINO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN LARGE URBAN SCHOOL

DISTRICTS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Rolando "Rudy" Treviño, a doctoral dissertation student at Sam Houston State University. The purpose of this study is to explore key factors that have led to the career success of Latino superintendents. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you identify as Latino and currently serve as a superintendent of a large urban school district or are a retired superintendent. Please review this consent form and sign the form if you agree to participate in this study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to explore Latino superintendents' experiences to identify factors that have contributed to their successes as a superintendents of large urban school districts. Prior research has shown that involvement in professional associations and the development of special skills are necessary for Latino superintendents to be most effective in their roles.

PROCEDURES

Participation in this study will involve completion of a web-based background questionnaire designed to obtain information on professional experience and skills that you believe were key to your success in reaching your goal as a school superintendent. The web-based questionnaire should take between 20-30 minutes to complete. You also will be asked to participate in an online or off-site face-to-face interview to share your experiences as a successful superintendent.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no anticipated risks to your participation beyond any discomfort you might experience in addressing interview questions. If you feel uncomfortable responding to any of the questions, you may leave them unanswered or withdraw from the study at any point.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There is no financial benefit for participation in this research study. However, your participation in this study will allow for other aspiring Latino school leaders to learn from your experiences and benefit from the information provided. Additionally, by conducting this study, I hope to determine what skills, attributes, and professional preparation are needed to prepare future superintendents.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no payment of or compensation for your participation in this research study.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The investigators of this research do not have any financial interest associated with this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Pseudonyms will be used in place of names and any affiliated school districts. Likewise, data will be analyzed and results reported in an aggregated, holistic form to alleviate any potential identification of the participants. Only me, as the primary researcher, and my dissertation advisor, Dr. Rebecca Bustamante will have access to the data associated with this study. The data will be stored and encrypted with a password on a password protected computer. The data will be stored for three years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.
Should any other use of the data present itself, no release of data or any other information will occur without your written authorization having been secured.

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed you will have the right to review and/or edit the recording. Only members of the research team will have access to these recordings. These recording will be kept confidential and will be encrypted and stored under password protection for a period of three years, after which they will be destroyed. If the results of the research are published or discussed at research conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION

You may choose not to participate in this study.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent or your continued participation at any time. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have any questions about your rights as a study subject or you would like to speak with someone independent of the research team to obtain

answers to questions about the research, or in the event the research staff cannot be reached please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at Sam Houston State University.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Rolando "Rudy" Trevino at (832) 594-8298 or my advisor, Dr. Rebecca Bustamante at (936) 294-4946.
Please check the appropriate box below and sign:

___ I give my consent to participate in this study.

___I prefer NOT to participate in this study at this time.

Signed_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX C

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

(Superintendent's Copy of Consent)

I have read the consent form and fully understand the contents of this document. I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I have also received a copy of this consent form for my records. Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Signature:_____

☐ Please check this box if you would like a copy of the research findings after the study is complete.

(Superintendent's Copy of Audio/Video Recording Consent)

I have read the consent form and fully understand the contents of this document. I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate in this **audio/video recording**. I have also received a copy of this consent form for my records. Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Signature:_____

☐ Please check this box if you would like a copy of the research findings after the study is complete.

APPENDIX D

STATEMENT OF CONSENT (Researcher's Copy)

I have read the consent form and fully understand the contents of this document. I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I have also received a copy of this consent form for my records. Your signature below indicates that you consent to particpate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Signature:_____

☐ Please check this box if you would like a copy of the research findings after the study is complete.

(Audio/Video Recording Consent)

I have read the consent form and fully understand the contents of this document. I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate in this **<u>audio/video recording</u>**. I have also received a copy of this consent form for my records. Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Print Name: _____

Signature:_____

☐ Please check this box if you would like a copy of the research findings after the study is complete.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTION GUIDE

Latino School Superintendents

1. What skills and talents will Latino administrators need to possess in order
to experience success as large urban school superintendents in the current context of
public education?

2. What skills and talents do you believe school boards are looking for when interviewing
potential Latino candidates for the superintendency?

3. Did race or ethnicity play a role in your selection as the school superintendent?

4. Did you participate in a leadership preparation programs for Latino administrators to
help you sharpen your skills to become a successful superintendents? If so, which ones?

5. What do you believe are the reasons why so few Latinos are being promoted to the
position of superintendent of schools?

6. What do you believe accounts for the disproportionate representation of Latinos in the
superintendency?

7. Do you believe there are personal or professional barriers that impede Latinos success
as they ascend to the superintendency?

8. What skills are needed for a Latino superintendent to experience success?

9. To what degree do you consider race to be a barrier when it comes to Latinos
obataining the superintendency?

10. Do you believe it is important to have a Latino as superintendent of a predominantly
Latino (student population) school district?

11. What are some of your innate abilities and skills that have contributed to your
success?

12. What skills would you consider to be compensatory that you consciously strive to
nurture?

APPENDIX F

BACKGROUND: LATINO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS IN LARGE URBAN

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

(Modified from Escobar, 2009)

Section I: Personal Characteristics

1. Name (optional)

_____

2. Current School District/Organization

_____

3. What is your Latino family origin?

□ United States □ Central America

□ Mexico □ South America

□ Caribbean □ Europe (please specify)_____

4. Birth Place:

Mother _____ Father _____

Yourself _____ Significant Other _____

5. Languages spoken at home. _____

6. If born outside the United States, how many years have you lived in this country?

_____

_____

7. Current age (optional) _____

Section II: Professional Characteristics

8. Years in public education_____

9. Total years in education before promotion to first leadership position (administrative).

_____

10. Title of first administrative position_____

11. At what age did you obtain your first position as a school leader (e.g. Principal, AP, etc..)?

a. 25-30   d. 41-50

b. 31-35   e. 51-55

c. 36-40   f. 56+

12. At what age did you obtain your first position as a school superintendent in a large urban school district?
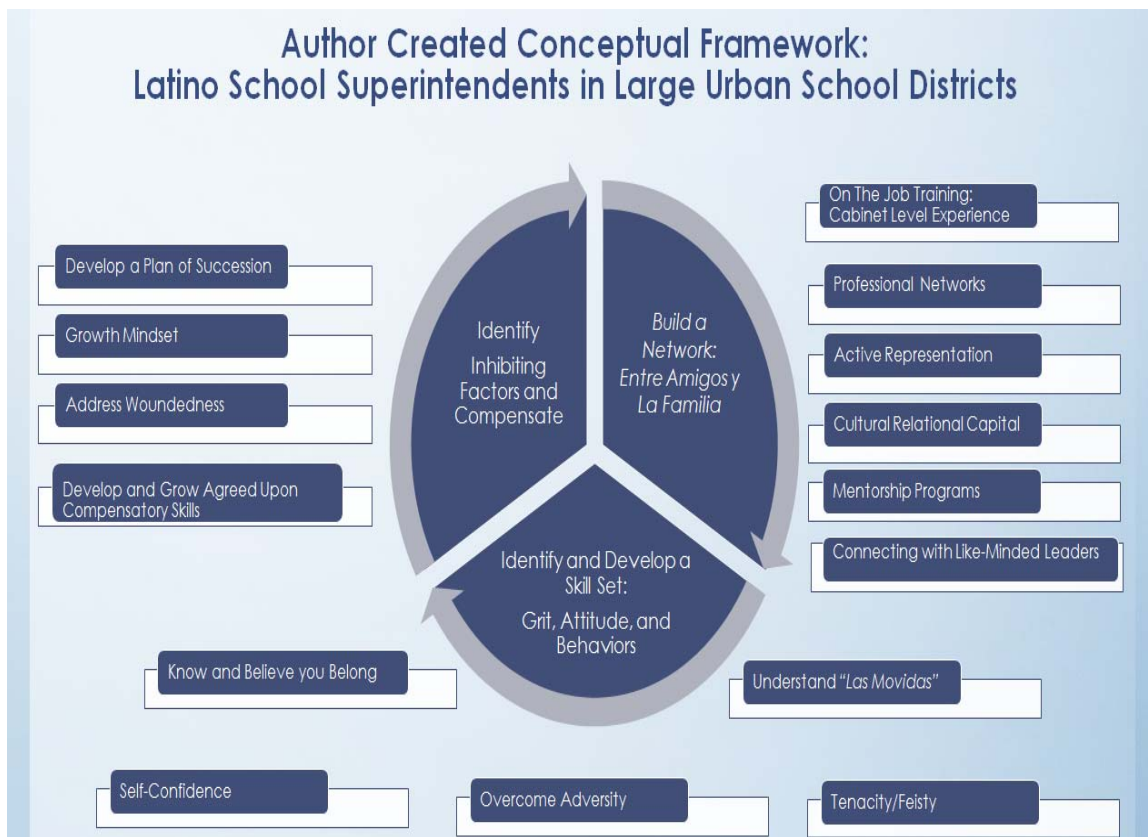
a. 25-30   d. 41-50

b. 31-35   e. 51-55

c. 36-40   f. 56+

APPENDIX G

LATINO SUPERINTENDENTS' COMPENSATORY SKILLS

Author Created Conceptual Framework:
Latino School Superintendents in Large Urban School Districts

VITA

Rolando Trevino

EDUCATION

Doctorate of Educational Leadership. Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, June 2010 – December 2016. *Latino School Superintendents in Large Urban School Districts: A Phenomenological Study.*
Chair: Dr. Rebecca Bustamante

Masters in Educational Leadership and Counseling at Sam Houston State University, August 2003- December 2004, Educational Leadership, Huntsville, Texas.

Masters of Arts at the University of Houston, August 2000 - December 2004, Masters of Arts in Modern and Classical Languages; "*Alumnos emigrantes: desde los campos de pizca hacia el sheetrock de los suburbios.*" Migrating Students: From the fields to the Sheetrock in the Suburbs. Spanish Linguistics and Literature, Houston, Texas.
Chair: Dr. Nicolas Kanellos

Bachelor of Arts at Sam Houston State University, August 1996-May 2000 Huntsville, Texas.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

School Support Officer, Houston Independent School District, August 2011 – 2014 & 2015 - Present. As the School Support Officer over schools, I serve as a direct supervisor and mentor responsible for the educational services provided to Houston ISD students ranging from 30,000 – 45,000 student groups. Additional responsibilities are to serve as an integral part of a team of School Directors, Teacher Development Specialists, Curriculum Specialist, and other educational leaders that supervise and support schools throughout the city of Houston.

Superintendent of Schools. Lockhart Independent School District, August 2014-August 2015. Managed and led the following: education standards and student achievement, budgets, and allocation of resources to better serve the children of Caldwell County. Oversee the planning and expenditures of bond monies, operational systems, and the district's budget process. Serve the needs of a 6300 student populated district and inspire, lead, and motivate an organization with over 700 employees. Lead all aspects of curriculum, assessment, and At-Risk student programing district-wide.

High School Principal, Houston Independent School District, August 2009 – August 2011. Served as the principal of a 9th-12th grade rigorous college preparatory high school for inner-city at-risk students. Our school earned numerous national and local recognitions such as; National Blue Ribbon Schools

Award, 2011, U.S. News Bronze Medal, 2010, T.E.A. Exemplary School Status 2010 and 2011, Earned the 2010-2011 Most Improved High School Recognition from the Children at Risk, accomplished the high rank of #3 in the High Schools division in the Houston Area in the 2010 rakings of the Children at Risk in 2011, Ranked #37 on the Nation's Top 100 High Schools from Newsweek and the Washington Post in 2010.

Ninth Grade Center Principal, Houston Independent School District, 2008-2009. Founding Principal, Ninth Grade College Preparatory Academy – Houston ISD – Sam Houston High School re-purposed school. Expedited a re-purposing plan created in collaboration with the Texas Education Agency and HISD. The re-purposed plan was intended to close and re-open Sam Houston High School as two separate campuses. The Ninth Grade College Preparatory Academy was a state-ordered spin-off of Sam Houston High School, whose test scores were historically low and it was labeled academically unacceptable for six straight years. I became the founding principal and we collectively built, planned, and designed the academy in 40 days in the summer of 2008.

Elementary School Principal, Houston Independent School District, August 2006-August 2008. John Herrera Elementary School, Facilitated and role-modeled a shared leadership vision to maintain high levels of progress and growth in a school of over 960 Elementary students. Our school earned a T.E.A. Recognized School rating for two consecutive academic school years. We established a Magnet School for Integrated Technology Program. During my leadership experience our school performed at the highest level and we earned a #4 spot on the top ten Elementary Schools of HISD's student academic growth through the ASPIRE and EVAAS evaluation system.

Assistant Principal, Houston Independent School District, August 2005-2006. Assistant Principal, Burbank Middle School, Houston ISD Accountable for several essential leadership areas at Burbank Middle School (BMS). Charged to lead the overall safety and security of the school, to focus on instruction with the English Language Arts and the Social Studies Departments and I was responsible for the Dual Language Programs.

Assistant Principal, Houston Gateway Academy (PK-10) State Charter School, Collaborated with a leadership team to execute a transformation plan as the Charter School was being monitored by the Texas Education Agency. During my first administrative experience, I was accountable for instructional duties to supervise the Special Education, Science, E.S.L. and Social Studies Departments. Through the implementation of Professional Learning Communities, we were able to keep the charter school open and in good standing with the TEA.

High School Teacher, August, 2000-June, 2004. **Teacher**, Spanish Language and Literature/Speech Communications, Houston Independent School District, J.H. Reagan Sr. High School

PUBLICATIONS

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Trevino, R., &. Wehde-Roddiger, C. (2012). The Influence of Advanced   Placement Enrollment on High School GPA and Class Rank: Implications for School Administrators. *International Journal Of Educational Leadership Preparation*, *7* (3).

Trevino, R. (2012). Featured in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation/Wallace Foundation Convening Magazine. The Role of the Instructional Leadership Developer in the Houston Independent School District. Presented at the 2012 Convening, May, 2012.

PRESENTATIONS AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

Trevino, R. (2012). The Influence of Advanced Placement Enrollment on High School GPA and Class Rank: Implications for School Administrators. Presented at the Southwest Educational Research Association (SERA) Conference, February 2012.

Trevino, R. (2012). The Scarcity of Latino Educators in Public Education. Presented at the Association of Latino School Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) conference, October, 2012.

Trevino, R. (2009) Presentation for the Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline (CMCD) Strategies for Elementary Schools: "Using Technology as a CMCD Strategy in PK-5th Grade Classrooms."

Trevino, R. (2005). Spanish Masters Thesis: *"Alumnos emigrantes: desde los campos de pizca hacia el sheetrock de los suburbios."* Migrating Students: from the fields to the sheetrock in the suburbs.

Trevino, R. (2005). Spanish Masters Project: Incorporation, Ethnic Group Identity, or Trans-nationalism? Adaptation of Salvadoran, Mexican, and Guatemalan Immigrants in the United States. Presented to the Masters Comprehensive Exam Committee.

Fernandez, R., Sarabia, S., & Trevino, R. (2013). The Importance of Understanding Social Capital and Networking for Hispanic/Latino Administrators and the Complexities of the Mentor/Mentee Relationship. Presented at the Association of Latino School Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) conference. October, 2013.

Trevino, R (2014). Creating Equity: Using Diversity in our Schools to Prepare Students to Lead in a Global Community. Tucson Unified School District Strategic Planning Community Event. Center for Reform of School Systems (CRSS) Forum.

Trevino, R (2014). The Role of the School Superintendent. Presentation for the Aspiring Superintendents Academy, Chicago IL.

Fernandez, R., Sarabia, S., & Trevino, R. (2016). What Does One-to-One Look Like? Presented at the Association of Latino School Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) conference. October, 2016.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Received the Bill and Melinda Gates/Wallace Foundation Convening Award. Recognized as The Leader in the Role of the Instructional Leadership Developer. Presented at the 2012 Convening, May, 2012.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Association of Hispanic School Administrators (Board Member since 2009- Scholarship Committee, Elected to the Board Presidency, 2013 – 2015, Member)

Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (TALAS, Board Member since 2012)

Houston Association of School Administrators (President Elect in 2010-2011)

Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP)

Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA)

Reagan Alumni Association (Scholarship Committee)

Member of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA)