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An Ethnographic Study Examining the Effect of Teachers' Socio-Political Bias on Latinx Students and School Culture

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AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS' SOCIO-POLITICAL BIAS ON LATINX STUDENTS AND SCHOOL CULTURE

by

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ABSTRACT

Academics such as Geneva Gay, Christine Sleeter, Samy Alim, and Django Paris have conducted research that illustrates the importance of educators being not only aware of the culture of their students but implementing curriculum that supports the diverse cultures of their students. A common finding among this research is that a culturally sustaining pedagogy is essential to the inclusion of all students in the classroom and the level of academic success they have in schools.

This study aims to investigate the effect of teacher beliefs on the academic performance of Latinx students and on the culture and atmosphere of the school. The purpose of conducting this research is to show the necessity for implementing a culturally sustaining pedagogy and curriculum in schools. My research requires teachers and administrators to answer survey questions concerning their teaching practice, student population, and beliefs about teaching students, specifically Latinx students. I hope to discover how teacher attitudes, both positive and negative, can affect the academic performance of Latinx student and the culture of the school. Lastly, with such an emphasis I would like to use this information to help educators embrace the differences of their students and see the value in incorporating students lived experiences in the class curriculum.

Using a survey modeled after Bandura's Survey for Teaching Self-Efficacy this thesis explores the following questions: Research Question One (RQ1): What effect does teachers' attitudes have on the culture of their school?, Research Question Two (RQ2): What effect does teachers' socio-political views have on Latinx student performance?

DEDICATED
To

My Husband
For always supporting and encouraging me

My Mother
For instilling compassion in me

My Father
For always cheering me on

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"Build that wall! Build that wall! Build that wall!" These chants are what you would expect to hear at rally for President Trump, but instead was what I could hear White students screaming at Hispanic students in the school courtyard the day after President Trump was elected. I teach in the small-town of Pierson, FL at a school that serves students grades 6-12. There is a total of 1,123 students enrolled in the school; 59% of those students are Hispanic and 79% of the students enrolled are considered to be in a low socio-economic class (U.S News). Pierson, FL is known as "The Fern Capital of the World" and on any given day you can see Hispanic men and women in their straw hats and long-sleeved shirts picking fern in the fields. As tensions between the students were reaching a boiling point that day, the screams and jeers between students was not what filled me with shock, but instead the behavior of the White teachers around campus filled me with disgust. Several White teachers stood silently by while their White students berated students of color. Even worse, several White teachers began making comments claiming certain Latinx families would soon be deported or how much better *their* country will be now that a president was elected who promised to clean up the country. This research is the result of that day of chaos and hatred experienced from both students and educators.

The current political atmosphere in our society is one that has become combative and toxic, even for school-aged children. This toxicity has seeped into the public-school system and into public school classrooms. While many may argue that politics does not have a place in the classroom, education is very decidedly political. Decisions about funding, curriculum, testing, even classroom sizes are voted on by representatives that the people have elected to office.

Political views can also become prevalent in the classroom when dealing with race. The United States has become increasingly divisive in the past several years with more racially charged hate crimes and combative opinions on immigration and people of "otherness". This concept of "otherness" is described "as a referencing of identity characteristics in which negative or less valued perceptions are likely attached" (Evans, 2017, p. 2). "The FBI annual reports on racial hate crimes show continuing high incidences of racial hate crimes against African Americans, and significant increases against Latino citizens and immigrants, and Muslims as well ("New FBI Hate Crimes," 2008)" (Gay, 2018, p. 20). It is of the utmost importance for educators to be aware of how their political views and implicit bias of the students in their classrooms affects the success of their Latinx students and the culture of the school in which they teach. With this awareness, educators will be aware of this bias and can take the steps to combat it within their teaching while also seeing the need for cultural bias training and the implementation of a culturally sustaining pedagogy.

Background of Research

Teaching in a public school with a high population of Latinx students, many immigrants, can be challenging in terms of their socioeconomic status, language barriers, and their academic skills. "2014 was the first year students of color were the majority in U.S public schools, whereas in 1970, 80% of students were White (Strauss, 2014)" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 5). This growth of diverse students into public schools means that educators must become aware of the cultural make-up of the students in their classroom and adopt a culturally sustaining pedagogy. Culturally sustaining pedagogy, or CSP, "seeks to perpetuate and foster – to sustain – linguistic, literate,

and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). As the political climate in society has become more polarized, especially in regard to immigration, teacher attitudes towards immigrant students or students from immigrant parents, is an issue that must be addressed.

However, for this issue to be addressed, educators must be willing to address how their socio-political beliefs and implicit bias affects the academic performance of their Latinx students. To realize this, "classroom teachers and other educators need to understand that achievement, or lack thereof, is an experience or an accomplishment. It is not the totality of a student's personal identity or the essence of his or her human worth" (Gay, 2018, p. 1).

For the purpose of this study, Latinx will refer to any individual who self-identifies as Hispanic and/or is from Central or South America or with parents from Central or South America who speak Spanish either as their first or second language. African-American will refer to any individual who self-identifies as either Black or African-American. Conversely, White will refer to any individual who self-identifies as White/Caucasian/Anglo-Saxon. This study seeks to discover the implicit bias of educators of any ethnicity or race on Latinx students and how that implicit bias affects the academic performance of Latinx students and school culture. In the case of this research study, the terms implicit bias and socio-political bias are used synonymously to discuss how educators' innate biases dealing with socio-political issues, such as race, affects the academic performance of Latinx students and school culture. All terms, White, African-American, and Latinx, will remain capitalized throughout this writing to give proper respect to each, respectively.

Statement of Problem

As public schools become increasingly diverse and have an increasing population of Latinx students, it is necessary for teachers to receive implicit bias training and to understand the negative effect the current predominantly White curriculum has on minority students. As Christine Sleeter stresses, "Although racial achievement gaps have been a focus of attention, solutions have emphasized offering all students the same curriculum, taught in the same way – based on the language, worldview, and experiences of White English-Speakers (Gutierrez, Asato, Santos, & Gotanda, 2002)" (Sleeter, 2012, p. 565). As Sleeter continues to explain, the majority of public-school teachers are White and have not had any prior acceptable training or education on how their attitudes and pre-conceived ideas may affect the academic performance of Latinx students in their classroom (Sleeter, 2016). "Student achievement gaps need to be aggressively addressed. For example, the percentage of Hispanics age 25 and older with a high school diploma or more was 52.4 percent in the 2000 census, compared to 85.5 percent for Whites. In addition, the percentage of Hispanics with bachelor's degrees or more was 10.4 percent, compared to 27 percent of Whites" ("National Education Association," n.d., para. 2). The foundation for a successful education is a positive relationship between teachers and students; this cannot occur if a teacher's implicit bias is affecting the relationship between student and teacher. Christine Sleeter emphasizes this by stating, "White teachers often have more difficulty forming constructive relationships with students of color, particularly African American students than with White students. Commonly assuming that African American and Latino parents do not value education, White teachers are much less likely to build relationships with them than are teachers of color" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 559).

Furthermore, the curriculum taught at public schools is largely White and not representative of all of the students being taught in public schools. As Paris and Alim question in their text *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World,* "For too long, scholarship on 'access' and 'equity' has centered implicitly or explicitly around the White-gaze-centered question: How can 'we' get 'these' working-class kids of color to speak/write/be more like middle-class White ones (rather than critiquing the White gaze itself that sees, hears, and frames students of color in every which way as marginal and deficient)?" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 3). They continue to explain that "instead of being oppressive, homogenizing forces, CSP (culturally sustaining pedagogies) asks us to reimagine schools as sites where diverse, heterogeneous practices are not only valued but *sustained*" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 3).

As the makeup of the students in public schools becomes more diverse the curriculum they are being taught should be representative of the students in the classrooms. Students should be able to see themselves and their lived experiences within the texts and assignments they are presented. Many educators are currently not implementing a culturally inclusive pedagogy or establishing the foundation within their classroom to enable Latinx students to develop a strong ethnic identity and feel connected to their school. More needs to be done by educators and the schools to support Latinx students in closing the achievement gap.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to understand how teachers' implicit bias affects the academic achievement and identity of Latinx students, the importance of school culture for

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Latinx students, and the importance of not only implementing a culturally sustaining pedagogy, but a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy. More specifically, this study will explore the following research questions: Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?, Research Question Two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?, and Research Question Three (RQ3): What are teachers' beliefs about their students' academic abilities? Additionally, this research study hopes to illustrate that improvements can be made to the current methods and tools that are utilized to determine implicit bias.

<div align="center">Significance of Study</div>

Geneva Gay explains how "teachers rather than students, were 'culturally deprived' because they did not understand or value the cultural heritages of minority groups. Educational reform needed to begin by changing teacher attitudes about non-mainstream cultures and ethnic groups, and then developing skills for incorporating cultural diversity into classroom instruction. These changes would lead to improvement in student achievement" (Gay, 2018, p. 35). As a result, the racial ideas and attitudes of educators towards Latinx students will help to increase professional understandings of how teachers' attitudes and implicit biases impact the academic performance of Latinx students as well as the culture of the school in which they teach. As Christine Sleeter points out, "The demographic gap between students and teachers is growing as the student population continues to diversify but the teaching population does now" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 559). The ever-evolving demographics and cultures of the students in public schools

across the United States emphasizes the need for educator cultural bias training and the implementation of a culturally sustaining pedagogy in all public-school classrooms.

<p style="text-align:center;">Theoretical Perspectives</p>

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) is a pedagogical theory and practice that "seeks to perpetuate and foster – to sustain – linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). This idea of a more culturally inclusive pedagogy was brought to attention by Geneva Gay who argued that "all schools and teachers, regardless of the ethnic and racial makeup of their local student populations, must be actively involved in promoting equity and excellence, and all students must be benefactors of these efforts" (Gay, 2018, p. 21). She presented the theory of a culturally responsive pedagogy for students of varying cultures and experiences to be better represented in the classroom. The curriculums that are predominantly used in public schools are centered around White, middle-class norms and strive to have all students fit into those norms. Gay argues, "if educators continue to be ignorant of, ignore, impugn, and silence the cultural orientations, values, and performances styles of ethnically different students, they will persist in imposing cultural hegemony, personal denigration, educational inequity, and academic underachievement upon them" (Gay, 2018, p. 33).

Paris and Alim take the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy a step further and explain that "the term 'relevant' does not do enough to explicitly support the goals of maintenance and social critique… CSP explicitly calls for schooling to be a site for sustaining

<p style="text-align:center;">7</p>

the cultural ways of being communities of color" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 5). They further

explain that "culturally sustaining pedagogies are approaches to teaching and learning with the

potential to improve academic outcomes among students, particularly those who have been

underserved by school" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 91). The implementation of a culturally

sustaining pedagogy in public schools is significant to increase the success of students of color.

Critical Race Theory

  Critical Race Theory is an attempt to theorize race and use it as a tool to analyze and

understand school inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 48). This theory centers on the

following three ideas:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States

2. U.S society is based on property rights

3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can

    understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate,

    1995, p. 48).

  For the purpose of this research study, Critical Race Theory is utilized in research in

regard to the academic performance of Latinx students in public schools as well as how the

implicit bias against Latinx students can affect the culture of a school. An additional tenet of

Critical Race Theory is the inclusion of "voice" from underserved populations. "The 'voice'

component of CRT provides a way to communicate the experience and realities of the oppressed,

a first step in understanding the complexities of racism and beginning a process of judicial

redress" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 14). Implementing a multicultural education has been touted

as a way to include students' voices from a variety of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic classes. However, multicultural education is not always practiced in the best way.

> Current practical demonstrations of multicultural education in schools often reduce it to trivial examples and artifacts of cultures such as eating ethnic or cultural foods, signing songs or dancing, reading folktales, and other less than scholarly pursuits of the fundamentally different conceptions of knowledge of quests for social justice. (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 61)

This can be a concern if students feel that their culture or ethnicity is not worth more serious, academic attention. Christine Sleeter uses the term "trivialization" to describe how culturally relevant pedagogy can be reduced down to step by step instructions instead of utilizing it as a standard for teaching and learning. Sleeter "suspects that many educators, parents, or policy makers interpret culturally responsive pedagogy as cultural celebration, *even when* it is presented as a process for building academic learning on the cultural repertoires students bring" (Sleeter, 2012, p. 569). Furthermore, teachers without the proper understanding or training can create lessons that are supposed to be inclusive but are actually harmful. Sleeter asserts "that although must teachers believed that they knew what culturally responsive pedagogy is, most attributed their students' academic difficulties to factors within the student and family rather than to pedagogical factors under educators' control. What most teachers had learned about culturally responsive pedagogy was not sufficiently potent to disrupt deficit theorizing about students, particularly in schools under pressure to raise student test scores" (Sleeter, 2016, p. 156-175).

Additionally, Critical Race Theory exerts that racism in society can be traced back to the history of property rights in the United States. The history of property ownership in the U.S is full of turmoil from conquest to stolen lands. Property ownership relates to the field of education

in that the people with better property are entitled to be enrolled in exceptional schools. This can be represented in the curriculum provided to students.

> The availability of 'rich' (or enriched) intellectual property delimits what is now called 'opportunity to learn' – the presumption that along with providing educational 'standards' that detail what students should know and be able to do, they must have the material resources that support their learning. Thus, intellectual property must be undergirded by 'real' property that is science labs, computers and other state-of-the-art technologies, appropriately certified and prepared teachers. (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 54)

This is significant because it is largely non-white students that "continued to be poorly served by the school system. The academic achievement of African-American and Latino students failed to improve while their suspension, expulsion, and dropout rates continued to rise" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 56). While districts have attempted to de-segregate, schools have actually become more segregated than ever and schools that are pre-dominantly students of color seem to suffer the most when it comes to academics and opportunities. A study conducted by Erica Frankenberg and Chungmei Lee from Havard University found "decreasing black and Latino exposure to white students is occurring in almost every large district as well as declining white exposure to blacks and Latinos in almost one-third of large districts… the isolation of blacks and Latinos has serious ramifications: this isolation is highly correlated with poverty, which is often strongly related to striking inequalities in test scores, graduation rates, courses offered and college going rates (Frankenburg & Lee, 2002, p. 24).

Rationale for the Study

The demographics of the United States have been increasingly evolving, becoming more culturally diverse. As of 2016, Hispanics numbered 18% of the population in the United States

and this increase is prevalent in public schools (Flores & Pew Research Center, 2017). While the Latinx population is the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States, they are one of the least educated groups. "Approximately 14% of Latinx students ages 16-24 were classified as dropouts/pushouts, as compared to only 5% of White students, enrollment in four-year colleges is 56% versus 72%" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 84). The growth of diverse students into public schools means that educators must become more aware of the cultural make-up of the students in their classroom and adopt a culturally sustaining pedagogy. As Paris and Alim state, "the educational trajectories for large portions of the Latinx population have been adversely impacted by educational neglect (MacDonald, 2004) and insufficient attention given to how students' cultural frames of reference influence teaching and learning, particularly in educational settings serving communities that have been historically underserved by schools (Guiterrez, Morales, & Martinez, 2009)" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 84). As the political climate in society has become more polarized, especially in regard to immigration, teacher attitudes towards immigrant students is an issue that must be addressed. The role of a teacher is to be an advocate, supporter, and mentor for all students, regardless of their ethnicity or background. Christine Sleeter expresses this sentiment best when she says, "excellent teachers take the time to get to know their students, then shape their pedagogy around relationships with them" (Sleeter, 2012 p. 571). Additionally, Sleeter explains that "it is significant that a teacher's ability to establish relationships with students' families and communities, and to establish a culturally responsive learning community, were valued by students and parents of color but are rarely central to mainstream definitions of quality teaching" (Sleeter, 2016, p. 163).

The importance of implementing a culturally sustaining pedagogy in all classrooms is evident by the increase in diverse students enrolled in public schools. Teacher attitudes toward immigrant students and students of color are important for in order for students to achieve academic and personal success. This research study will specifically explore the effect of teachers' beliefs on Latinx students and school culture.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND BACKGROUND

This chapter examines the importance of the term culture, Latinx student identity and teachers' implicit bias on school culture, colorblindness in education, and defines a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy. Furthermore, this chapter explores the connectedness between student identity, school culture, and teacher attitudes and how those factors can affect the academic success of Latinx students. This chapter also discusses the importance of implementing a culturally sustaining pedagogy in schools.

Additionally, this chapter discusses various research studies that have been conducted on the various factors that affect the academic performance of Latinx students including, school culture, implicit bias, and the developing identity of Latinx students. This research provides a strong foundation for a critical view of teacher attitudes towards Latinx students, how possible socio-political views of teachers are affecting the academic performance of those students, and how a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy can address this issue.

Culture

The term culture has been attached to various meanings throughout history and is a fundamental concept in discussing the need for more culturally inclusive pedagogy in education. Heath and Street examine the way we think about the use of the word culture. "Street (1993b) proposed that we think of culture as a verb rather than as a noun – a fixed thing. Ethnographers who adopted this idea took culture to be unbounded, kaleidoscopic, and dynamic" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 7). Thinking of culture as verb can cause ethnographic research to become particularly challenging due to the popular usage of culture as noun. "Nouns such as these lead

people to believe in fixed boundaries around things and events as well as beliefs and values"

(Heath & Street, 2008, p. 8). When people view culture as a "fixed" thing, it leads to beliefs that

cultures are distinctly different from one another when in actuality that is not the case. Heath and

Street explain, "that the word of ethnographers shows again and again that groups that see

themselves as vastly different from their neighboring groups actually share many habits and

patterns of behaviors" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 8). They further expound how

> we generally associate 'culture' with one or more 'societies,' often seen as synonymous
> with 'nation,' 'racial group,' 'religion,' or 'ethnicity.' Yet these biological and
> geographic frames of birth origin or chosen affinity also develop sub-groupings that have
> a strong sense of their own special ways of doing and believing. (Heath & Street, 2008, p.
> 9)

These sub-groups can have varying traditions, religious affiliations, language dialects,

among other differences while being located within the same geographic boundaries. It is

important to also note the way culture and cultural patterns function within institutions, such as

public schools and universities. Heath and Street assert,

> complexes of cultural habits and beliefs change for institutions and organizations as well
> as social groups. Some of these changes take place in the open while others go on behind
> the scenes or without participants' awareness. Stimulating such changes in almost every
> circumstance are pressures and forces – social, political, and economic – from outside the
> group. Powerful individual personalities can also shift the sense of cultural identity or
> potential of such groups. (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 10)

The pressures and forces that Heath and Street refer to can affect public institutions due

to the fact that they are government funded. This indicates that public schools and universities

would feel the political and economic pressures that generally do not align with the cultures

found within the population of students at those institutions. Furthermore, the "powerful

individual personalities" that Heath and Street reference can be connected to the dominant White

curriculum and standards that students of color are expected to adapt to within public schools in

order to achieve academic success. Further research on dominant White curriculum is discussed forthcoming.

<center>Latinx Student Identity</center>

Identity is an important construct for any adolescent but is even more important for students of color who become inundated with a White, Euro-centric curriculum in place at public schools. Growing research has shown that there is a distinct link between ethnic identity and school achievement for Latinx students. Researchers Carlos E. Santos and Mary Ann Collins from Arizona State University conducted a study to find the connection between the role of ethnic identity and school connectedness to performance on standardized tests. The participants in the study were of Mexican origin living in Arizona and consisted of 436 students. The results of the study found

> school connectedness and ethnic identity were both positive predictors of academic achievement in reading and math… [students] feeling connected to a school played a protective role against having a less positive sense of ethnic private regard in predicting achievement in reading, particularly in a school context where youth of Mexican origin make up the dominant group at the school, which may make having a less positive sense of ethnic identity incongruent with the school context/population in which this study took place. (Santos & Collins, 2016, p. 450)

Daisy Verduzco Reyes conducted research on identity formation in Latino students attending college. The research focused on Latinx students receiving higher education, the findings are still significant for Latinx students in K-12 schools. The study was conducted on Latinx students in three different types of universities and how their membership in Latinx organizations at those universities help to shape and sustain their cultural identity. A quick summation of this research shows that belonging to an organization gives Latino students a sense

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of belonging on their campus and a support group to help them navigate their new educational environment (Reyes, 2017). Another study conducted on middle school teachers and Latinx students in Northern California found that it "is not that positive teacher-student relationships 'feel' better, but that they facilitate learning (Katz, 1997). Researcher and educator Susan Roberta Katz observed and interviewed eight Latinx students in Grade 7 and their ESL teachers. Through her findings, it was shown that the Latinx students felt unfairly labeled by their teachers as gang members and criminals. Katz found that because these students were being bused in from a neighborhood known for its high-crime level and poverty, teachers were unfairly stereotyping the students. With the school's intense focus on high test scores, teachers would focus their instruction only on those students they felt would be high achieving; pushing aside the students they thought were "at-risk". While this study was completed in 1997, it is important to note because the findings and conclusions drawn from it are drastically similar to the present experience Latinx students face in schools. It appeared that many of the ESL teachers did not take the time to establish meaningful relationships with their Latinx students and it resulted in low performance and behavioral issues in those classes. Conversely, a Language Arts and Social Studies teacher from the same school treated his Latinx students as individuals and established a good rapport with him. In turn, those students seen as behavioral problems in other classes became leaders in his class. He reported not having an issue with classroom management or with his students. These studies demonstrate the importance of Latinx students cultivating their identity and the essential role educators have to give Latinx students the chance for achievement in education. It is evident that establishing a rapport with students and showing care for them as individuals can make a difference in the way they behave and learn in a classroom. The question

that this research leads us to is how exactly do educators assist Latinx students in the United

States in developing and sustaining their cultural identity while encouraging their academic

success?

<div align="center">Teachers' Implicit Bias</div>

Teacher beliefs and implicit bias play a pivotal role in how a student of color feels about

themselves as a person and the likeliness that they will achieve academic success in school. As

Helenrose Fives and Michelle Buehl have discovered, teacher beliefs are very complex and have

a reciprocal relationship with context and experiences.

> …individual and contextual constraints may hinder the enactment of their beliefs, and
> therefore beliefs and practice may not always be congruent. Researchers examining
> consistency between beliefs and practice need to consider the larger context in which the
> teacher is situated as well as the multiple aspects of the teacher's belief system. (Fives &
> Buehl, 2012, p. 488)

Dr. Anne Walker, Dr. Jill Shafer, and Dr. Michelle Iiams from the University of North

Dakota conducted a study to determine the extent of teacher attitudes towards ELLs, what factors

affect teacher attitudes towards ELLs, and how do these attitudes vary depending upon the

community. Data was collected through both surveys and interviews of the teaching staff at 28

schools. The findings from the study showed that teacher attitudes towards ELL students was

neutral to strongly negative. Some overwhelming findings from the study showed that

> 70% of mainstream teachers were not actively interested in having ELLs in their
> classroom. 25% of teachers felt that it was the responsibility of ELLs to adapt to
> American culture and school life. Additionally, 87% of teachers had never received any
> professional development or training in working with ELLs, 51% said they would not be
> interested in training even if the opportunity was available. (Walker, Shafer, & Iiams,
> 2004, p. 152)

Upon examination of the data, researchers concluded "the majority of teachers do not appear to start out with negative attitudes about English Language learners… rather, the majority of teachers start out with little to no training in ELL education and as such are vulnerable to misinformation circulated by the media or the public at large" (Walker, Shafer, & Iiams, 2004, p. 152). While the researchers focused on the issue of teacher bias stemming from lack of training and professional development, an important point that was brought up was how misinformation perpetuated by the media leads to the development of bias in teachers. Even with professional development opportunities available, many teachers choose not to participate or even refuse to accept information that opposes their own beliefs. The reason for this is because people tend to fear things they are not knowledgeable about and have not be exposed to.

> In rural and small communities, where the majority of residents often have little or no experience with diverse populations, these sudden and dramatic demographic changes can translate into community misunderstanding and fear. Negative attitudes about immigrants and refugees have been documented in numerous towns and small cities across America. (Walker, Shafer, & Iiams, 2004, p. 133)

This is an issue that could be remedied by exposure to diverse cultures, talking to people from different ethnic backgrounds and reflecting on personal bias. The fear of the unknown can be especially dangerous for educators because with the demographics of the United States become more diverse, it is the responsibility of teachers to be open and accepting of all students no matter their ethnicity, background, or where they may come from. As mentioned in the study, further quantitative and qualitative research needs to be completed in order to have a better understanding of the factors influencing teacher attitudes and the measurement of teachers' implicit bias; especially for educators in rural communities.

Researchers Axinja Hachfield, Adam Hahn, Sascha Schroeder, Yvonne Anders, Petra Stanat, and Mareike Kunter utilize the newly created Teacher Cultural Belief Scale (TCBS) to assess teachers' multicultural and egalitarian beliefs. They conducted two studies with the aims to test the measurement model and reliabilities of the new instrument along with testing the validity of the two subscales, multiculturalism and egalitarianism. At the conclusion of their study their "findings provide support for the idea that teachers' cultural beliefs directly impact their teaching practices" (A. Hachfeld, et al., 2004, p. 994). While further research is needed, "the newly developed TCBS provides a useful tool for assessing teachers' multicultural and egalitarian beliefs" (A. Hachfed, et al., 2004, p. 995). Even though this study was performed in Germany, it is still important to include as the United States is increasing in the diversity of students in schools. With the difficulty of assessing a teachers' implicit bias, a measurement tool is an essential component in identifying how much a teacher's beliefs may be negatively affecting students of color in their classroom.

School Culture

School culture is another important factor for Latinx students having the ability to be academically successful. School culture is referred to as a "general sense of belonging, support, and safety within the school" (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2011, p.749). Many factors affect a school's culture including the attitude of the teachers, administrators, and students. If the culture of the school is poor, then it is more likely that students attending that school don't feel connected to their environment and may struggle to be successful in their classes. In the previously mentioned study conducted by Susan Roberta Katz, the middle school that was used in the research was

seen as having a deficient culture for Latinx students. While the administration at the school attempted to stop the Latinx students coming from a neighborhood known for its' gang activity, Katz commented "clearly the tradition at Coolidge was to regard the students bused in - who happened to be Latino and African American – as 'those kids', the Other, the problem" (Katz, 1999, p. 821). Several studies have been done to examine the link between school connectedness and academic achievement. Carlos E. Santos and Mary Ann Collins investigated the role of ethnic identity in the association with school connectedness and performance on standardized tests. The participants in the study were 436 Mexican youth attending a middle school in the southwestern part of the United States. The results of the study showed "school connectedness and ethnic identity were both positive predictors of academic achievement in reading and math… having low levels of ethnic private regard and high levels of school connectedness was associated with higher achievement…" (Santos & Collins, 2016, p. 450). While this study was limited in that the participants were in the majority at their middle school and more data could have been collected through interviews and questionnaires, it is an important starting point for more research to be done. The conclusions illustrate the importance of schools having a strong culture and allowing all students to feel connected to their school; even if students do not have a solid sense of personal ethnic identity, an inviting school culture can enable them to still find academic success. An additional study completed by Guadalupe Espinoza and Jaana Juvonen examined the sensitivity to the school social context and how it varied between Latinx and White students. The participants consisted of 520 students in grades 4-7, 39% identified as White, 35% as Latino, 8% as African American, 8% as mixed, 6% as Asian, and 4% as other. Researchers used student completed questionnaires and self-reported data such as, perceptions of school

climate, perceptions of behavior norms, demographics, and rule-breaking behaviors. The results

of the study showed that "in addition to school interpersonal climate, perceived behavioral norms

among grade mates are indeed an important index of the school social context associated with

school conduct" (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2011, p. 755). Furthermore, it was found that "among

Latino students, a positive school climate is associated with perceptions of a peer culture where

rule breaking is not perceived as normative among peers, which, in turn is associated with their

own conduct" (Espinoza & Juvonen, 2011, p. 756). These findings of school behavior being tied

to school climate coincide with the findings from Susan Roberta Katz's study where the Latinx

students "tried to distinguish themselves from Asian students (whom they categorized as 'nerds')

through acting 'bad'. Olivia, an exemplary student in elementary school, attributed her

downslide in middle school to the fact that '[p]eople grow up. They act bad. They're not going to

be like those little nerds'" (Muller, 1999, p. 829). In this case, the Latinx students developed

their cultural identity by purposely not acting like the students they deemed "nerds", the Asian

students. An additional study done by Moosung Lee, Yeonjeong Kim and Na'im Madyun

explored the relational characteristics of negative school environments and how it affects the

academic achievement of immigrant students. The researchers used 3615 immigrant students in

44 public schools as participants. Data used was GPA to determine academic achievement and

dropout percentage and student body size as variables that could affect student relationships.

Their findings showed that a student's peer group can directly affect their level of achievement

in school.

> The academic achievement and orientation of these students who "act White" result in
> their being shunned and marginalized by their racially-identical peers" (M. Lee, et al.,
> 2018, p. 542). Furthermore, "having friends who do not plan to go to college and/or who

dropped out of school, tended to show lower both educational expectations and achievement among immigrant students. (M. Lee, et al., 2018, p. 552)

There is a difficult balance for Latinx students to find a connection with their school and develop sense of belonging in their school environment to also feeling proud and strong in their identity as a Latinx and among their peers. If the school culture is determined to make students of color feel like an "Other", it may mean Latinx students will turn to one another for support and rebuke any attempt the school makes to connect to them.

Parental Support

A lack of parental support or involvement is echoed by many educators as an issue preventing students from being academically successful. However, there is a significant difference between parental involvement and parental support. Goodall and Montgomery discuss involvement "defined as 'the act of taking part in an activity or event, or situation' (Macmillan Dictionary 2009-2012b) while engagement may be defined as 'the feeling of being involved in a particular activity' (Macmillan Dictionary 2009-2012b)" (Goodall & Montgomery, 2013). They further assert that "engagement with children's learning may not equate to – and should not be judged on the basis of – engagement with the school. Many parents, particularly those from ethnic minorities or those facing economic challenge, find engagement with schools difficult, but still have a strong desire to be involved in their children's learning and educations (Cooper 2009; Crozier 2001; Crozier and Davies 2007; Kim 2009; Turney and Kao 2009)" (Goodall & Montgomery, 2013). As student populations become more diverse and children come from a variety of cultures and backgrounds, schools and educators need to adopt a new view of how parents support their child's education. A qualitative study conducted by Delores C. Pena found

that teachers' perceptions, socio-economic status, parents' education, and cultural differences influences their level of involvement within schools.

The education level of the parents was a factor that determined how involved they were in their child's school. Pena discovered that many parents were unable to read in English or Spanish. "The staff assumed parents could read and understand the written information they disseminated, but a number of parents at Parker Elementary had limited literacy skills in both English and in Spanish. Therefore, the education-level barrier continued to influence how parents participated at the school" (Pena, 2000, p. 48). Additionally, many parents who participated in the study were Mexican American and "believe that educating students is solely the responsibility of the school and do not intervene in the teacher's professional duties (Carrasquillo & London, 1993)" (Pena, 2000, p. 46). Educators or schools that are not aware of families' cultural beliefs may misunderstand a parents' intention in supporting their child's education. Additionally, parents' socio-economic status and family issues also affect their ability to be involved in school activities. In the study, "the parents face cultural and social class differences that negatively influenced their involvement. They did not participate because they feared they would not be understood or welcomed. Although the school provided various opportunities for parent involvement, without first alleviating the fears and concerns of parents, the opportunities had limited success" (Pena, 2000, p. 51). Family issues such as childcare and transportation also determined whether or not parents could be involved in school. "Lack of transportation limited many parents from attending activities at the school" (Pena, 2000, p. 51). Having childcare available was an important factor for parental involvement. Pena stated that "many parents told me because they had babies and toddlers at home, coming to school was very difficult Parent

concerns about childcare were observed during the Saturday morning parent classes. Many parents asked if they could bring their children to the arts and crafts classes while they attended English-as-a-second language classes. However, because the teacher did not want to be a 'babysitter,' only one parent's children were allowed to be present at the class" (Pena, 2000, p. 51). This lack of childcare and transportation prevents many parents from attending school activities.

While schools may desire more parental involvement and support, it is important to understand that many parents are supporting their children in the best possible way they can. By working numerous jobs, helping children at home with their homework, reading to them, etc. are all ways to provide support for their children. Before schools can encourage parents to be more involved, there are steps that need to be taken by the schools and educators. "To include more parents and to deal with some of the factors influencing parents, the school staff must consider the educational level, language, culture, and home situations of parents. School staff must communicate regularly with parents through various methods in order to meet the educational and language needs of parents" (Pena, 2000, p. 52). Establishing positive relationships between schools, educators, parents, and the community will result in a better level of education for students.

Colorblindness in Education

The ability for educators to discuss race and culture within the field of education is an essential component to move towards a more inclusive and culturally sustaining pedagogy. However, the discussion of race and ethnicity can be difficult for educators, particularly White

educators. These difficulties can not only be seen in public school classrooms, but also in universities and teacher education programs. Christine Sleeter speaks about this by explaining that researchers

> Warren and Hotchkins (2015) report two studies in which although the professors' intentions about preparing teachers for students of color may have been laudable, their assumptions about what students of color need led them to promote 'false empathy' that was relatively comfortable for White teacher candidates but did not substantially challenge their beliefs and their ability to relate to children and families of color. (Sleeter, 2016, p. 159)

Furthermore, Sleeter asserts that "color-blind conceptions of quality teaching, by failing to account for ways race matters in education, support the continued Whiteness of teacher education" (Sleeter, 2016, p. 160). This issue can also be seen in K-12 public school classrooms in which "White teachers commonly sidestep fear through colorblindness, claiming, 'I don't see color, I just see children' (McIntyre, 1997; Valli, 1995)" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 560). Sleeter proposes that this fear is partly due to educators' desires to see themselves as good people as well as the fear that they will say something offensive. Additionally, Sleeter claims that many White educators, "lack awareness of themselves as cultural beings (Schmidt, 1999), assuming that their own beliefs and ways of behaving are 'the norm to which others should aspire' (Valli, 1995)… a tacit belief in the superiority of the White ways of doing things and perceiving the world, and a colorblind perspective toward race (Sleeter, 1992)" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 560, 573-574). To combat this problem, Sleeter emphasizes the need for educators and teacher education programs to directly confront race "by using insights from social movements, collaborating with communities to broaden the range of voices at the table, and engaging White faculty members in situating themselves within rather than outside an analysis of race, Whiteness can be constructively confronted" (Sleeter, 2016, p. 166).

Geneva Gay also discusses the importance of educators truly caring for their students. This "culturally responsive caring" as she refers to it requires educators to abandon their colorblindness to accurately see their students. She argues that "an essential part of this seeing and caring is teachers and students not trying to be color-blind, but routinely employing what Thompson (2004) calls 'color-talk'" (Gay, 2018, p. 62). Color-blindness can lead to a dominantly White curriculum and assessments. As Gay asserts, "most state and national standardized tests seem to ascribe to a color-blind philosophy, as evident by avoiding any specific references to cultural diversity, social class, race, and ethnicity beyond the superficial, such as names of characters (Maria, Abdullah, Wei-ying, Ganaraj) in scenarios and prompts for test items" (Gay, 2018, p. 157). Overall, the research presented illustrates the way color-blindness can affect the way curriculum and standardized assessments are written as well how colorblindness negatively affects teacher education programs. It is necessary for educators to create and partake in open conversations surrounding cultural inclusivity in the field of education.

<u>Socially Just Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy</u>

While many studies discussed here offer a few suggestions on how educators can combat the widening achievement gap for Latinx students, none mention the implementation a culturally sustaining pedagogy. In their book *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies* Django Paris and H. Samy Alim state, "CSP [culturally sustaining pedagogy] seeks to perpetuate and foster – to sustain – linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). They go further to assert that "culturally sustaining pedagogy exists

wherever education sustains lifeways of communities who have been and continue to be damaged and erased through schooling" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). Historically, public schools have been dominated by a White, Euro-centric curriculum that does little to include students of color. In their book, Paris and Alim argue that the utilization of a culturally sustaining pedagogy is

> about providing our children with the opportunities to survive and thrive, but it is also centrally about love, a love that can help us see our young people as whole versus broken when they enter schools, and a love that can work to keep them whole as they grow and expand who they are and can be through education. (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 14)

A study performed by Paula J. Mellom, Rolf Straunhaar, Carissa Balderas, Michael Ariail, and Pedro R. Portes should be the first of many in examining the effect of culturally sustaining pedagogies on deficit narratives in regard to students of color. The participants of this study were 147 3rd and 5th grade classroom teachers and they were distributed among 47 high-poverty elementary schools within 15 rural, suburban, and urban districts in North Georgia, which the study refers to as the New South. The term New South was developed due to the significant demographic shift the south as undergone in the past several decades due to the increasing number of Latinx immigrants. This study took place over two years and had one group of teachers undergo training and the implementation of a culturally sustaining curriculum, while a control a group of teachers utilized the standard professional development and curriculum offered by their schools or districts. The data from the study was collected from a variety of questionnaires, statistical analysis of test scores, observational videos, fidelity of implementation evaluations, and bi-weekly log data. Overall, the results of the study indicated that

whether manifested as a deficit mentality toward ELLs, benign neglect regarding their language needs or passive acceptance of home language use in the classroom, the findings have outlined degree to which cultural assumptions and prejudices still have a strong influence on many teachers' attitudes towards English Language Learners in the New South. (P.J Mellom et al., 2018, p. 105)

Teacher attitudes were mixed towards ELLs using their home language in class, but teachers that received training in culturally sustain pedagogies noticed an increase in student comfort and participation in their classroom. The researchers concluded that

the teacher logs analyzed here present compelling evidence that training in culturally responsive pedagogies can seem to mitigate such negative attitudes over time. However, whether such attitudinal changes remain long-term remains to be seen and is an important area for future inquiry. (P.J. Mellom, et al., 2018, p. 105-106)

While there are numerous positives for educators being trained to implement a culturally sustaining pedagogy, an argument can be made for steps to be taken in utilizing a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy. Introduced in *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies,* a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy works to assist in "the importance of fostering a justice-oriented citizenship that encourages youth to be active agents in the political process, encouraging critical dialogues around race, and recognizing the evolving and hybrid nature of immigrant youths' identities" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 197). The attention to this grew from high school teacher Daniel Walsh's "concerns that his teaching had focused on helping students make sense of inequalities without adequately delving into how students might challenge existing inequalities. Thus, he fears he many have inadvertently given students the impression that they are helpless in the face of inequities" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p.198). While no studies or research could be found on the implementation of a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy, the current shift in demographics and heated political climate reason that research on the implementation of this

pedagogy could aid in empowering Latinx students to better achieve in schools and give them an active voice in their communities.

<p style="text-align:center;">Student Voice in Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies</p>

As culturally sustaining pedagogies becomes a more ubiquitous concept, it is often only discussed in terms of what educators and policy makers can do to implement a culturally sustaining pedagogy in the classroom. In Paris and Alim's book *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World,* Jason Irizarry questions "How might understandings of culturally sustaining pedagogies be enhanced if they were informed by teaching practices developed, implemented, and refined by students themselves?" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 83). He further questions, more specifically, "As the largest and fastest-growing group of minoritized students and a community that disproportionately experiences academic underachievement, what can Latinx students teach us about developing teaching strategies that have the potential to improve their educational experiences and outcomes?" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 83). Irizarry draws on a two-year ethnographic study known as Project FUERTE in which the goal was to "critically examine the educational experiences of and outcomes for Latinx youth and to develop empirically based recommendations to influence the preparation of preservice and inservice teachers to work with Latinx students (see Irizarry, 2011)" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 85). The high school students who participated in the study were given the role as researchers and teachers within their Action Research and Social Change class. Students were given the freedom to select the content they could research and study within the class. "In contrast to their school curriculum,

the content the students selected to include as part of the class demonstrated a commitment to moving the exploration of the experiences as marginalized peoples from the periphery of the curriculum to the center of their work" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 89). The data collected from the study was a variety of interviews and field notes from observations of the students in the class and showed the power that students realized they possessed to improve their educational experience. Irizarry explains,

> the participants took the omission of Latinx people from the curriculum to implicitly suggest that Latinx people didn't have a history worth mentioning, and developed a sense of race and culture-based internalized oppression. When given free rein to inform the direction of the class, students worked to fill that void in their education and develop a deeper understanding of themselves through learning more about the experiences of Latinx people through literature and participation on a research project examining the education of Latinx students in urban schools. Their shift in engagement, from students with minimal investment in schooling (not to be confused with a lack of interest in education) to scholars with a passion for learning, was facilitated by an engagement with content that was connect to students' lives and interests, a core aspect of culturally sustaining approaches to teaching and learning. (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 91)
> Based on student responses in interview questions, students felt not only accomplished

and heard by others, but had gained a greater understanding of their culture. When asked what they would take away from this year, one student replied,

> I don't know. Like the whole thing…. Feel me? I thought Latinos were dumb, that were not smart. That's probably the biggest thing. I see that we are [smart] now. I thought that because of what they teach us and how they treat us [in school]. But now when we have the power in this class, to like learn stuff, hard stuff, but stuff that we like are connected to, we do the work. The presentations were big… (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 90)

The students in the study had felt powerless to change the standardized curriculum at their school. Along with facing penalties for speaking languages other than American English on their high school campus, the students also had no representation of themselves or their culture in the school curriculum. However, "when positioned as teachers and allowed to shape the classroom culture and climate, develop curricula, and take responsibility for its implementation,

the students offered a vision for what culturally sustaining pedagogies can be" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 94).

All of these concepts are associated with student academic success and their ability to cultivate a resilient ethnic identity. It is significant for educators to become aware of their own implicit bias and the way in which their biases affect their teaching practices. This will enable educators to better serve the Latinx students in their classroom.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology utilized for this research study. This chapter is organized into the following sections: methodological framework, research questions, research design, researcher's role, research setting, research participants, limitations of the study, data collection process, interview protocol, and data analysis.

The purpose of this research was to explore the effect of teachers' socio-political bias on the academic performance of Latinx students in their classrooms as well as the effect on the school culture. More specifically, this study examined the attitudes educators have towards Latinx students, their ability to perform well academically, and how these attitudes affect the culture of the school.

Methodological Framework

Qualitative Research Approach

This research study was completed using a qualitative approach due to the purpose of the study being to further understand the behavior of educators and the Latinx students in their classroom. Furthermore, the data gathered as part of this research study was collected through participants' survey responses and observations the researcher made in time spent at the research site. The data collected was then analyzed for recurrent themes and emerging patterns to assist in answering the following research questions:

Research question one (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

Research question two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?

Ethnography

This study utilized an ethnographic approach to determine the correlations between how Latinx students within the formal school setting learn through literacy and language and how educators affect this process. The researcher utilized this methodology through the lens developed by researchers Shirley Brice Heath and Brian V. Street. In this approach, ethnographic studies focus *in* education versus *on* education. The difference being that in education scholars generally have a background in teaching within a formal school setting and their study is "motivated by a desire to bring the knowledge gained in higher education to bear on reforming education policies, the school as an institution, specific subject-matter curricula, or pedagogical approaches of individual teachers" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 122). Utilizing this lens, the researcher hopes to collect data that will demonstrate the necessary implementation of a more culturally inclusive pedagogy.

Research Questions

The researcher examined the attitudes and biases of public-school educators towards Latinx students as well as how those biases affected the culture of the school. Research was conducted by content analysis of a qualitative survey process of educators at two public schools located in a rural community. The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions:

Research question one (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

Research question two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?

Researcher's Role

Due to the subject of the research study, it is important to disclose the race and gender of the researcher because it may have affected the responses of the research participants. The researcher was a White female who was a public-school teacher at one of the schools included in the research. As many of the participants in the study includes White female educators, it was important to note the similarity between the researcher and the participants as that may impact the results of the survey. When discussing the topic of race, it is not uncommon that members of the discussion will alter their responses depending on the demographic of the researcher.

Research Setting

Surveys were distributed online through educators' district e-mails which allowed for research participants to answer the survey questions in a quiet, private location of their choosing.

Research Participants

Research participants included forty-six (46) public school teachers and administrators who were randomly invited to participate from a sample of convenience of educators currently working in public school, who were known to the researcher as current public-school educators in one of the two public schools in the rural community. Research participants were contacted by the researcher through their school district e-mail to complete a survey that took approximately 20 minutes.

Race was a variable in the study. The researcher did not purposely invite participants based on their race but noted the self-identified ethnicities of the participants as a factor in their responses to the survey questions.

<u>Limitations of the Study</u>

This research study was limited in terms of the area where data was collected. While this study focused on two public schools located in a rural area, the researcher acknowledges that conducting the study in a more populated, urban area, may produce a variety of results due to the population of students that served there. Furthermore, only forty-six educators participated in the survey which could possibly skew the data. Finally, the researcher had originally included several open-ended questions about the participants' feelings on specific immigration policies in the state of Florida and the United States. However, the school district where the research was being conducted were uncomfortable with these questions being included in the survey and so had to be removed in order for the research study to move forward. If those questions had been included, the researcher would have a wider scope of data to analyze. The researcher also incorporated field notes, however, the field notes were only collected from one research site, instead of both. If field notes had been gathered from both sites, the study would have included a wider scope of insights into the participants.

Additionally, this research could be widened by including student voice of their experience in public school classrooms. However, in an effort to provide a clearer focus for this study, the researcher focused solely on educator responses.

<u>Ethical Considerations</u>

This research study was approved by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

<u>Research Participant Privacy</u>

Participation in this study as well as the responses were kept confidential. Any reference to the research participants were by pseudonym. Data files are store electronically on a password protected computer that only the researcher has access to. Only the researcher and the research supervisor might know who has participated in this study. Five years after the completion of this research study all personally identifying information will be destroyed.

<u>Risks to the Research Participants</u>

There were no expected risks for participating in this research study.

<u>Benefits to the Research Participants</u>

There were no direct benefits to the research participant regarding participation in this study beyond the general knowledge that they are assisting in furthering the knowledge related to this research topic and assisting the researcher in completing the thesis requirement for the Masters in Secondary Education program. There was no compensation associated with participation in this study.

<u>Data Collection</u>

Data collection included an adapted survey of Bandura's Instrument for Teacher Self-Efficacy and field notes written by the researcher. The survey included forty-four (44) questions

that took approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The survey was conducted online so participations could choose to take the survey in a comfortable, private environment.

<u>Survey Questions</u>

Survey questions were adapted from Bandura's Instrument Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale and were utilized based on prior research and the purpose of this study. Each survey question correlated to the study's research questions, listed under the section "Research Questions." Each survey question is different and aids in the analysis of the research questions.

Survey questions in the "Background Section" were meant to gather information about the participant's ethnicity, age, years as an educator, and city they resided in to complete the majority of their secondary education. This information was important to the study to draw connections between the participant's background and the survey responses.

Survey questions in the section "Efficacy to Influence Decision Making" focus on how much the participants feel that they can have a voice and an influence on the decisions made in their school. (RQ1)

Survey questions in section "Instructional Self-Efficacy" gathered information on how much participants believe they can effectively instruct their most difficult students, motivate students that may show low interest in school, and promote learning while dealing with a lack of support from home or from the community. (RQ1)

Survey questions in the "Disciplinary Self-Efficacy" section focused on how much research participants believe they can prevent disruptive behavior in their classroom as well as the role they play in discipline on school campus. (RQ1)

Survey questions in the "Efficacy to Enlist Parental Involvement" section focused on the role educators can take to have parents become more involved in school activities and with assisting their children in school. (RQ2)

Survey questions in the "Efficacy to Enlist Community Involvement" section gathered information on how educators can get local business, colleges, and members of the community to become more involved in working with the school and students. (RQ2)

Survey questions in the "Efficacy to Create a Positive School Climate" section focused on gathered information on how much educators contribute to ensuring school is a safe place for students and how they can establish positive relationships with their students. (RQ1)

Survey questions in the "Beliefs of Teaching Students" section gathered information on how educators teach students of various races and socio-economic status as well their beliefs in teaching students of varying cultures. (RQ1)

Survey Protocol

The survey protocol was utilized for data collection as well as data analysis. The survey utilized for this research study consisted of forty-four (44) questions. The results from the survey are evaluated and analyzed in Chapter Four.

The participants in the research study remained confidential with no reference to their name or school of work. However, data such as their current teaching position, ethnicity, age, years in the field of education, highest degree earned, and city where the participant attended high school were recorded by the researcher to identify any association among the research participants.

Field Notes

The researcher also collected data using a method of field notes described by Shirley Brice Heath and Brian Street. Field notes are recordings of individual's accounts. "Rarely, however, do such accounts indicate the fieldworker's means of grasping while in the midst of collecting data what fieldnotes taken over a specific period of time might mean. We recommend *conceptual memos* for this purpose" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 77). Through the analysis of these notes, the researcher discovered congruences and emerging themes between the field notes and the survey responses.

Reflexivity of a 6th Grade Teacher

Reflexivity is "a process by which ethnographers reveal their self-perceptions, methodological setbacks, and mental states, often includes broad general critiques of the field. Reflexivity enables ethnographers to see their research within historical and structural constraints that result from asymmetrical power distributions" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 123). Over the course of three years, the researcher adopted an ethnographic perspective in the utilization of reflexivity which is evident in the collected field notes. The field notes were based solely on the researcher's perceptions and recollections of the events that transpired on the school campus.

As the researcher, I recognize my position within the school as White educator who comes from a place of privilege. The schools utilized in this research are both considered to be low income schools and, as someone who has never experienced poverty, I do not fully understand the situations they have had to face. Additionally, as a White educator, I recognize that I possess my own biases towards students that have different cultural backgrounds and lived

experiences than I do. These biases can be seen in some of my teaching practices and attitudes I hold, but I also acknowledge that I have a responsibility to educate myself and do what is necessary to reverse my biases and be more culturally inclusive in my classroom.

Data Analysis

Due to the survey questions being asked on a rating scale, the research participants' responses were analyzed for emerging patterns with the intention of developing themes from the data. The researcher preferred survey questions over open-ended interview questions because survey questions were easier to keep the participants' responses anonymous. Anonymity was important to the researcher due to the sensitive nature of the research topic and because the participants are colleagues of the researcher.

After the initial reading and re-reading of the survey responses, the researcher processed the data through cross-tabulation to categorize information into themes for analysis. In utilizing a cross-tabulation method, the researcher analyzed the survey responses by dividing the research participants into the following sub-groups: African-American, Hispanic, and White. This allowed for an analysis and comparison of the responses to each survey question by sub-group. Additionally, the researcher utilized collected field notes of observations and interactions to further analyze and compare with the research participants' survey responses. This analysis included identifying emerging patterns and ideas into groups for use in this research study. The researcher interpreted and analyzed these groups of data to determine the implications of teachers' implicit bias on Latinx student academic performance and school culture.

The following chapter will present a summary of the results of the study. The results will be presented in various categories, in which each category is explained in order to ensure that only relevant results which are necessary for analyzing each research question are included.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. Research participants responded to survey questions using a scale of 1-9, 1 meaning "Not At All" and 9 meaning "A Great Deal". For the purpose of explaining the results in this chapter, the researcher grouped the rating scale numbers into the following categories: Any responses 1-3 were considered "Hardly Any Influence, responses 4-6 were considered "Somewhat Of An Influence", and responses 7-9 were considered "A Good Deal of Influence." For the purpose of determining correlations between participants' responses and themes within the data, the researcher grouped the participants into sub-groups by their identified ethnicity. The sub-groups are as follows: African-American, Caucasian, and Hispanic. Additionally, the researcher utilized the process of reflexivity in writing field notes containing observations and interactions with students, colleagues, and parents over the course of three years being an educator at the research site.

Background of Research Participants

Survey questions one through seven gathered information about the research participants' background information including their age, ethnicity, teaching position, years as an educator, highest degree earned, name of college, and city where the participant attended high school. This information is important to the study in order to identify patterns between the research participant's background information and the survey responses.

There were forty-six (46) participants in the survey; two of the participants identified as African-American, thirty-eight identified as White, and six as Hispanic. 27 participants are elementary educators and 19 participants were elementary educators. The ages of the participants

ranged from 24 years old to 68 years old. The research participants had various years of experience within the field of education ranging from first year educators to educators with forty-four years of experience. Additionally, participants attended various colleges both around the state of Florida and out of Florida. Research participants also completed high school in various areas around the country; thirty-three participants completed high school in Florida and out of those thirty-three, twenty participants completed high school in Volusia County.

Efficacy to Influence Decision Making

The efficacy to influence decision making section of the survey focused on how much the participants felt they had a voice in the decisions that are made in their school. This section aligns to Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate? Most participant responses fell in the middle of the scale; Hispanic and African-American educators felt they had somewhat to a good deal of influence in the decision-making process at their school. Conversely, White educators responded that they believe they have little to no influence in the decision-making process at their school.

Table 1: "How much can you influence the decisions that are made in your school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	1	3	2
White	12	21	5

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Instructional Self-Efficacy

The instructional self-efficacy section asked nine questions that were meant to gather information from the research participants on their role in teaching difficult students, promoting learning in their classroom, and motivating students. This section aligns to Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

For most of the questions within this section the participants' responses from all three sub-groups were indifferent according to the rating scale used. Participants felt strongly about question one which asked, "How much can you do to influence the class sizes in your school?" Almost half of the participants, 43.5% responded a one – meaning they felt that have no influence at all on their class sizes. The other responses to that question ranged from a two to a seven on the rating scale of one to nine.

Table 2: "How much can you do to influence the class sizes in your school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	0	1
Hispanic	2	3	1
White	31	7	0

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Interestingly, the question "How much can you do to promote learning when there is lack of support from the home?" received varying responses. African-American educators responded in contrast to one another; one believed that educators had no influence in promoting learning in their classroom when there is a lack of support at home while the other African-American research participant believed that educators have a great deal of influence in overcoming students' lack of home support to promote the importance of learning in their classroom. The Hispanic educators reported that educators have the ability to promote learning in the class even when students have a lack of support at home. On the other hand, while the majority of White educators believe educators are able to overcome a lack of home support to promote learning, fifteen White research participants believe that educators are unable to overcome a lack of home support in their students' lives to promote the importance of learning.

Table 3: "How much can you do to promote learning when there is a lack of support from the home?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	0	1
Hispanic	0	3	3
White	3	12	23

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The responses to the question, "How much can you do to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning?" were also varying when compared amongst the participant sub-groups. Both African-American participants reported that educators can do little to overcome adverse community conditions on students' learning. In contrast to those responses, Hispanic and White educators overwhelmingly believe that educators play a strong role in overcoming hostile community conditions to support student learning.

Table 4: "How much can you do to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on student learning?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	5	18	15

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Finally, the question, "How much can you do to get children to do their homework?" received the most variable responses within this section. Both African-American participants doubt that educators can do anything to get their students to complete their homework. Likewise, thirty-two White participants also doubt that educators can motivate students to do their homework. Hispanic educators were the only sub-group that responded positively to this question; all six of them trust that educators can influence students completing homework.

Table 5: "How much can you do to get children to do their homework?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	14	18	6

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Disciplinary Self-Efficacy

This section asked participants three questions that were focused on how much an educator can prevent and control disruptive student behavior in their classroom. This section aligns to Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

The first two questions in this section were concentrated on student behavior within the teachers' classrooms. The participants from all three sub-groups responded that they had a good

deal of control over disruptive behavior in the classroom and could do sufficiently get students to follow the classroom rules they put in place.

Table 6: "How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	0	6
White	0	10	28

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 7: "How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	0	6
White	1	9	28

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Question three asked, "How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?" The two African-American educators believed they could do a good deal to prevent issue behavior around school campus. Hispanic educators, as well, all thought that educators can do a great deal to counteract problem behavior in school. The responses from the White

educators, however, were more evenly distributed across the rating scale. While twenty-eight White participants believe a good deal can be done to prevent harmful behavior in school, ten participants consider that there is little they can do to stop problematic behavior on school campus.

Table 8: "How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	10	1	13

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Efficacy to Enlist Parental Involvement

The efficacy to enlist parental involvement section gathered information on how much educators felt they could involve more parents school activities and in the classroom. This section aligns to Research Question Two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?

The first two questions of this section asked how much educators can do to get parents more involved in school activities and how much educators can do to assist parents in helping their children succeed in school. Participants across all three sub-groups believed that they had some influence in getting parents more involved in school activities. However, there were twelve participants in the White sub-group who hold the belief that educators have little to no influence

for getting parents to become more involved in school activities. Comparably, educators across the three sub-groups all hold the belief that educators play some role to assist parents in helping their children to do well in school. And while twenty-nine White educators also hold that belief, nine of them disagree that educators are able to do much to assist parents in helping their children.

Table 9: "How much can you do to get parents to become involved in school activities?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	0	5	1
White	12	20	6

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 10: "How much can you assist parents in helping children do well in school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	9	21	8

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

As for the responsibility of educators in making parents feel comfortable on school campus, 69.5% of research participants responded that they had a good deal of influence on whether or not parents feel comfortable coming to school. 21.7% of educators felt that they have some influence on making parents feel comfortable coming to school campus, while 8.7% of participants answered that they have hardly any influence in making parents feel comfortable coming to school.

Table 11: "How much can you do to make parents feel comfortable coming to school?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	4	8	26

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Efficacy to Enlist Community Involvement

This section of the survey focused on how much educators felt they could do to get members of the local community, including churches and local business, involved with the school. Enlisting community involvement aligns to Research Question Two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?

The four questions in this section asked teachers how much they can do to get community groups, churches, local businesses and local colleges and/or universities, respectively, involved in their school. The responses to all four questions had a similar distribution on the rating scale

for all three sub-groups. Both African-American educators think that educators can do some to

involve the various groups in the community into their school. Hispanic educators hold a

stronger belief that educators can influence community groups to become more involved in their

school; four Hispanic educators believed educators could have a good influence while the other

two Hispanic educators thought educators could not do very much to evoke more community

involvement. White educators, on the other hand, had a stronger response disagreeing that

educators played a significant role in encouraging community involvement from local groups;

overall, ten White educators responded unfavorably to each of the four questions of how much

educators can do to get local community groups involved in school, eighteen White participants

believe educators can somewhat evoke community involvement, and nine White educators think

they can play a significant role in recruiting community groups to become more involved in

school activities.

Table 12: "How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with schools?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	10	20	8

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 13: "How much can you do to get churches involved in working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	11	18	9

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 14: "How much can you do to get businesses involved with working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	1	2	3
White	10	19	9

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 15: "How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	9	22	**7**

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Efficacy to Create a Positive School Climate

The efficacy to create a positive school climate gathered information about how large of a role can educators have in creating a positive culture at their school. This section aligns to Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

The responses in this section of the survey showed an overwhelming number of participants, over 67%, felt that they had a good deal of influence on making the school a safe place for students, making students enjoy coming to school, getting students to trust their teachers, and getting students to believe that they can do well on their schoolwork. The responses to the three previously listed questions by sub-groups were: African-American, Hispanic, and most White educators felt that they can do a good deal to make school a safe place for students, make students enjoy attending school, and get students to trust them as educators. There was one White educator that believed they could do little to influence those three things for students.

Table 16: "How much can you do to make the school a safe place?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	1	11	26

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 17: "How much can you do to make students enjoy coming to school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	1	7	30

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 18: "How much can you do to get students to trust teachers?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	1	6	31

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Table 19: "How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well on their schoolwork?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	2	3
White	1	7	30

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

In regard to reducing school absenteeism, the participant responses were, again, widely distributed across the rating scale. The question of reducing school absenteeism had the most widespread responses and while 54.3% of participants felt they had some influence on the reduction of school absenteeism, 28.2% responded that they had no influence at all on reducing the amount of school absences. Only 17.4% of research participants thought they had a good deal of influence on reducing school absenteeism; the two African-American participants thought they could do little to reduce the amount of students' absences from school. One Hispanic participant held the belief that educators could do a great deal to decrease school absenteeism, while five Hispanic participants believed they could only do a little or nothing at all to reduce school absences. Eleven White participants responded that they could do nothing at all to diminish the number of students being absent from school. However, twenty-seven White participants thought they do a little something to reduce the amount of student absences.

Table 20: "How much can you do to reduce school absenteeism?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	1	7	30

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The responses concerned with reducing school dropout were similar to the responses of reducing school absenteeism. All six of the Hispanic educators believed that they can do more to decrease the school dropout rate. One African-American educator thought that educators could do nothing at all to reduce school dropout, while the second African-American educator thought there was little an educator could do to lessen the number of students dropping out of school. Thirty-five White educators felt that educators have a good deal of influence over reducing the number of school dropouts, while three White educators held the belief that nothing at all could be done to diminish the rate of school dropouts.

Table 21: "How much can you do to reduce school dropout?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	3	20	15

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Beliefs of Teaching Students

The final section focused on various beliefs educators may hold about students and how that can affect their instruction and response to classroom behavior. Beliefs of teaching students aligns to Research Question Three (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate?

The first two questions in this section focused on if educators think about their students in terms of their race or ethnicity and if the gap in achievement among students of different races is about poverty and not race. For both questions, an overwhelming number of the participants 86.9% and 82.6% respectively, reported that they do not think of their students in terms of their race of ethnicity and that they do believe a great deal that the achievement gap among students of different races is related to their level of poverty, not their race. All six Hispanic educators responded that they somewhat or a great deal do not think of their students in terms of their race or ethnicity and that they believe they are color blind in their teaching. Both African-American educators reported that they hardly ever think of their students in terms of their race or ethnicity. Thirty-seven White educators hold the belief that they barely or almost never think of their

students in terms of their race of their ethnicity. One White educator reported that they do think

of their students in terms of their race and ethnicity.

Table 22: "I don't think of my students in terms of their race or ethnicity. I am color blind when it comes to my teaching."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	3	3
White	1	2	35

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

In regard to the statement, "The gap in achievement among students of different races is

about poverty, not race.", both African-American participants, six Hispanic participants, and

thirty-seven White educators hold the belief that the achievement gap is due to students' poverty

and is not tied to their race. One White educator responded that they do not at all believe the gap

in student achievement is due to poverty and not race.

Table 23: "The gap in achievement among students of different races is about poverty, not race."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	1	6	31

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The results become more widely distributed across the rating scale when the questions concern the cultures of the participants' students. While 63% of participants responded that they greatly believe teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of their students, 13.1% of research participants disagree. Only 23.8% believed that their teaching should be adapted to the cultures of their students. Of these responses, both African-American educators strongly believed that teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of their students. Five Hispanic educators also strongly believed in teachers adapting their teaching to address the cultures of their students, while one Hispanic educator disagreed with the statement. Thirty-three White educators thought teachers should adapt their teaching to their students' cultures, but five White educators did not think teachers should be adapting their teaching to match students' cultures.

Table 24: "Teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of African America, Latino, Asian, and Native American students."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	1	1	4
White	5	10	23

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

In relation, the participants were asked their feelings about the following statement, "In some cultures, students are embarrassed to speak in front of others, so I take this into account and don't call on these students in class". In response, 21.7% of the participants do not at all take this into account in their classroom, 47.8% report that they somewhat take this into account with students, and 30.5% greatly take this into account with the students in their classrooms. From those percentages, the two African-American participants responded that they do take students' culture and possibility of embarrassment into account. Five Hispanic participants take this statement into account, while one does not take this into account at all in their classroom. Twenty-nine White participants somewhat or completely take this statement into account when calling on students in their classroom. However, nine White participants do not take their students' culture into account when calling on students in the classroom.

Table 25: "In some cultures, students are embarrassed to speak in front of others, so I take this into account and don't call on these students in class.

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	9	17	12

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The remaining questions centered around the participants' instructional practices with students of different races and ethnicities and the pressures to raise student achievement levels. 100% of the research participants responded that they greatly match their instruction to the various learning styles of their students of different races or ethnicities. However, when asked if the participants kept the limits of their students' ability in mind and in giving them assignments that they know they can do to avoid students feeling discouraged, the data was more widespread; 36.9% of participants responded in the 7-9 range on the distribution scale, 47.8% responded in the 4-6 range, and 15.2% answered in the 1-3 range.

Table 26: "I try to keep in mind the limits of my students' ability and give them assignments that I know they can do so that they do not become discouraged."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	2	2	2
White	5	19	14

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

Furthermore, in response to the statement: "With all the pressures to raise student achievement, finding and using examples for cultural, historic, and everyday lived experiences of my students takes away (or could take away) valuable time from teaching and learning what matters most", 37% of participants answered that using students' lived experiences or cultural examples would not at all take away from valuable teaching time, 30.4% responded that it would somewhat take away valuable time, and 32.6% believe it would greatly take away valuable teaching time if they were to implement examples for cultural, historic, and lived experiences of the students. The sub-groups of participants responded the following way: Three of the Hispanic participants believed that implementing students' lived experiences or cultural examples could take away valuable time in class. The other three Hispanic participants believed that implementing cultural examples and students' lived experiences would not at all take away valuable time in class. Both of the African-American participants responded that finding and implementing cultural examples and students' lived experiences will take valuable instructional time away from the class. Twenty-four White participants reported that they believed finding and

incorporating cultural/historical examples and students' lived experiences would take away from

needed instructional time in the classroom. Fourteen White participants disagreed that

implementing cultural examples would take away valuable time.

Table 27: "With all the pressures to raise student achievement, finding and using examples for cultural, historic, and everyday lived experiences of my students takes away (or could take away) valuable time from teaching what matters most."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	2	2	2
White	5	19	14

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The final question posed to participants asked if they believed talking about race with

colleagues would open up a can of worms and little good would come from it. The majority of

participants, 43.5% responded that it would somewhat open a can of worms. 36.9% of research

participants believe that it would not at all open up a can of worms and 19.6% agreed that it

would not be good to discuss race with their colleagues. By breaking down these responses into

the subgroups the results were: two African-American educators believed a good deal that

speaking about race with colleagues would not result in anything good. Five Hispanic educators

responded that they also believed nothing good would come out of talking about race with

colleagues. One Hispanic educator thought that speaking about race with colleagues would not

open a can of worms. In contrast, twenty-two White educators believed talking about race with

colleagues could possibly or greatly open up a can of worms and nothing productive would result

from the discussion. However, sixteen White educators responded that they do not at all believe

speaking about race with their colleagues would open up a can of worms.

Table 28: "Talking about race with my colleagues could open up a can of worms; little good is likely to come from it."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	16	15	**7**

Range of Responses: 1-3= Not at all-Little; 4-6= Somewhat; 7-9= A great deal

The following chapter will discuss the conclusions that can be drawn from the data

collected in this research study. The chapter will provide a succinct summary of the research and

methodology, implications of this study in the field of education, and recommendations for

further research to be conducted on the topic of teachers' implicit bias, Latinx student academic

performance, and school culture.

Field Notes

The tables below illustrate the overarching themes that the researcher discovered through

the analysis of the field notes. The observations and interactions are focused on the past three

years as an educator at the research site. (See Appendix E for original copy of written field notes).

Table 29: Year One (2016-2017)

Themes	Observations, Interactions, and Self-Perceptions
Education as a political construct	• Students participating in No Immigrant Day • Good seeing students become actively involved in politics, but I wonder how many of them actually understand the meaning [behind No Immigrant Day] or just don't even care because they get to miss school? • Teachers voicing frustrations because politics doesn't belong in school and should not be brought into the classroom.
Negative school culture for Latinx students	• Teachers hoping many of the students don't show up to school, but then complaining that they cannot do the activities they have planned. • Fight on the high school side. White student told a Hispanic student his family was going to be deported, they don't belong here. • School not stepping in or encouraging teachers to have a dialogue with the students about their feelings or questions.

Diminishing of teacher/student relationships	• Teachers hoping many of the students don't show up to school. • White teachers, in front of students, "now the country can get its' morals back and we can get prayer in schools." • White high school teachers "written up" for making comments to and in front of students about how illegals will now be deported and this will help employment around the country. • Latinx educator: "They need to come school. Education is too important."
Importance of Latinx student identity	• Hispanic student: "My mom said I had to come because school is important." • Many Hispanic students did not show up to school. • White student: "I wish I was Mexican so I could skip school." • Hispanic students telling other students to get over it, it's not that bad.

Table 30: Year Two (2017-2018)

Themes	Observations, Interactions, and Self-Perceptions
School as a safe place for *all* students and teachers	• Teacher, Maddie, sponsors Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at school and promotes a Kindness week sponsored by GLSEN • Parents and teachers voice their unhappiness that their children are being exposed to a disgusting organization such as GSA and the unfairness that it was put on the school announcements, but Florida Christian Athletes was not. • Educators, myself included, e-mailed the sponsor while copying the school staff on the e-mail, voice our anger at the legal counsel as well as our support to her and the GSA. • Both the GSA sponsor and another teacher met with the principal to resign citing that they felt unwelcome and unsafe continuing to work at the school. • In reflection, I feel hurt for the students who may have finally felt seen or heard and like they had finally found a group/community/teacher that appreciated and accepted them for who they are.

	• Taylor receiving school shooting threat several days after Parkland; students crying, some acting "tough", some seem unfazed. • Student: "What do we do if there's a shooting?" Me: Looking blankly, pausing, "We will hide, away from the door and windows." • Teacher: "You would never expect something bad to happen out here in Pierson."
Perpetuated division between educators	• Group of teachers and parents join together and sought legal counsel through the Liberty Counsel. Liberty Counsel sends cease and desist letter and requires school to cancel Kindness Week. • Middle school teacher, Leann, tells me "I can't believe how unwelcoming this school has become. What about our gay students? I don't think I can continue to teach her and have my sons here in the 'Pierson Bubble'" • In reflection, I feel shocked and angry towards the teachers and members of our community that they would go to the lengths that they did to prevent an organization from being a part of the school.

	• Teachers discussing the solution to schools shooting, many arguing that teachers should be allowed to carry guns, others arguing that allowing teachers to be armed would create more issues.
Education as a political construct	• The school shooting threat and recent gun violence inspired students to walk out onto football field to show their stance against gun violence. • Students asking teachers what they can do to get involved in fighting against gun violence.

Table 31: Year Three (2018-2019)

Themes	Observations, Interactions, and Self-Perceptions
Importance of family for Latinx students	• Students leaving for weeks to months at a time to visit family in Mexico. • Student, Alana: "Ms. I won't be here for three weeks in December… Can you give me the work I'll miss?" • Student, John: "Ms, I'm also going to be gone for the rest of the month. My mom is going to e-mail you asking about assignments. Can you put together the work for me?" John explains that his dad is unable to come into the country, so he and his mom travel to Mexico once a year to visit him.

	• Students are excited at this time. They tell me they love to visit their family. They go 4 wheeling, eat a bunch of delicious food, and play with their cousins.
Parental Involvement in school	• Having issues with a particular student in class and it takes several months to set-up a conference with the parent. • During parent conference, mother cries and says "My older son went here and was also playing around, was just goofy, and a teacher had him arrested for no reason. The teachers here are racist against Mexicans." • Reflection: It's interesting that John's mother e-mailed weeks in advance and was concerned about his grade falling if he were to leave and asked if it would be possible for him to do assignments while he was gone. However, Alana's parent did not contact any teachers or the school to let them know that she would be missing three weeks of school.
Teachers' bias towards Latinx students	• Mother stating the school and teachers at the school are racist against Mexicans. • Reflecting on how "racist" has been a popular term used by 6th graders this year; any action or statement they do

	not agree with, they believe is racist. Do they truly understand the meaning of the word? • How many students believe the same thing this mom believes, that the teachers and the school are racist against Mexicans? What do teachers do to make students feel this way? Is it an unfair assumption? • Teachers voice complaints when students leave for an extended period of time to Mexico. • White teachers complaining that they cannot get in touch with parents, parents won't show up for conferences. • The school's attendance score is lowered due to the number of students that leave for an extended period of time.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the conclusions that can be drawn from the data collected in this research study. The chapter will provide a succinct summary of the research and methodology, implications of this study in the field of education, and recommendations for further research to be conducted on the topic of teachers' implicit bias, Latinx student academic performance, and school culture.

Summary of Research

The purpose of this research study was to examine the how teachers' implicit bias and socio-political views effect the academic performance of Latinx students and the culture of the school where they are employed. This research was conducted using a qualitative survey of which forty-six (46) participants completed.

The survey included forty-four (44) questions and the responses from the survey were used to investigate the following research questions: Research Question One (RQ1): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect school climate? and Research Question Two (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of their ability to affect student success outside of the classroom?

The survey was provided to participants online through their district provided e-mail which enabled them to complete it in a comfortable, private space of their choosing. The responses to the survey were done on a rating scale of "1-9", 1 meaning Not At All and 9 meaning A Great Deal. The research participants' responses were analyzed using a cross-tabulation method by which the research participants were organized into sub-groups based on

their self-identified ethnicity. The responses were analyzed for emerging patterns with the intention of developing themes from the data. The researcher preferred survey questions over open-ended interview questions because survey questions were easier to keep the participants' responses anonymous. Anonymity was important to the researcher due to the sensitive nature of the research topic and because the participants are colleagues of the researcher.

Noteworthy survey responses and themes found within the collected data correlated directly to the two research questions. The researcher utilized a cross-tabulation method to analyze the responses to each survey question for each sub-group of participants. This analysis of the data was used to determine the effect of teachers' socio-political views on the academic performance of Latinx students as well as the effect these teacher views may have on school culture.

The findings of this study indicated that the beliefs and implicit biases of educators do affect the academic performance of Latinx students as well as the culture of the school in which they are employed. Based on the survey results, the responses were varied and there were some inconsistencies between responses to several survey questions in comparison to the sub-groups of research participants as well as to the researcher's perceptions and observations.

The researcher concluded that the beliefs of the research participants directly impact the culture of the school where they teach, which align directly to Research Question One (RQ1). Based on their responses, research participants in each sub-group believed that they had a great deal of influence on discipline within their classroom and in getting students to follow their rules. Additionally, participants from all three sub-groups also reported that they understood the significant role they play in creating a positive climate in their school.

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As previously mentioned, school climate is an important factor in the academic success of Latinx students. Past research has shown that when students feel connected to their school and to their ethnic identity, they will have higher levels of achievement in math and in reading (Santos & Collins, 2016, p. 450). Based on the participants' responses, it is encouraging to see that the majority of educators from all sub-groups do believe they have a great deal of influence on creating a positive school culture for their students. A component of creating a positive school culture is the dynamic of educator and student relationships. As researchers Walker, Shafer, and Iiams discovered in their study, educators, specifically in rural and small communities, develop negative attitudes towards Latinx students due to the educators in that area having no prior training or experience with diverse populations. The rapid and sometimes sudden changes in demographics of the school population can result in the fear developing within the community (Walker, Shafer, & Iiams, 2004). This fear manifests as negative attitudes that educators hold towards Latinx students in the classroom and creates a toxic environment for students and other educators across school campuses.

The research site being a toxic environment for students and educators is evident in the field notes that were collected by the researcher in all three years but was especially prevalent in years one and two. In year one, the day after President Trump was elected the researcher observed White students yelling at Latinx students that they "will be sent back to Mexico!" as well as a White student telling a Latino student that "your family is going to be deported because they don't belong here!" These types of interactions resulted in fights between White students and Latinx students and perpetuated a divide between the White students and the Latinx students. Additionally, several White teachers were overheard speaking in front of students about the

country getting back to having better morals as well as putting prayer back into schools. Some White high school teachers were even written up or spoken to by administration for making comments to students about how Trump would clean up the country by deporting the illegals and this will result in better employment rates around the country. These interactions between students and between teachers and students are indicative of fears that have developed over time of Latinx people in the community and on school campuses.

Additionally, year two of collected field notes observed the creation of a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at the school. GSA was promoting Kindness Week, an event sponsored by GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network). Once the organization was formed and promotion for Kindness Week began, a group of teachers and parents sought legal counsel to have the organization disbanded. This group of parents and teachers were said to be disgusted that their children at school would be exposed to this kind of organization and accused the organization's sponsoring teacher as "coercing the students to participate in the organization's activities." The researcher spoke with several teachers that voiced their anger at these events. One middle school teacher stating, "the school is now so unwelcoming that I no longer want to teach here. I think I may have my sons transfer too so they don't stay in the 'Pierson Bubble'". The researcher also spoke with two teachers, including the organization's sponsoring teacher, as they explained the anger and fear they now felt. Both teachers went to the principal to resign in concern for their safety and desire to work in a more welcoming environment. These observations suggest the great influence educators can have on the culture of a school. In both of these observations over a two-year period, it was evident that the school research site had

become a negative and unsafe environment for both students and educators on the campus of the research site.

The responses concerning how much educators can do to reduce the school dropout rate were problematic in connection to establishing a positive school culture. While fifteen White educators and two Hispanic educators held the belief that there is a great deal they can do to decrease the school dropout rate, twenty-three White educators, four Hispanic and two African-American believed that there was some to nothing that they could do to help lessen the number of students dropping out of school. Previously mentioned research conducted by Moosung Lee, Yeonjeong Kim, and Na'im Madyun determined that a student's peer group and school environment influenced the level of academic success of immigrant students. Students that associated with peers who did not plan on going to college or who dropped out of school showed lower levels of achievement has well as educational expectations, based on GPA and dropout percentages as data collected (M. Lee, et al., 2018). Additionally, the study conducted by Susan Roberta Katz demonstrated how school administrators were attempting to prevent a group of Latinx students from attending school because they were coming from a neighborhood that had been known for its' gang activity. Katz remarked that the school clearly regarded the Latino and African American students as "those kids", the Others, and the school considered them to be a problem. (Katz, 1999). This view of Latinx students as "Other" or less than, is harmful for those students to feel comfortable and safe in their school. The participants in this research study can combat this perspective by establishing strong, positive relationships with the Latinx students in their school so that these students can feel not only welcomed but valued.

Interestingly, there were several discrepancies in the results when comparing the three sub-groups of participants. In regard to the questions concerning discipline with students, Hispanic and African-American participants felt more strongly than their White counterparts that they can control disruptive behavior in the classroom; ten White educators felt that they only had some control over the behavior that occurs in their classroom. The main inconsistency were the responses to the question of preventing behavior issues on school campus. While two African-American and six Hispanic educators answered that they felt they had a good deal of influence on preventing behavior issues across school campus, twenty-five White educators responded that they had only some to no control over preventing problem behavior on school campus. These results are conflicting with the participants' responses about the role of educators in making school a safe place, where twenty-six White educators, four Hispanic, and one African-American believed they had a great deal of influence in making school campus a safe place for students.

As previously illustrated from the field notes collected in year one, there have been instances at the research site of Latinx students feeling unwelcomed and, arguably, treated as "Other". The researcher observed the weakening of teacher/student relationships beginning in year one. Teachers commenting to students about illegal immigrants being deported and "cleaning up the country" contributes to Latinx students feeling unwelcomed on their school campus. This pattern progresses to year two at the research site. In February of year two a planned "No Immigrant Day" occurred where Latinx people did not attend work or school in order to demonstrate what society and the workforce would be like if there were no immigrants in the United States. In this instance the researcher observed teachers commenting that they "hope a bunch of kids don't show up" and "what's the point of today? What are they even

getting accomplished?" Teachers making these comments in front of other students contributes to the diminishing of positive relationships between teachers and students and continues to regard Latinx students as "Other".

These responses demonstrate a disconnect educators have that their responsibility as educators in creating a positive school culture has no alignment with the handling of discipline in the classroom or on school campus. Previous research indicated that school culture was tied to school behavior and to the way students perceived the peer culture in the school. From the study conducted by Jason Irizarry, schools can feel like an unwelcomed place for students of color if they are not fitting into the standard White norms. In his research, Irizarry found that "because of the restrictive language policies subordinating the use of languages other than Dominant American English in the school, the students often felt alienated from teachers and the content they needed to learn in order to meet their personal and educational goals" (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 87). If students are struggling to find a sense of belonging at their school and are not receiving the social and academic care from their teachers, it can result in misbehavior from the students. This misbehavior from Latinx students can be a result of students who are struggling with their ethnic identity. In the research conducted by Susan Katz, Latinx students used bad behavior to show that they were different from the Asian and White students that they deemed as "nerds" (Katz, 1999). Teachers and administrators can gain a better understanding of the congruence between a positive school culture and the academic achievement of students, specifically students of color, this will allow for students to gain a connection with the school, develop a healthy ethnic identity, and a higher level of academic success.

The development of Latinx identity in students was an overarching theme demonstrated through the collected field notes. In year one, the presidential election caused dissonance between students and researcher observations illustrated Latinx students feeling both prideful and afraid of their ethnicity. While some Latinx students stood up to the White students who were shouting and making comments, other Latinx students shrank away from the confrontation. However, later on in year one when "No Immigrant Day" took place, the researcher observed that many Latinx students seemed to have gained pride in their identity. One student explained that she was "excited to show everyone what Florida would be like if all of the immigrants left or were deported because we're important!" While some teachers at the research site made comments about politics and political things not belonging on a school campus, it was evident to the researcher that allowing Latinx students to become politically active was developing pride in their ethnic identity.

The researcher concluded that the beliefs educators hold concerning parental involvement and community conditions had a profound effect on Latinx students' connectedness to the school and behavior. These beliefs align with Research Question Two (RQ2). Based on their responses, participants across the three sub-groups hold differing beliefs about their role in encouraging parental and community involvement in schools.

In regard to the role educators have in making parents feel comfortable coming to school, 32 research participants responded that they believed they had a good deal of influence in making parents feel comfortable enough to be involved in school. However, as survey questions became more specific about parental and community involvement in schools, there was a disparity between the three sub-groups. While five Hispanic educators believed they had a good

deal of influence in getting both local businesses and churches involved and both African

American educators agreed, eleven White educators believed they had no influence at all in

getting churches involved and ten White educators responded that they had no role to play in

persuading local businesses to be involved in the school. These responses indicate that educators

of color felt a stronger value in the connection between school and its' community than White

educators. Even though all educators felt that they have influence over encouraging more

parental involvement in schools, it was interesting that White educators felt either disconnected

or did not see how incorporating the local community can bring value to their students.

Additionally, a significant number of educators from all three sub-groups hold the beliefs

that they can do a great deal to motivate the most difficult students, promote learning in their

classroom even when there is a lack of support at home, keep students on task, and overcome

adverse community conditions. However, five White educators responded that they felt unable to

overcome hostile community conditions for students' learning as well as the inability to motivate

student learning when there is a lack of support from students' homes, while only one African-

American educator and no Hispanic educators reported the same.

Field notes gathered from years two and three reveal the disparity between educators and

the local community. The creation of the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), as discussed beforehand,

brought forth a negative incident of community involvement. Based on observations, parents

from the community along with educators voiced their distaste and "disgust" for the formation of

the GSA organization. These community members went so far as to seek legal counsel to cease

and desist with the organization's planned Kindness Week. This response made educators and

other parents feel unsafe and unwelcome within their own school and community. The educator

who sponsored the GSA, as well as educators who identify as LBGTQ, met with the principal to voice their concerns over safety and to announce their resignation.

An additional disconnect between educators and the community was noted by the researcher in regard to parent contact. Educators were observed voicing their frustration at being unable to contact parents or guardians of students. Moreover, educators were struggling to have parents attend parent/teacher conferences to discuss academic and behavior concerns for students. A teacher was overheard stating, "It has taken three months to set-up this conference, and she wants to complain about us." Educators who felt that their time was being wasted trying to establish parent contact and set-up conferences, began to not show up to parent conferences due to their frustration. The researcher also observed a specific parent conference where a mother of a Latinx student stated, "The teachers here are racist against Mexicans." This negative attitude is harmful to the development of a productive relationship between both parents and educators and affects the academic success of students.

These findings demonstrate a high need for educator trainings in both implicit bias and teaching students from a poverty situation, as well as the implementation of a socially just, culturally sustaining pedagogy. Paris and Alim explain the importance of a culturally sustaining pedagogy as a means to "sustain linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). However, merging social justice with culturally sustaining pedagogies would enable both educators and students to approach inequalities that exist for students beyond race and ethnicity. As previously mentioned, this concept came about from Daniel Walsh's concerns that students were not learning enough about how to challenge and overcome the inequalities they face on a regular basis; "many students at

Danny's school have embraced the rhetoric of color-blindness and postraciality, which suggests that institutional racism has been eliminated and that people of all races have equal opportunities (Bonilla-Silva, 2010)" (Lee, Walsh, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 200). Even though a socially just culturally sustaining pedagogy is a fairly new concept and no studies or research could be found on the implementation of this pedagogy, it is evident from the participants' responses in this study that the application of this type of pedagogy would direct teachers to confront the inequalities their students face and teach their Latinx students how to challenge and overcome inequalities. This pedagogical approach will advocate for the students in the community who struggle with poverty and/or a lack of support at home.

The researcher determined that the attitudes educators hold about teaching students in their classroom along with their beliefs about students' instructional abilities reveals how educator socio-political views can affect the academic performance of Latinx students. Based on the survey responses, research participants across the three sub-groups had fluctuating ideas about their ability to motivate students and promote learning as well as incorporating students' cultures into their teaching.

The responses concerning educators' beliefs in teaching students, specifically students of color, the research found that the majority of educators from all three sub-groups believed that the achievement gap is due to poverty, not race; thirty-one White, two African American, and five Hispanic educators reported that poverty is the cause of the achievement gap between students. Additionally, twenty-three White, two African American, and four Hispanic educators responded that teachers should adapt their teaching to the cultures of the students in their classroom. Moreover, there were more White educators than Hispanic and African-American

educators that found value in using cultural examples or their students' lived experiences in the classroom due to the rise in pressure to ensure that all students are mastering the state standards or in adapting their teaching to the culture of their students. Specifically, four Hispanic educators agreed that implementing students' lived experiences or cultural examples would take away valuable instructional time while fourteen White participants disagreed that the implementation would take away instructional time.

As Jason Irizarry illustrated in the Project FUERTE study, students did not feel that they were properly represented in their school's curriculum or that their culture was welcomed at their school until they were given the role of researchers in their Action Research and Social Change class. This role enabled students to find their voice and a sense of pride in their cultural identity. They became more invested in school and in their own education with a passion for learning (Irizarry, Paris, & Alim, 2017). It is surprising that educators of color do not see the benefits of incorporating Latinx students' lived experiences into their classroom. It is possible that the educators of color who participated in the research may fear black lash from the community or the school district for putting more focus onto the culture of students, instead of on curriculum standards. However, without students' ethnic identity and culture being included into the classroom, Latinx students will not feel valued within their school or rise to levels of academic success.

Furthermore, White educators' responses indicate that they do not take their students' race or ethnicity into account in their teaching; thirty-five White educators answered that they are greatly color blind when it comes to teaching students of color. While some educators may believe that it is commendable to be "colorblind" and this leads them to believe that they are

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treating all students in their classroom fairly and equally. However, this "colorblindness" can be dangerous for the level of academic success of students of color because a students' culture and ethnicity effects the way they learn, process information, and see themselves as a scholar. Christine Sleeter argues that teachers are fearful of discussing race and racism and so they escape this fear by claiming colorblindness, "I don't see color, I just see children" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 560). This leads to the identity and specific needs of Latinx students to be ignored and pushed aside by their teacher, resulting in a feeling of disconnect to the school and lower levels of academic success. Sleeter continues to explain that Critical Race Theory is essential to "expose various ways in which processes and structures of teacher education that purport to be color blind in fact serve to perpetuate Whiteness in teacher education" (Sleeter, 2016, p.162). Exposing colorblindness within teacher education programs is a start to combating this common attitude within the field of education. Geneva Gay poses the use of "color-talk" for educators to show culturally responsive caring and to truly see their students for who they are as individuals. (Gay, 2018). The White participants of this research study may have felt that they were demonstrating their feelings of equality by responding that they are color blind when it comes to their teaching, but these responses as well as the field notes indicate the need for additional resources and learning for the teaching of diverse students.

Additionally, these views can negatively affect the population of students at the school as well as their colleagues and as a result, create a negative school culture.

Conclusions

Based on the survey results and the field notes, the researcher can conclude that the socio-political biases of teachers effect the way they manage their classroom, discipline students, and provide instruction.

As previously discussed, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the theory that race is a social construct; "race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates or retires when convenient" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 9). A key tenet in CRT is the role of voice and storytelling in order to bring power and healing to instances of racial injustice (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Keeping this theoretical perspective in mind, the emerging themes from the study results, specifically the field notes, illustrate the significance of allowing Latinx students and educators to share their narratives and lived experiences in the classroom. As explained in the literature review chapter, allowing the oppressed the ability to tell their stories is the first step in understanding the complexities and how to combat racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998). For example, the field notes demonstrated that the participation of Latinx students in the "No Immigrant Day" empowered them to tell their stories and speak about their experiences with injustice.

The importance of "voice" in CRT leads to the implementation of socially just culturally sustaining pedagogies (SJCSP) in the classroom. SJCSP works to encourage students to be active in the political process as well as participate in critical conversations about race as a means to recognize the evolving nature of ethnic identity (Lee, Walsh, Paris, & Alim, 2017, p. 197). Though survey responses revealed that numerous educators across all three sub-groups did not

see the value in utilizing students' lived experiences or incorporating cultural examples in the

classroom, other educators have experienced the powerful transformation in their students when

integrating CSP in their curriculum and SJCSP provides that additional component of activism

for students to use their voice and further develop their ethnic identity. Furthermore, the work

done by Jason Irizarry in Project FUERTE exemplified the impact of allowing student choice in

the development of class curricula. Specifically, in regard to this research study, permitting more

student voice in the classroom would result in a stronger positive school culture, better

development of Latinx student identity, and a higher level of academic success for Latinx

students.

This study confirms the necessity for not only a more culturally inclusive curriculum, but

one that allows for student social activism. While many states and school districts focus solely on

raising achievement levels through standardized tests and scripted curriculum, a socially just

culturally sustaining pedagogy is the first step in fostering a positive school culture and

encouraging higher levels of academic success for Latinx students.

<u>Educational Implications</u>

An increase in understanding how teachers' socio-political views and implicit bias can

affect the academic success of Latinx students and school culture is crucial to the inclusivity of

all students in public school classrooms and the curriculum that educators implement. The

increase in racial diversity of students enrolled in public schools emphasizes the need for implicit

bias training for both teachers and administrators as well as the implementation of a socially just

culturally sustaining curriculum. As a result, school districts need to be conscientious of how

teachers' socio-political views may be affecting the increasing achievement gap between White

students and students of color as well as the culture of the school and implement more

professional development, training, and discussions to address the ongoing issue of inclusivity of

not only Latinx students, but all students of color. Trainings should come in the form of free or

school-funded professional developments or conferences that are made available to all teachers,

administrators, school staff, and counselors. The results of this research study established the

need for counselors to be trained to better help underserved students who are struggling with

their ethnic identity, academic success, or feeling of belonging on campus. Additionally, more

needs to be done by the schools to assist parents in supporting their children. Many parents want

to support their children academically but are unable to be involved in school activities due to

work or other familial obligations. Schools can offer parent nights that offer free dinner and

babysitting services while parents can receive tutoring services with their children or the use of a

computer lab. Schools can also go out into the community and set-up workshops for parents at

local churches, businesses, or community centers. This will allow for parents to feel more

comfortable and for the community to become involved in school activities. Furthermore, it is

important for administrators to also be proficient in monitoring student behavior across campus

to ensure that all students feel safe at their school. Educating teachers and staff about teaching

diverse populations or social just culturally sustaining pedagogy is the first step in addressing the

issues of negative school culture, academic success of Latinx students, and the development of

Latinx student identity.

Recommendations for Further Research

This research study examined the effect of teacher's socio-political views on Latinx students and the effect of teachers' beliefs on school culture. Further research can be done to extend the understanding of how teachers' implicit bias directly affects the academic success of students of color in public schools and how educators' socio-political views can create a culture of toxicity within the school for both students and colleagues. Researchers could expand on this study by using a wider sample size of participants, incorporating analysis of student data, such as test scores and grades, and utilizing open-ended interview questions as a means to include more in-depth responses and provide a deeper analysis of the language used in the responses. Furthermore, this study would benefit from the inclusion of students of color. Including student voice as well as their lived experiences within public schools would be a powerful addition to the study.

Additionally, as the researcher utilized the process of reflexivity in developing the meaning of the research within historical context, further research could be accomplished by utilizing an intertextual reflexivity process. "'Intertextual reflexivity' refers primarily to the historical accounts that locate the data not in a supposedly overarching 'ethnographic present' but instead in a developing and moving 'past' (Foley, 2002)" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 124). Applying an intertextual reflexivity process can expand this research study to examine how colonialism influences teachers' implicit bias on Latinx student identity and academic performance.

APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351
IRB00001138
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

May 7, 2019

Dear Elsie Olan:

On 5/7/2019, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Study, Category 2
Title:	An Ethnographic Study Examining the Effect of Teachers' Socio-Political Views on Latinx Student Academic Performance and School Culture
Investigator:	Elsie Olan
IRB ID:	STUDY00000475
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Racine Jacques, Ph.D.
Designated Reviewer

APPENDIX B: VOLUSIA COUNTY APPROVAL LETTER

P.O. Box 2118	200 North Clara Avenue	DeLand, Florida	32721-2118
DeLand (386) 734-7190	Daytona Beach (386) 255-6475	New Smyrna Beach (386) 427-5223	Osteen (386) 860-3322

School Board of Volusia County

Mr. Persis, Chairman
Mrs. Ida D. Wright, Vice Chairman
Mr. Ruben Colon
Mrs. Linda Cuthbert
Ms. Jamie M. Haynes

Mr. James T. Russell
Superintendent of Schools

May 29, 2019

Jessica McMaster
5316 New Jersey Ave
DeLeon Springs, FL 32130

Dear Ms. McMaster,

I have received your request to conduct research in Volusia County on the topic of "**An Ethnographic Study of Teachers' Socio-political Views on Latinx Student Academic Performance and School Culture**". After committee review and amendment to the survey instrument titled "Bandura Survey Instrument", we are approving your request with this research.

By copy of this letter you may contact the school and teachers to participate. Please keep in mind, participation in this study is voluntary.

We would very much appreciate receiving a copy of your findings upon the completion of the project.

Sincerely,

Eric J. Holland
Assistant Director, Digital Learning & Assessment

EJH

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE OF SURVEY

BANDURA'S INSTRUMENT

TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

This questionnaire is designed to help gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in the classroom, specifically for Latinx students. Please indicate your opinions about each of the statements below by circling the appropriate number. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be identified by name.

Background Information

Ethnicity _____

Age _____

How many years have you been an educator? _____

Highest degree earned _____

Name of college attended _____

In what city did you attend high school? _____

Efficacy to Influence Decision making

How much can you influence the decisions that are made in the school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you express your views freely on important school matters?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Instructional Self-Efficacy

How much can you do to influence the class sizes in your school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to promote learning when there is lack of support from the home?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to keep students on task on difficult assignments?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to increase students' memory of what they have been taught in previous lessons?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get students to work together?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get children to do their homework?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Disciplinary Self-Efficacy

How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Efficacy to Enlist Parental Involvement

How much can you do to get parents to become involved in school activities?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you assist parents in helping their children do well in school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

How much can you do to make parents feel comfortable coming to school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Efficacy to Enlist Community Involvement

How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with the schools?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get churches involved in working with the school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get businesses involved in working with the school?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with the school?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

Efficacy to Create a Positive School Climate

How much can you do to make the school a safe place?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you do to make students enjoy coming to school?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you do to get students to trust teachers?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you help other teachers with their teaching skills?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
</pre>

How much can you do to enhance collaboration between teachers and the administration to make the school run effectively?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you do to reduce school dropout?

<pre>
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal
</pre>

How much can you do to reduce school absenteeism?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Beliefs of Teaching Students:

I don't think of my students in terms of their race or ethnicity. I am color blind when it comes to my teaching.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

The gap in achievement among students of different races is about poverty, not race.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of African America, Latino, Asian, and Native American students.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

In some cultures, students are embarrassed to speak in front of others so I take this into account and don't call on these students in class.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

It is not fair to ask students who are struggling with English to take on challenging academic assignments.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite a Bit		A Great Deal

Students of different races and ethnicities often shave different learning styles and good teachers will match their instruction to these learning styles.

  1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal

I try to keep in mind the limits of my students' ability and give them assignment that I know they can do that they do not become discouraged.

  1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal

With all the pressures to raise student achievement, finding and using examples for the cultural, historic, and everyday lived experiences of my students takes away (or could take away) valuable time from teaching and learning what matters most.

  1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal

Talking about race with my colleagues could open up a can of worms; little good is likely to come from it.

  1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9
Nothing   Very Little   Some Influence   Quite a Bit   A Great Deal

APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Ethnicity

46 responses

Age

46 responses

How many years have you been an educator?

46 responses
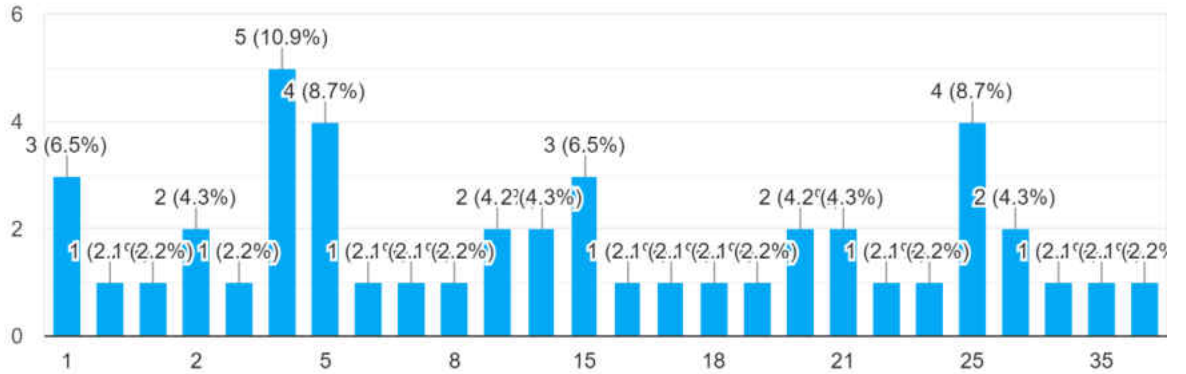
Highest degree earned?

46 responses
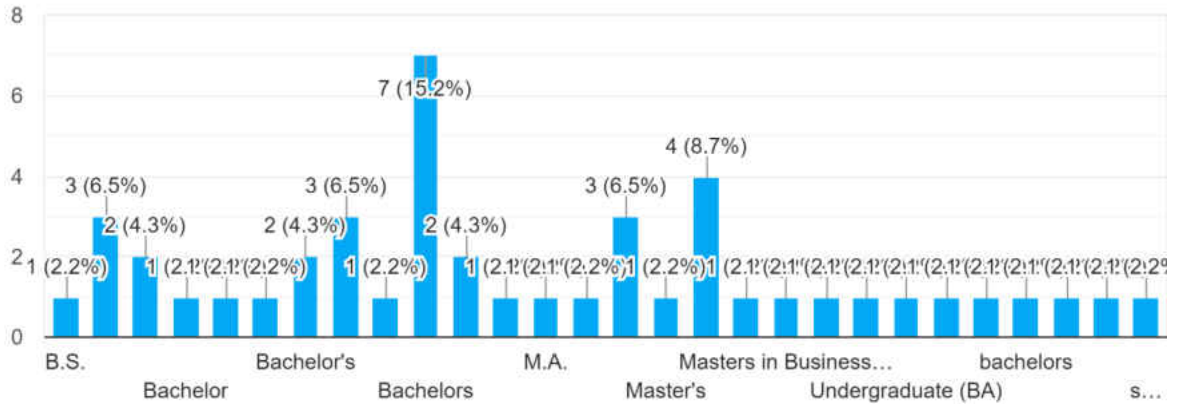
Name of college attended?

46 responses
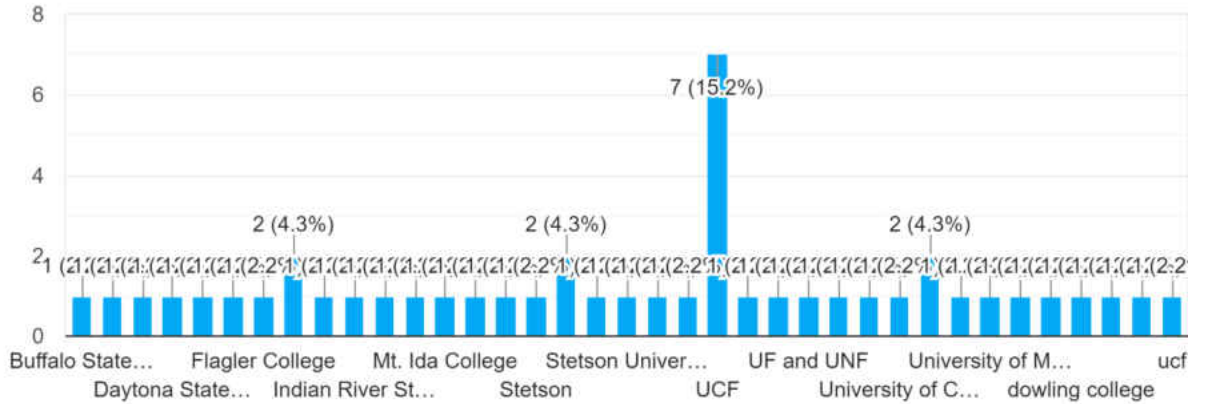
In what city did you attend high school?

46 responses
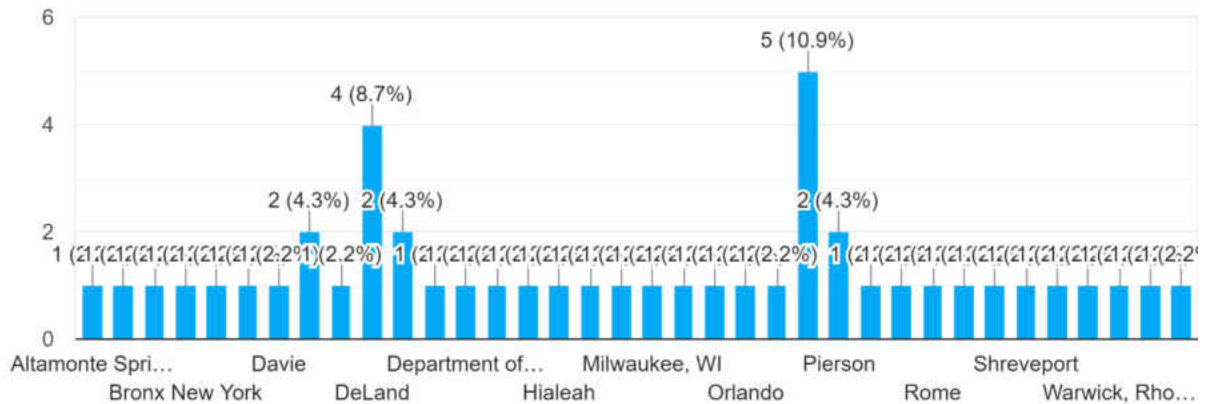
How much can you influence the decisions that are made in your school?

46 responses
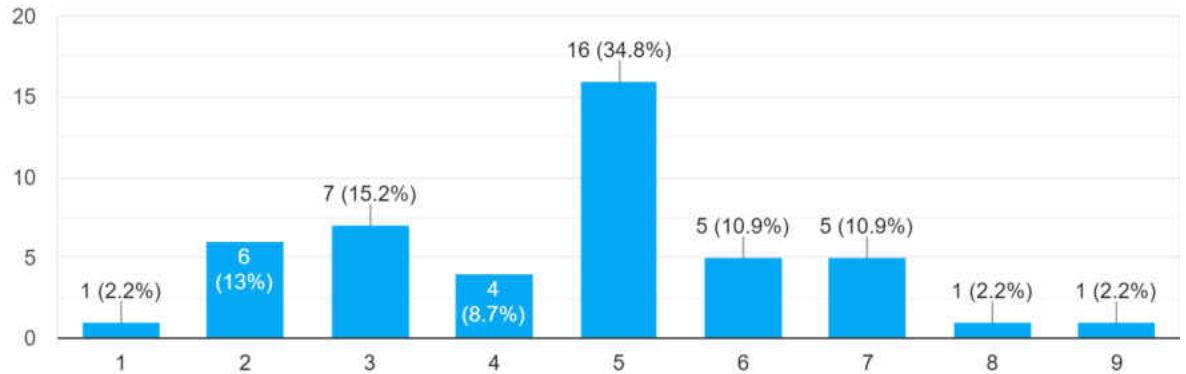
How much can you do to influence the class sizes in your school?

46 responses

105
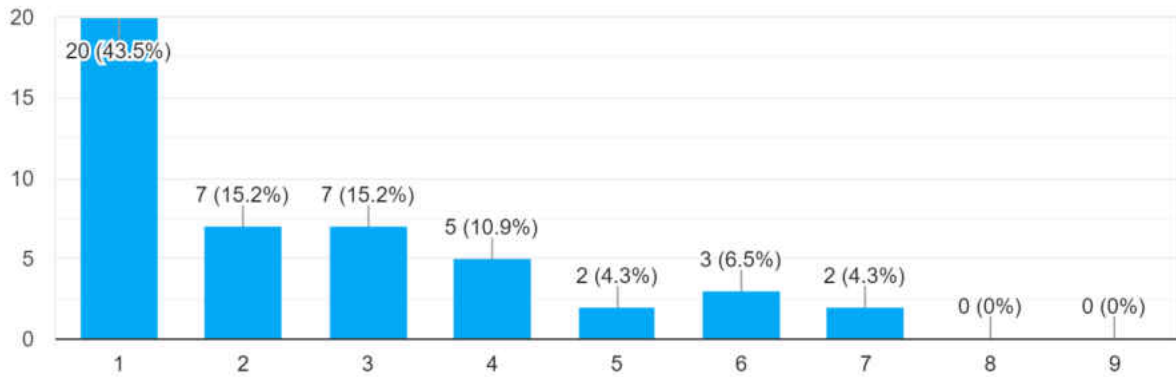
How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?

46 responses
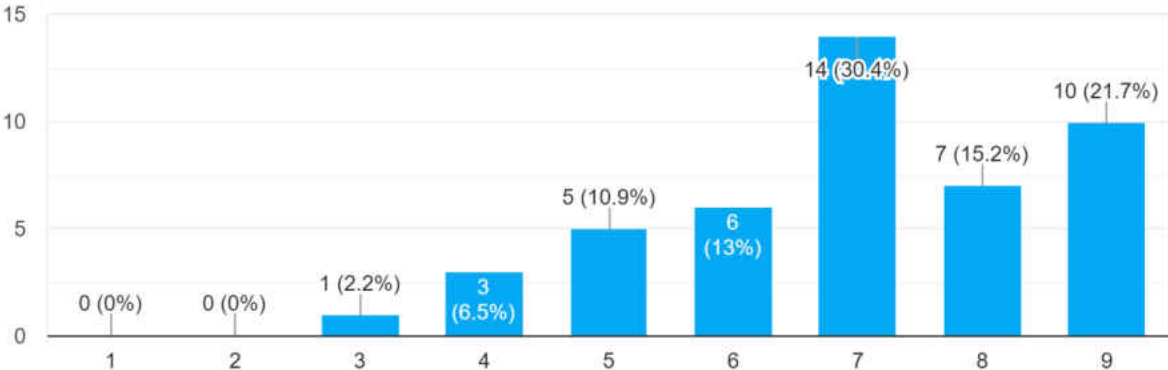
How much can you do to promote learning when there is lack of support from the home?

46 responses
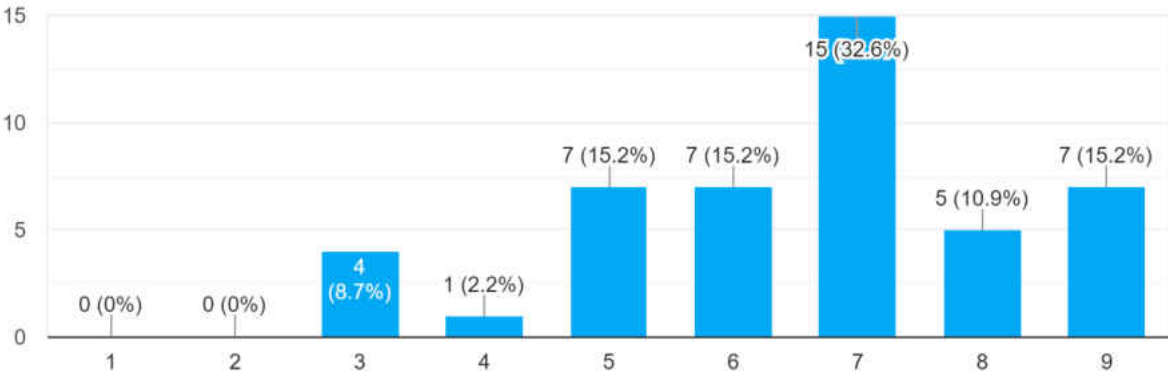
How much can you do to keep students on task on difficult assignments?

46 responses
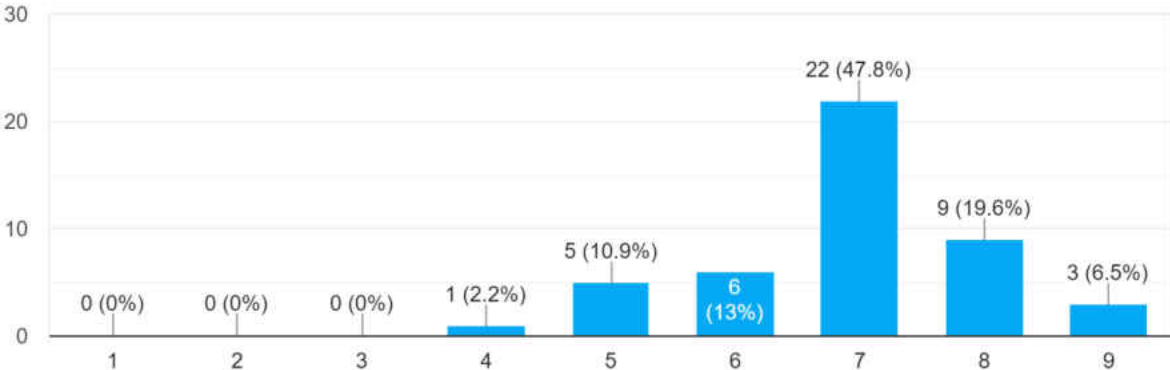
How much can you do to increase students' memory of what they have been taught in previous lessons?

46 responses
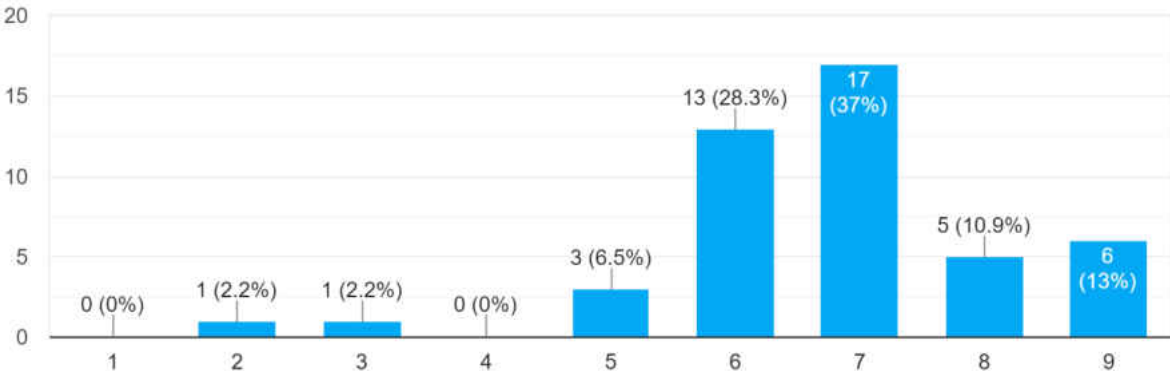
How much can you do to get students to work together?

46 responses
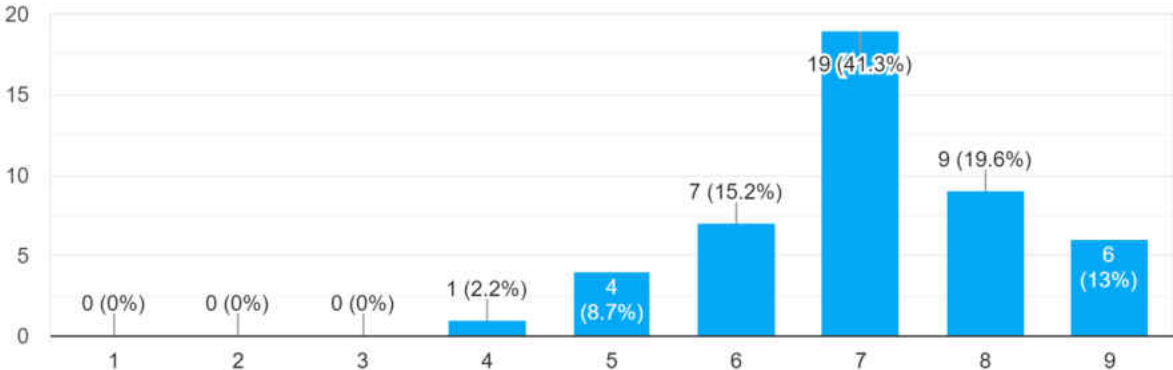
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?

46 responses
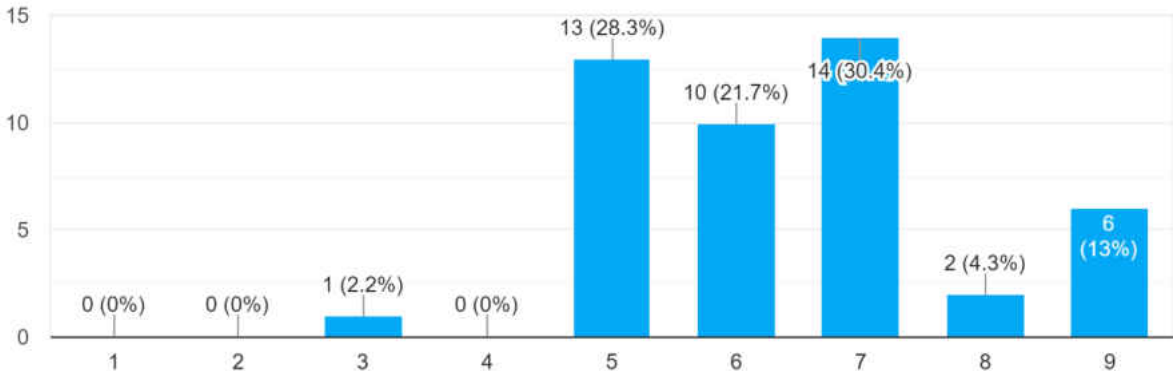
How much can you do to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on students' learning?

46 responses
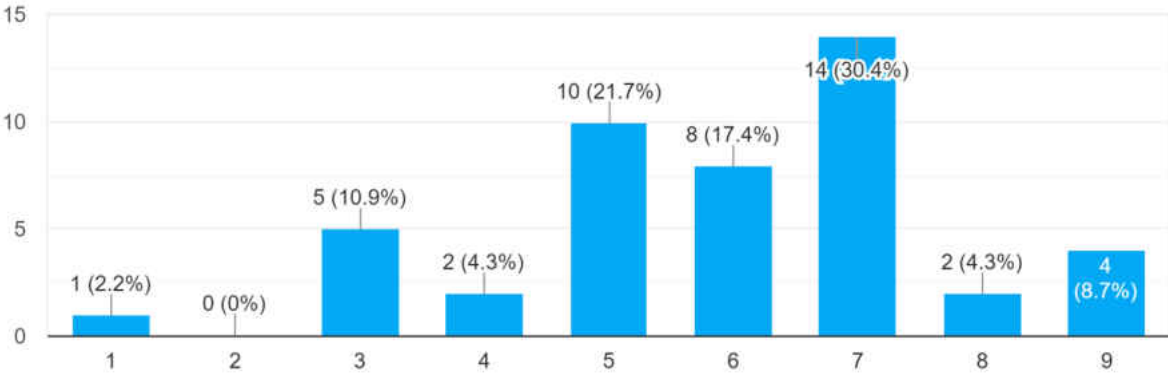
How much can you do to get children to do their homework?

46 responses

109
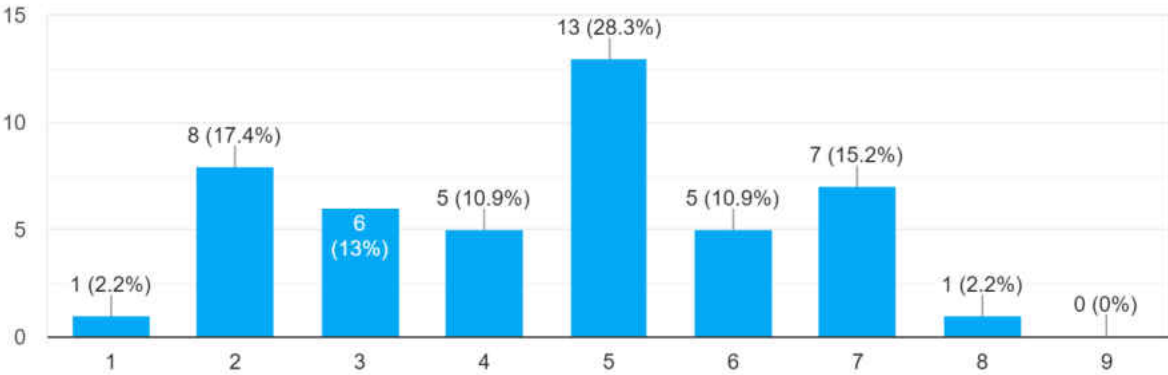
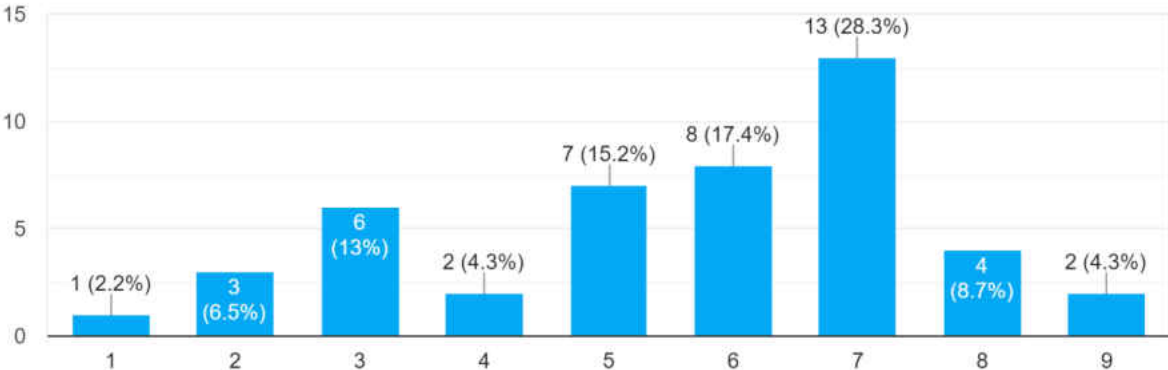## How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?
46 responses
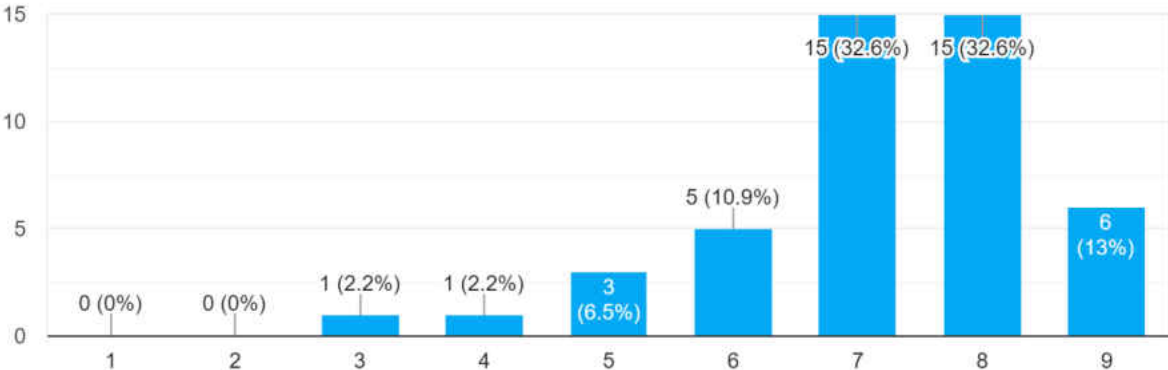
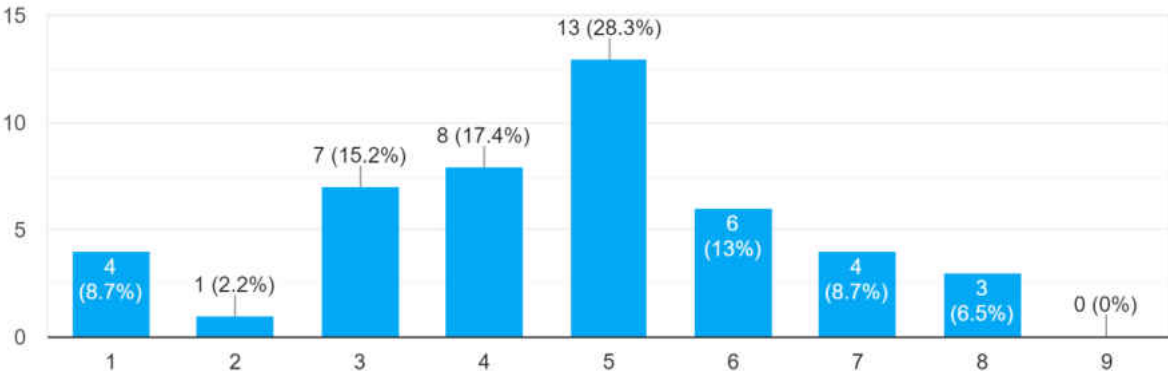## How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
46 responses
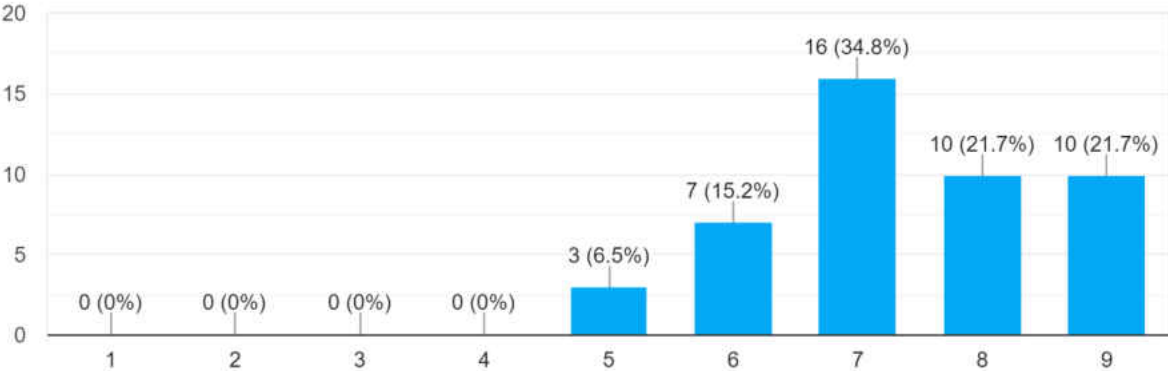
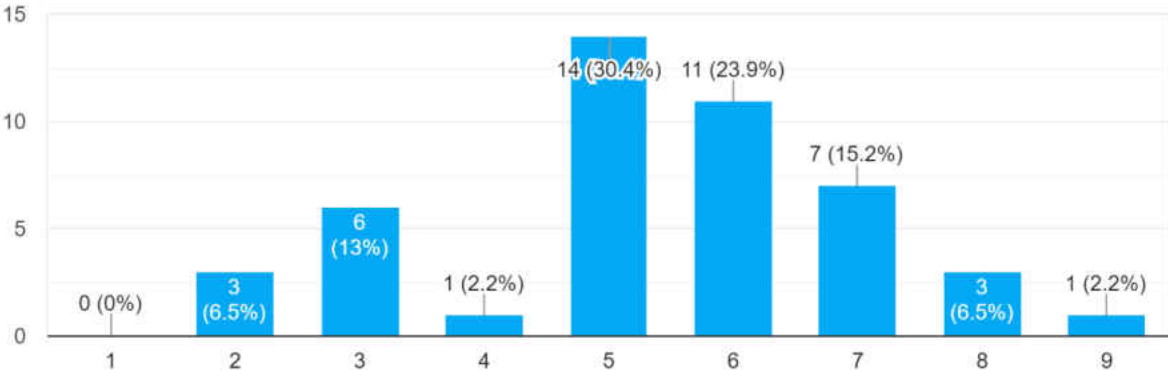## How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?

46 responses

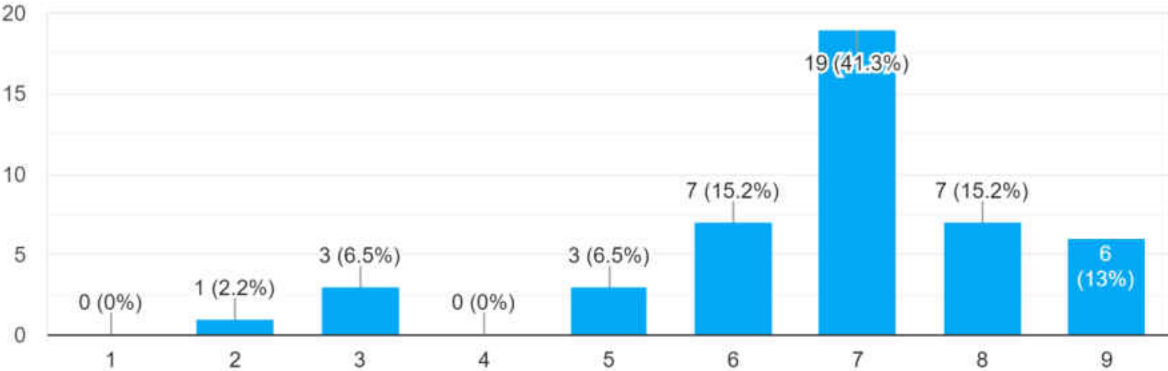## How much can you do to get parents to become involved in school activities?

46 responses

111

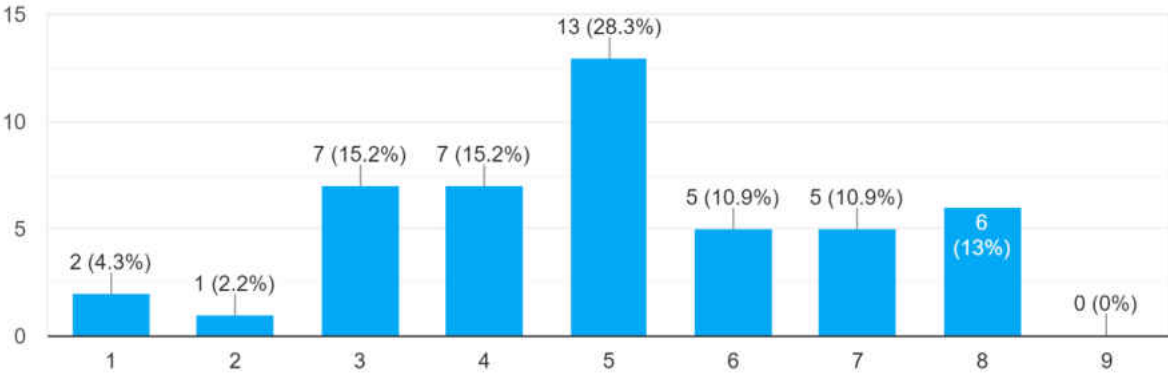## How much can you assist parents in helping children do well in school?
46 responses

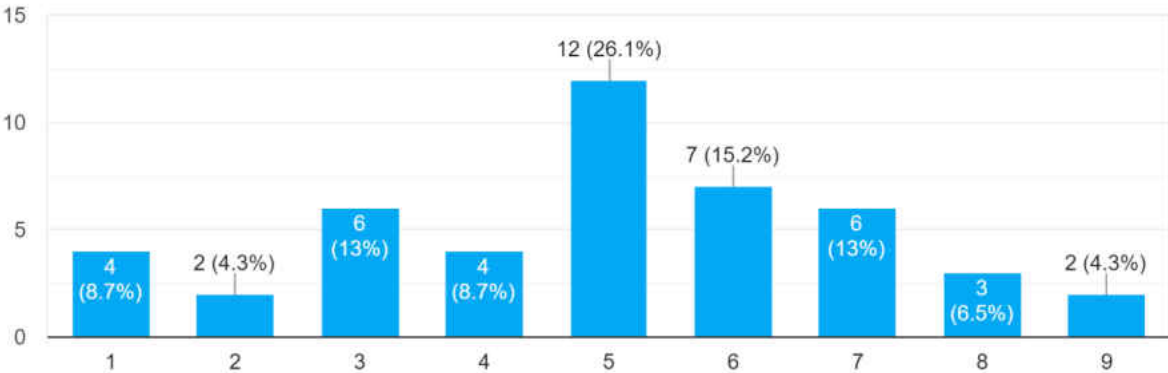## How much can you do to make parents feel comfortable coming to school?
46 responses

How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with the schools?
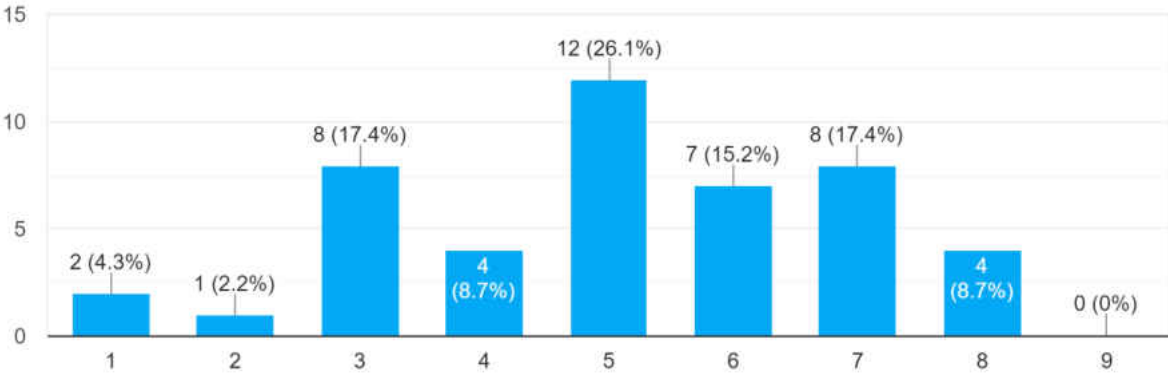
46 responses

How much can you do to get churches involved in working with the school?

46 responses

How much can you do to get businesses involved in working with the school?

46 responses

How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with the school?
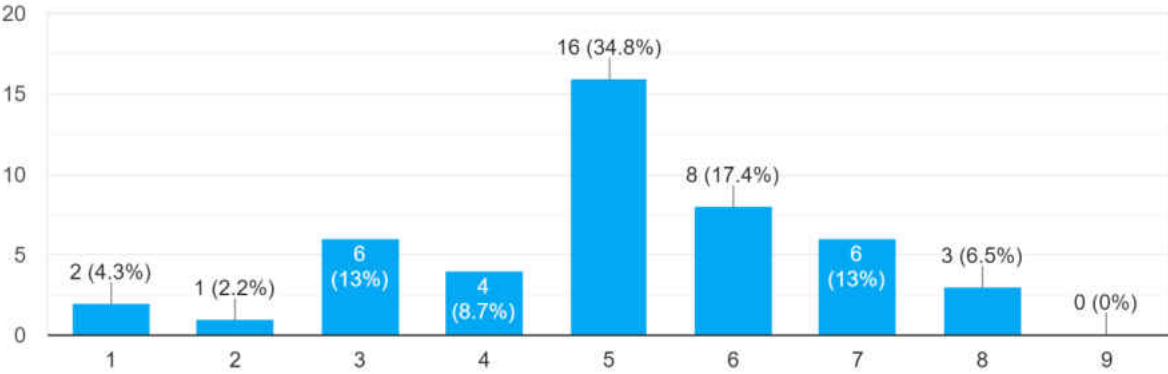
46 responses

How much can you do to make the school a safe place?
46 responses
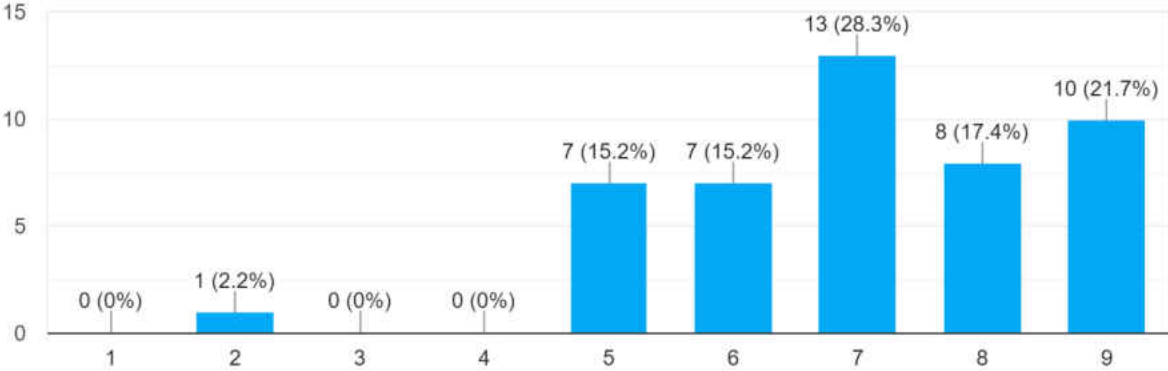
How much can you do to make students enjoy coming to school?
46 responses
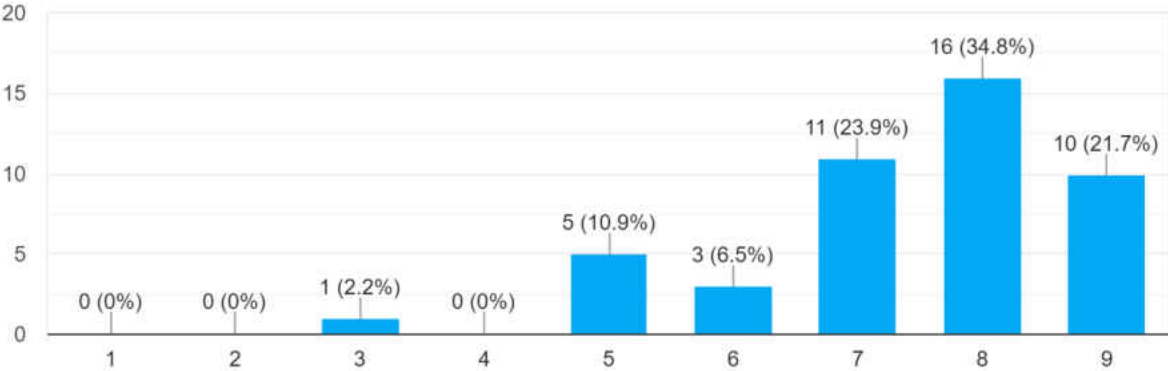
How much can you do to get students to trust teachers?

46 responses
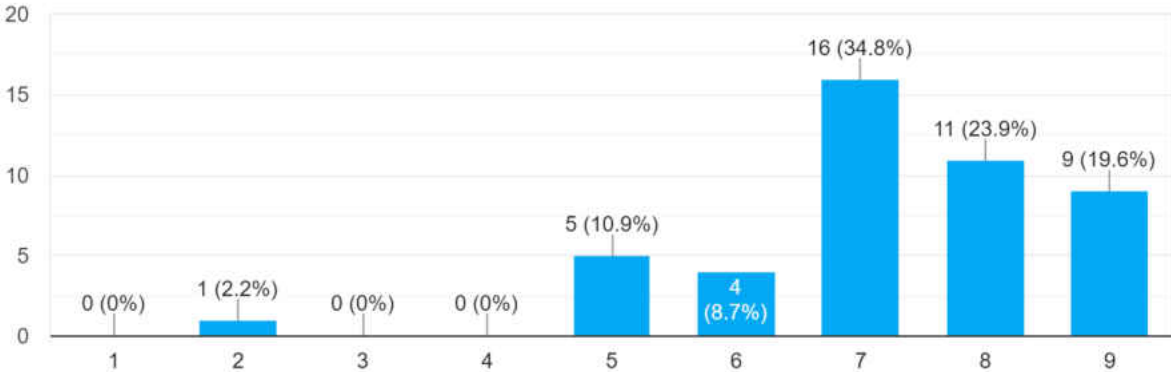
How much can you help other teachers with their teaching skills?

46 responses
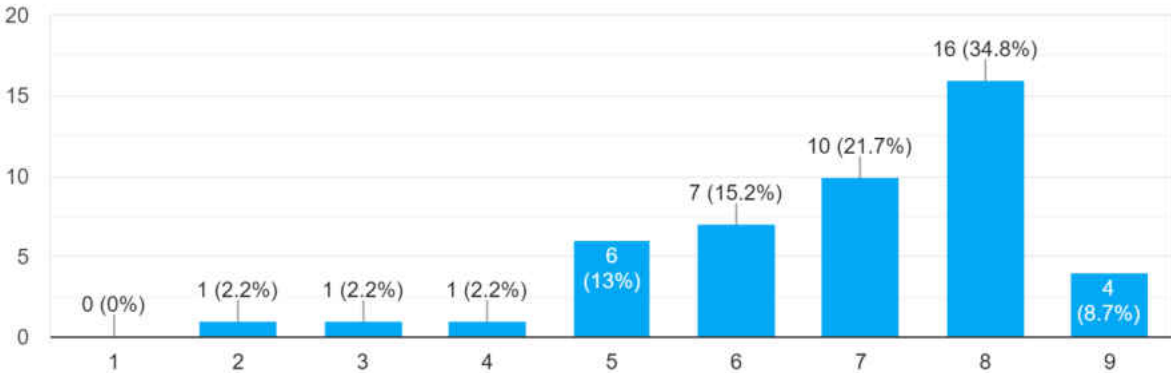
116

How much can you do to enhance collaboration between teachers and the administration to make school run effectively?

46 responses
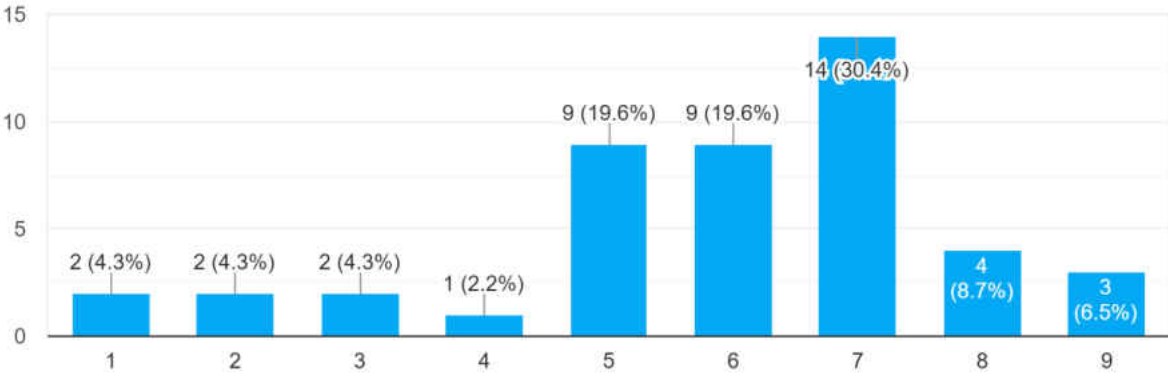
How much can you do to reduce school dropout?

46 responses

117
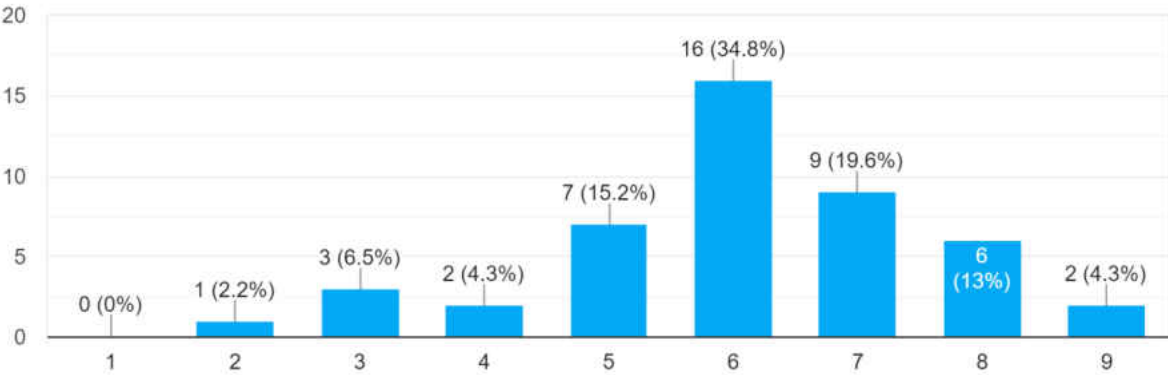
How much can you do to reduce school absenteeism?

46 responses
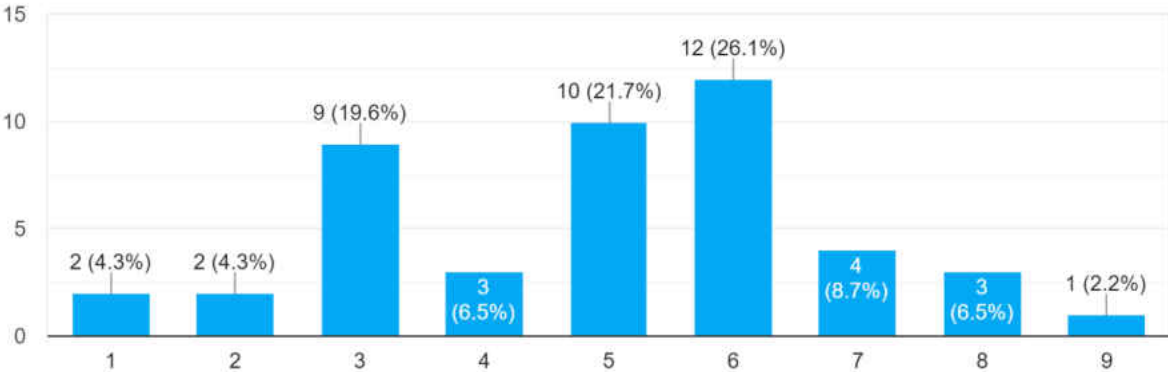
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well on their schoolwork?

46 responses
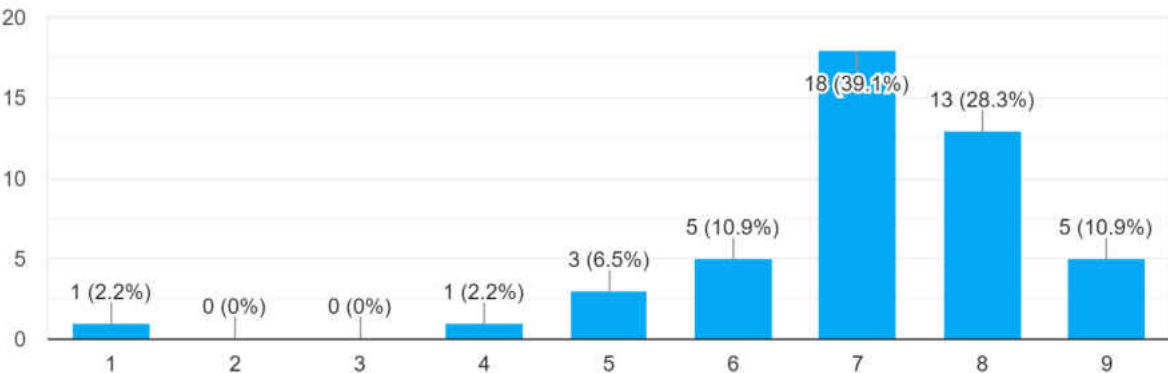
I don't think of my students in terms of their race or ethnicity. I am color blind when it comes to my teaching.

46 responses
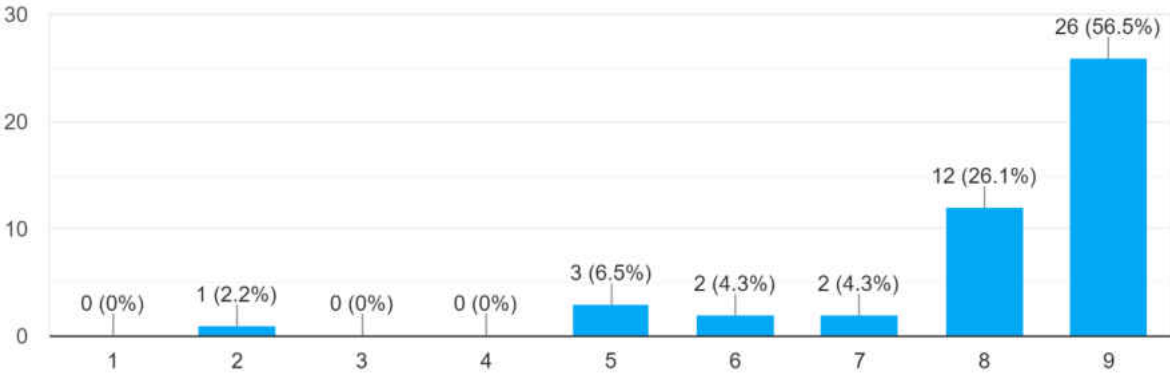
The gap in achievement among students of different races is about poverty, not race.

46 responses
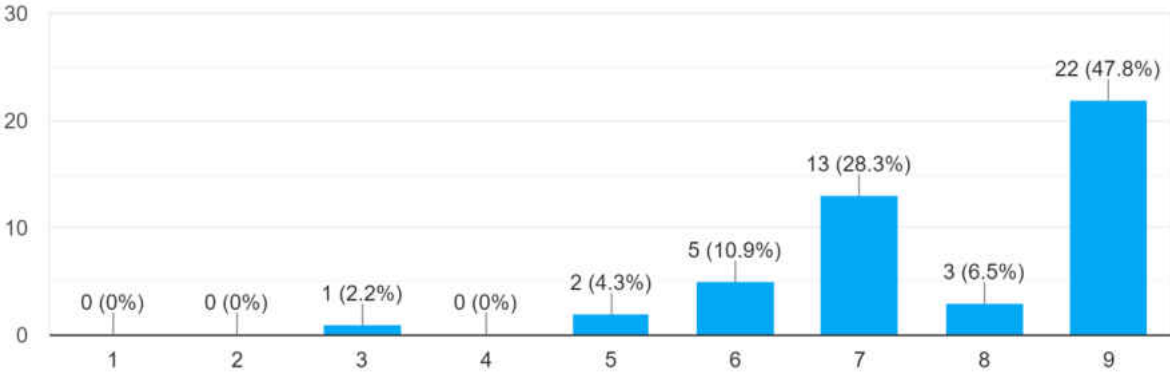
Teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of African America, Latino, Asian, and Native American students.

46 responses
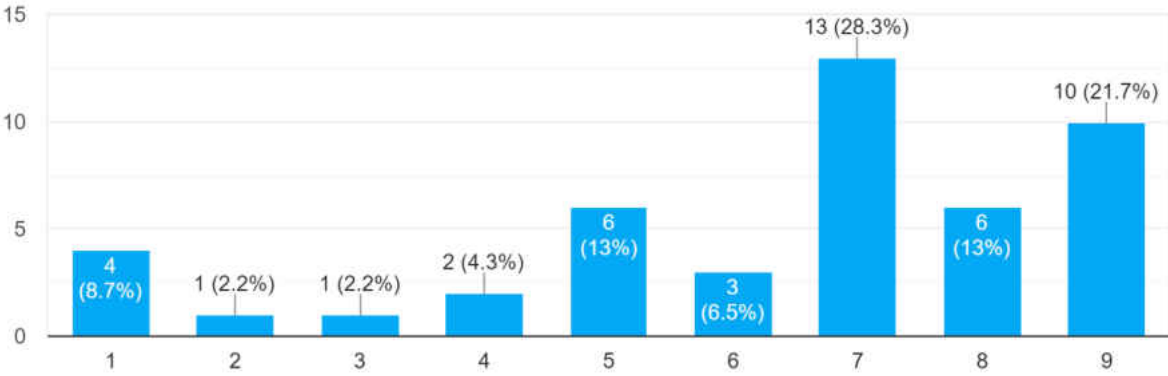
In some cultures, students are embarrassed to speak in front of others, so I take this into account and don't call on these students in class.

46 responses
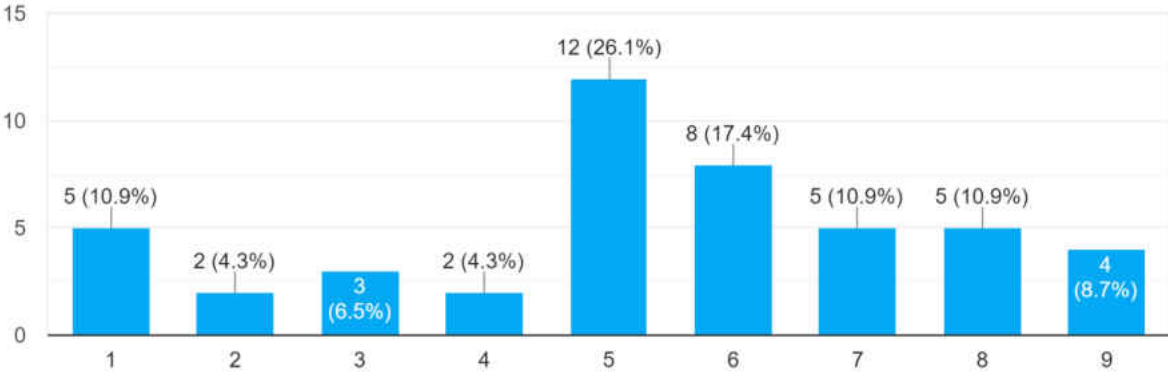
120

It is not fair to ask students who are struggling with English to take on challenging academic assignments.

46 responses
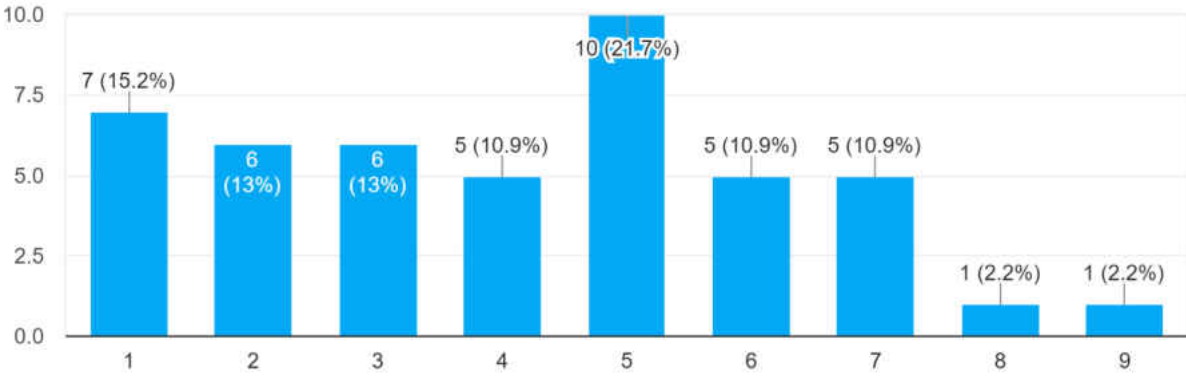
Students of different races and ethnicities often share different learning styles and good teachers will match their instruction to these learning styles.

46 responses
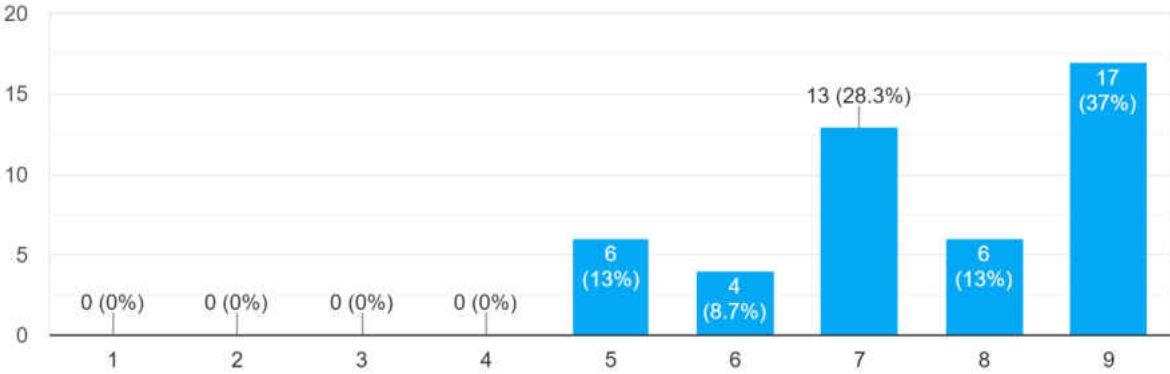
I try to keep in mind the limits of my students' ability and give them assignment that I know they can do that they do not become discouraged.

46 responses
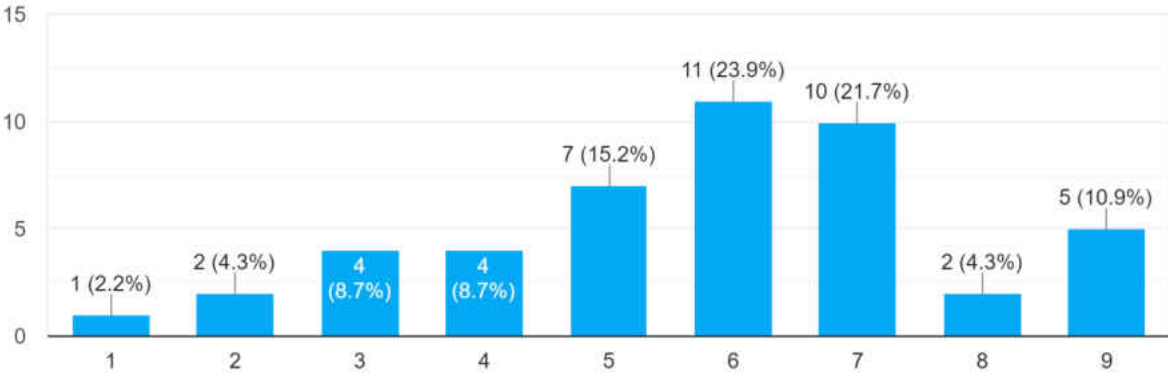
With all the pressures to raise student achievement, finding and using examples for cultural, historic, and ev...ching and learning what matters most.

46 responses
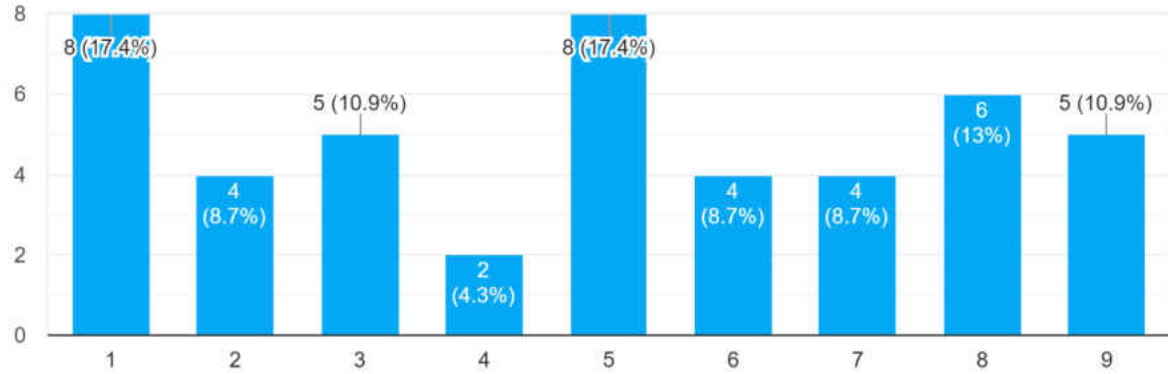
Talking about race with my colleagues could open up a can of worms; little good is likely to come from it.

46 responses
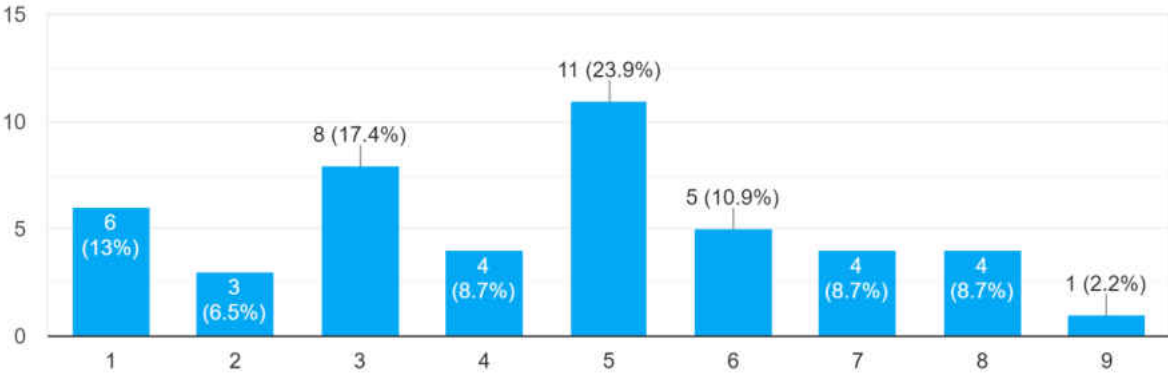
APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANT RESPONSES BY SUB-GROUP

Efficacy to Influence Decision Making

Table 1: "How much can you influence the decisions that are made in your school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	1	3	2
White	12	21	5

Instructional Self-Efficacy

Table 2: "How much can you do to influence the class sizes in your school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	0	1
Hispanic	2	3	1
White	31	7	0

Table 3: "How much can you do to promote learning when there is a lack of support from the home?"

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	0	1
Hispanic	0	3	3
White	3	12	23

Table 4: "How much can you do to overcome the influence of adverse community conditions on student learning?"

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	5	18	15

Table 5: "How much can you do to get children to do their homework?"

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	14	18	6

Disciplinary Self-Efficacy

Table 6: "How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	0	6
White	0	10	28

Table 7: "How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	0	6
White	1	9	28

Table 8: "How much can you do to prevent problem behavior on the school grounds?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	10	1	13

Efficacy to Enlist Parental Involvement

Table 9: "How much can you do to get parents to become involved in school activities?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	0	5	1
White	12	20	6

Table 10: "How much can you assist parents in helping children do well in school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	9	21	8

Table 11: "How much can you do to make parents feel comfortable coming to school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	4	8	26

Efficacy to Enlist Community Involvement

Table 12: "How much can you do to get community groups involved in working with schools?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	10	20	8

Table 13: "How much can you do to get churches involved in working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	11	18	9

Table 14: "How much can you do to get businesses involved with working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	1	2	3

White	10	19	9

Table 15: "How much can you do to get local colleges and universities involved in working with the school?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	2	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	9	22	**7**

Efficacy to Create a Positive School Climate

Table 16: "How much can you do to make the school a safe place?"

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	1	11	26

Table 17: "How much can you do to make students enjoy coming to school?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	1	7	30

Table 18: "How much can you do to get students to trust teachers?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	2	4
White	1	6	31

Table 19: "How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well on their schoolwork?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	2	3
White	1	7	30

Table 20: "How much can you do to reduce school absenteeism?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	1	7	30

Table 21: "How much can you do to reduce school dropout?"

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	1	1	0
Hispanic	0	4	2
White	3	20	15

Beliefs of Teaching Students

Table 22: "I don't think of my students in terms of their race or ethnicity. I am color blind when it comes to my teaching."

| | Responses | | |
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	3	3

White	1	2	35

Table 23: "The gap in achievement among students of different races is about poverty, not race."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	0	1	5
White	1	6	31

Table 24: "Teachers should adapt their teaching to the distinctive cultures of African America, Latino, Asian, and Native American students."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	0	2
Hispanic	1	1	4
White	5	10	23

Table 25: "In some cultures, students are embarrassed to speak in front of others, so I take this into account and don't call on these students in class.

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	9	17	12

Table 26: "I try to keep in mind the limits of my students' ability and give them assignments that I know they can do so that they do not become discouraged."

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	2	2	2
White	5	19	14

Table 27: "With all the pressures to raise student achievement, finding and using examples for cultural, historic, and everyday lived experiences of my students takes away (or could take away) valuable time from teaching what matters most."

Participant Sub-Group	Responses		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1

Hispanic	2	2	2
White	5	19	14

Table 28: "Talking about race with my colleagues could open up a can of worms; little good is likely to come from it."

	Responses		
Participant Sub-Group	1-3	4-6	7-9
African American	0	1	1
Hispanic	1	4	1
White	16	15	**7**

APPENDIX F: FIELD NOTES

Year One (2016-2017):

November, 2016

Taylor Middle High School

Trump was elected yesterday and campus was crazy intense. Interesting how some 6th graders are oblivious to news or current events, but some are totally intuned and opinated → echoing opinions they hear around the dinner table?

Yells from down the hall of Build that wall! Cues! Two students yell they're going back to Mexico (Hispanic) White Student says good! Unfocused in class, too busy gossiping.
→ Fight on the high school side, kids excited and riled up White kid told a Mexican boy his family was going to be deported b/c they don't belong here Mexican Student punched White kid in the face → all the students want to talk about
★ Whites feel empowered to speak now?
→ Teachers complain they can't do any lessons or activities because the kids won't calm down
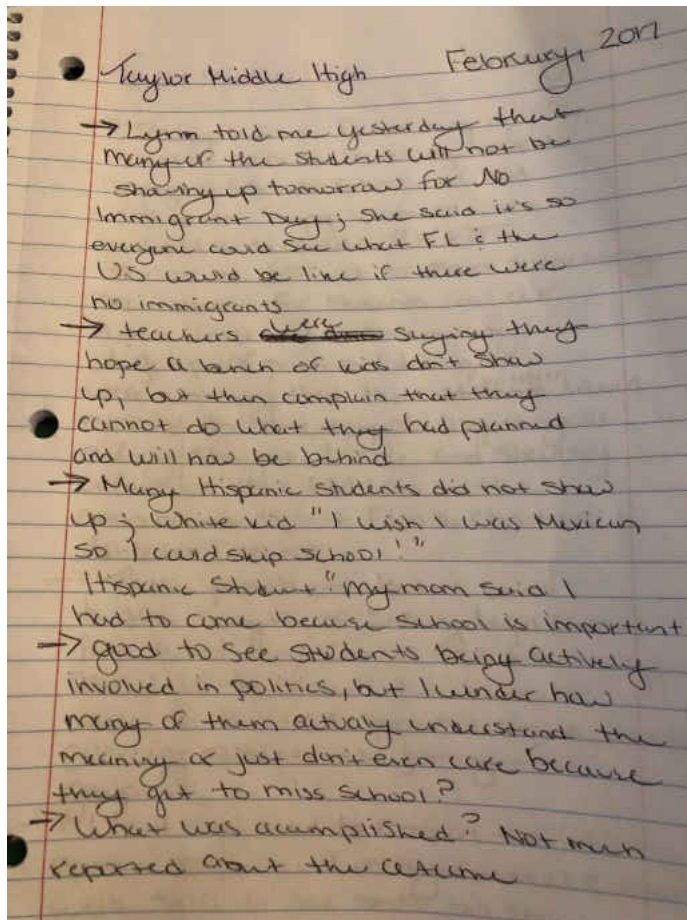→ White teachers turning in the halls

and in the lunge about better morals and prayer being back in schools
→ Hispanic students telling other students to get over it, it's not that bad
→ White high school teachers "written up", comments to students about how illegals need to be deported and that this will help employment
↳ Other teachers frustrated because politics doesn't belong in school

137

Year One (2016-2017):

Taylor Middle High   February, 2017

→ Lynn told me yesterday that many of the students will not be showing up tomorrow for No Immigrant Day; she said it's so everyone could see what FL & the US would be like if there were no immigrants

→ teachers ~~~~~ saying they hope a bunch of kids don't show up, but then complain that they cannot do what they had planned and will now be behind

→ Many Hispanic students did not show up; White kid "I wish I was Mexican so I could skip school!"
Hispanic Student "My mom said I had to come because school is important"

→ good to see students being actively involved in politics, but I wonder how many of them actually understand the meaning or just don't even care because they get to miss school?

→ What was accomplished? Not much reported about the outcome

138

Taylor Middle High   January, 2018

→ Today was a frustrating day. Maddie worked incredibly hard to begin a GSA at school and had worked on bring Kindness Week by GLSEN to campus. EXCEPT

It can be difficult to start something so inclusive for students in our super conservative community. A group of parents & teachers were unhappy that their ~~students~~ children would be exposed to something as disgusting as a Gay/Straight Alliance and shouting unfairness that GSA was on the announcements, but Florida Christian Athletes was not

→ These parents and teachers went to the length of seeking legal counsel from the Liberty Counsel that immediately asked us to cancel the Kindness Week as the GSA Sponsors were supposedly coercing students into joining this group.

→ I felt the need to e-mail the GSA Sponsor once the Liberty Counsel e-mail was sent to the staff to show

my support and shock @ the way GSA was being attacked.

→ A middle school teacher came to tell me how unwelcoming the school was beginning to feel. She didn't want her sons to continue to be here in the "Pierson Bubble"

→ I felt anger for my fellow teacher who felt so unsafe at the school now that she went to the Principal to resign.

I feel even worse for the students who had felt like they had finally found a group/community/teacher/ school that appreciated and accepted them for who they were

Year Two (2017-2018):

Taylor Middle High   February, 2018

→ I still feel tingly as I write this. After Parkland, a school shooting threat is a sickening situation to go through.

Driving to school as a normal day. Receive a phone call from a family member that the police had received word of a shooting threat at Taylor. I needed to turn around and go back home → too late, I was already in the parking lot.

→ I hesitated for a few seconds, but it was too late for a sub, my students were already there, I couldn't just leave.... so I walked in, hands tingly, butterflies fluttering

→ Students were freaking out, some crying, some being "tough"

One student asked "What do we do if there's a shooting?" I looked at him blankly, unsure and responded that we hide.

It didn't occur to me until then, not even the day of Parkland, that we had never practiced for a shooter.

→ A teacher said out in Pierson, you never except something bad to happen

→ It took parents 2½ hours to check out their students, my classroom emptier each period.

I put on a movie, unable to use my brain to effectively teach or discuss

The feeling of helplessness, unpreparedness, unable to help students, those that were crying, those that were seemingly unfazed.

→ because this has been the new normal?

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- Taylor Middle High   December, 2018
  → A student, Alana, asked for all of her assignments for this month b/c she will be gone to Mexico.
    This is typical for Taylor and at this time of the year, the holidays. Students will leave for weeks, sometimes months to go be with family.
  → John also speaks up and says he'll be gone for three weeks, his dad can't get into the U.S so he only gets to see him once a year when he travels to Mexico.
  → I wonder how many students have only half their family here and the other half in Mexico.
  → Students are always excited to go, they tell about how they eat the best food, go 4 wheeling, play with cousins.
  → I ask one what it's like at the border, is it crowded? Dangerous? Sad? He responds that he barely notices or pays attention, his dad just shows the paperwork and they drive through. He says he usually

sleeps through it b/c the drive is so long.
→ It's interesting to see the students whose parents e-mail weeks ahead of time, asking for work for the trip since they'll be gone for so long, wanting to make sure their grade is in good standing, that their child won't get too far behind
→ And the parent that doesn't contact the teachers or even the school to let them know they'll be gone for 3-4 weeks.
→ The school's attendance score is always low this time of year.

Taylor Middle High   March, 2019

→ Parent Conference for Anthony, we
had been attempting a parent conference
for several months.
I felt nervous b/c I had heard that
this parent blames all issues on the
school and the teachers.

→ Mother begins begins pretty quiet,
a translator is needed b/c the mother
only speaks Spanish

I explain that Anthony had been doing
better, but plays around a lot and
avoids completing assignments.

→ Mother begins to cry, says "my
older son went here and was also
playing around, was just goofy, and
a teacher had him arrested for no
reason. The teachers here are racist
against Mexicans"

→ No one is sure what to say, Anthony
is crying and won't look at any of
us. I feel uncomfortable and a

little affronted, is she accusing
us, me, of being racist?

→ I think how the word "racist" is
the 6th graders favorite word this
year, anything action or statement
they don't agree with is racist
Do they even know what the word
means?
I wonder if I should have a conversation
with them or if I will get in trouble
for being off curriculum in having a
lesson on racism and the word racist.

I am wondering how many students actually
feel that their teachers, administrators,
and school is racist? Is this a
problem?

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