Developing a Culturally Responsive Action Team in Teacher-Led Schools

by

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ABSTRACT

Situated in a majority-minority school setting, this action research study focused

on developing culturally responsive teaching (CRTchg) approaches in a group of

Caucasian teacher leaders. Highly qualified teachers who determined the curriculum,

professional development, assessments, and school-level policies were leading two

alternative schools, but this group of predominantly majority teachers had difficulty

relating to their African-American and Hispanic students and fostering student learning.

Specifically, the intervention provided methods to encourage and support them on their

journey towards implementing CRTchg. I developed interactive professional

development workshops to introduce concepts from servant leadership. Additionally, I

used culturally responsive school leadership and critical race theory as part of the

professional development process to promote the implementation of CRTchg and foster a

sense of self-efficacy for its use. In the study, I used a mixed-methods approach that

included surveys, reflective journals, and interviews to gather data to determine how and

to what extent professional development sessions for these teacher leaders affected their

perspectives and teaching styles with respect to CRTchg. To understand better these

effects, I explored six constructs including servant leadership listening; servant leadership

awareness; servant leadership empathy; servant leadership building community; using

CRTchg; and self-efficacy for employing CRTchg. Quantitative results indicated teacher

leaders scores on the four servant leadership variables, increased significantly indicating

they were more aware of cultural matters, listened more closely to students, were more

empathetic, and engaged to a greater extent in building community with their students.

Additionally, quantitative data showed significant increases in teacher leaders use of

CRTchg and their self-efficacy for its use. Results from the qualitative data were consistent with those from the quantitative data and exhibited a high degree of complementarity, pointing to the same conclusions. Notably, as they progressed through the workshops, teacher leaders questioned educational and cultural assumptions that influenced their instructional practices and revised them as they began to implement CRTchg, which made their instructional practices more meaningful to students. The discussion focused on the complementarity of the data, understanding the results, limitations, implications for practice, implications for research, and personal lessons learned.

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this milestone to all of the other Stewarts and Doctor Stewarts that have gone before me. I am now the third Doctor Stewart in my house. The first doctor Stewart is my mother, Dr. Mary Alice Stewart, EdD (1977). Thank you, mom, for always being my biggest supporter and role model in faith and love. The Second doctor Stewart is my wife, Dr. Kelly Stewart, EdD (2015). Kelly, thank you for always being there for support, encouragement, and believing in me when I struggled and stayed by my side when all the stresses of work, life and dissertation hit at the same time. You are my favorite co-conspirator. Then there are my children Augustus Stewart; you have courage and wisdom beyond your years. Avery Lee your thoughtfulness and understanding always bring me joy. Both of you encourage me with your spirit, humor, and kindness. Thank you for your unconditional love and support. Then there is Charles E. Stewart, my father. I knew you were watching over me and that I was going to make it through ever since the day I learned I was accepted into the doctoral program on March 8, 2018, it would have been your 85th birthday.

supportive and caring. I could not have reached this milestone without all of you. To have earned my doctorate degree, which is something that only 1.2% of the US population has accomplished. If you examine that percentage, approximately 162,500 have been earned by African Americans, which represents.0005% of the population this isn't something that I could have done alone. Thank you.

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CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

"You can't lead the people if you don't love the people. You

can't save the people if you don't serve the people." —

Cornel West

There has been a phenomenon known as a presenting problem, which was the

initial symptom for which a person sought help from a therapist or doctor. The

presenting problem was not necessarily the most severe problem nor even the one that led

to the most accurate diagnosis. In many instances, the presenting problem indicated a

multitude of different conditions and did not provide enough information for the doctor to

provide a correct diagnosis. For this reason, doctors, therapists, and other health

professionals typically have gathered an inventory of symptoms to determine whether

they could find any vital clues to help diagnose a patient. In education, these complex

presenting problems have sometimes been referred to as the "wicked problem" (Jordan,

Kleinsasser, & Roe, 2014). Wicked in the sense that everyone in the educational

community including parents, teachers, policy-makers, teacher educators, educational

researchers, and the media all had solutions they felt would solve the problems

experienced by public education. The wicked part arose when someone tried to define

the problem and identify the ramifications of the solutions.

No problem has been more persistent or challenging than that of improving the

academic achievement of African American students and other students of color. The

number of students of color has continued to increase in public schools while the number

of educators of color has continued to be quite limited. Many educators, educators of all

races, have felt they were unable and unequipped to meet the educational needs of students of color and specifically African American students (Ladson-Billings, 2013).

National Context

Race, as an educational issue, has become an ever more pressing matter as the U.S. student population has grown increasingly diverse. Between 2001 and 2023, Caucasian enrollment in public education was projected to decrease from 60% to 45%, nationwide (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). Over that same timespan, the Center also anticipated Hispanic students would nearly double, from 17% to 30%. As the trend has continued, educators have recognized they cannot afford to ignore race under these changing conditions (Davis, Gooden, & Micheaux, 2015). Nationally, in 2012, the U.S. teaching workforce was approximately 82% Caucasian. Moreover, prospective teachers enrolled in traditional brick and mortar university programs were 74% Caucasian; of those enrolled in university-based alternative programs, 65% were Caucasian, and in non-university-based alternative programs, 59% were Caucasian (Sleeter, 2016). Overall, teacher education programs appeared to be preparing predominantly Caucasian cohorts to teach racially and ethnically diverse students through a course or two on multicultural education (Sleeter, 2016). Moreover, the limited coursework provided to teach English language learners was not sufficient to develop and support an inclusive educational environment. Race has been inadequately theorized in education in general (Milner, Pearman, and McGee, 2013), and race theorization has been practically absent in teacher preparation (Sleeter, 2016).

Local Context

Another wicked problem that has arisen concurrently with the issue of ways to improve African-American students' academic performance has been the problem of teacher retention. In particular, in Arizona, teachers have been leaving the profession at extremely high rates. As a result, other local agencies have focused on teacher retention issues. For example, the Office of the Maricopa County School Superintendent conducted a study, The Teacher Retention Project, in 2019. They surveyed and interviewed hundreds of teachers in Maricopa County to determine factors contributing to teacher retention *and* turnover. Results showed the five most important concerns were salary, class size, pressure from increased workloads, lack of respect for teachers, and benefits. Rankings for these concerns varied by individual depending on the grade taught, years of experience, and where in the county the teacher taught, however, these concerns remained the five most prominent ones.

Based on survey and focus group data from the Teacher Retention Project, and subsequent conversations, teachers and administrators proposed a theory of action. In it, proponents claimed that if teachers were empowered to make more of the decisions affecting their work, they would be more creative, effective, professionally satisfied, and provide affordances to increase student academic and social-emotional growth. To explore the effects of this theory of action, beginning with the 2019-2020 School Year, the Maricopa County Regional School District #509 (MCRSD) launched two teacher-led, alternative schools. Teachers in the schools had autonomy to determine the learning programs and learning materials including teaching methods, curriculum, and use of technology. They also had discretion with respect to setting school-level policies such as

establishing disciplinary protocols, determining homework, selecting relevant professional development, and assessing student and school performance using multiple measures in accordance with state reporting requirements. Although the concept was a powerful one, as always there was a certain amount of "wickedness" even in this more ideal approach (at least from teachers' perspectives).

My presenting problem was how to serve best students within a teacher-powered school. Nevertheless, as with any presenting problem, there were more complex, nuanced issues underlying the initial, presenting problem making it a "wicked" one. Specifically, because the teachers who were Caucasian were serving students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, teacher leaders struggled with providing appropriate culturally relevant instruction that was aligned with student experiences and needs. Although teachers were selected for their outstanding teaching abilities, most of them being Caucasian had not taught in minority-majority school settings. Notably, these teacher leaders needed to address the more substantial, often undiscussed issue of race and racism and how it influenced school settings and learning by students of color.

I have served and continue to serve the Maricopa County Regional School District as the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and was responsible for assisting teachers at these two teacher-led schools with respect to operations and human resources. Thus, I was known by the faculty and staff members of the two schools in various capacities including recruitment and hiring, facilities management, technology utilization, and school safety. As the teacher-led school model was unfolding, I gathered information by listening to educators about what they needed to deliver quality education to our

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culturally diverse students, who came from challenging environments and required an alternative school setting because of behavior or academic reasons.

To meet students' needs, the teacher-led schools were operated with an entirely new teaching staff committed to culturally responsive teaching, implementing trauma-informed practices, and using a restorative justice approach with respect to disciplinary matters. By reimagining education in this manner, we felt confident we would be able to provide an environment where an underserved population felt safe and connected to others to learn, take risks, and be their authentic selves. Nevertheless, as early as eight weeks into implementing the new system, teachers struggled with the weight and responsibility of leadership, the stress of learning to be trauma-informed and culturally responsive competent teacher leaders, and questioned their own efficacy as educators. As a result, it was evident there was a need to focus on specific practices to help increase these educators' efficacy, support their implementation of trauma-informed practices, and ensure their confidence and competence with regard to employing culturally responsive teaching strategies. It became evident that just asking teachers to assume leadership roles was not an effective plan and their retention and job satisfaction were uncertain, at best.

Context has been important in any teaching/learning setting. It was even more so in the alternative school setting for these teachers and students. This challenge presented an extraordinary opportunity for the teachers and the students. To re-imagine the teaching and learning experiences at the two schools, the Maricopa County Regional School District (MCRSD) organized the schools around four pillars defining the environment and culture that was desired. The four pillars were (a) a caring culture, (b) school safety, (c) inspirational instruction, and (d) equipping students for the future.

To create a tangible manifestation of these pillars, MCRSD implemented various initiatives and made structural and procedural changes to policy and practices for the 2019-20 school year. The four pillars chiefly addressed students' experiences. Nevertheless, MCRSD also wanted to address teachers' experiences. The district started by reviewing the data and trends presented in the Maricopa County Teacher Retention Project, which revealed the most important concerns of teachers included salary, class size, pressure from an increased workload, and benefits. To address these concerns and re-imagine the working environment for teachers, MCRSD adopted the principles of teacher-powered schools during the 2019-20 school year. Four specific changes were made including

1. Teachers were hired on 12-month contracts.
2. Teachers were given control over instructional leadership and decision-making, typically delegated to administrators such as scheduling, curriculum, instructional materials, assessments, and professional development.
3. Teachers were paid at salary rates approximately 50% greater than the average Arizona teacher's salary to compensate for the additional days of work and increased responsibilities.
4. The staff to student ratio was approximately 12:1 to keep class sizes low.

Additionally, the school district implemented several 'theories of action' based on the cultural and structural changes that had been made by the district. Theory of Action 1–If the curriculum was based on creative inquiry, then students would be more engaged (Crawford, 2007, Martin, 2013). Theory of Action 2–If teachers integrated social emotional learning strategies into academic instruction, then students would be more

academically successful. Theory of Action 3–If teachers practiced trauma-responsive approaches, then student behavior incidents would decrease in severity and quantity. Theory of Action 4–If teachers were empowered to lead, then they would be more professionally satisfied.

It was the fourth theory of action upon which I focused my study, with a caveat to the "wickedness" of the alternative school setting. In teacher preparation programs, teachers typically have not been prepared to serve as leaders unless they explicitly desired to assume leadership roles in education and sought training to prepare themselves for such roles after their initial preparation. How would these teachers cope at Hope and Esperanza, our high school and elementary school, when they were asked to lead the transition from traditional schools to teacher-led, student-centered environments?

The recruitment and hiring process was very intensive and purposeful to ensure teachers had the sets of skills and abilities for the environment they entered. As noted earlier, eight weeks into the new system, teachers were struggling with the weight and responsibility of leadership, the stress of learning to be trauma-informed and culturally competent teacher leaders, and questioning their own efficacy as educators. All of the teachers hired at Hope and Esperanza were very successful veteran teachers and had attained a strong sense of self-efficacy, competence, and confidence as indicated by the academic and behavioral successes in their previous classrooms; however, this new context was immensely different. Teacher leaders were repeatedly reporting exceptional levels of stress due to feeling inept, uncertain about how to navigate academics and behaviors, and overcome by the extent to which their 'whiteness' had shaped their attitudes and assumptions about race, ultimately affecting their responses to students.

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Teachers were already talking about how this was not the 'right fit' and the strategies that had worked with their toughest kids previously were not working here. They made comments about 'these kids' and disparaging remarks about parents. Many of the comments made during professional development or anecdotal conversations in the office/hall seemed to be revealing of underlying bias, racist beliefs, and overall insensitivity to students of color. One example teachers experienced as a team, was a situation where a male student of color who was working through some mental health issues and drug addiction had recently been kicked out of his home and was discovered sleeping at school. This young man had a sibling who also attended the school and they ended up in a physical altercation on campus. After the situation was under control, a group of teacher leaders was discussing whether they were going to contact the police about the "aggressor" in the situation. In another conversation about another student of color, teacher leaders had developed a plan that would include moving the 'problem student' into a room all by himself on the opposite side of campus, basically, complete isolation from the rest of the students and faculty. In another instance, one of our veteran teachers who had received state and national recognition for their teaching ability pulled aside one of our non-certified staff who happened to be African American to ask what the secret was to getting the students to listen. These were only a few of the observed incidents that quickly made me aware teacher leaders were lacking the critical self-reflection needed to examine what was preventing them from establishing authentic personal relationships with their students of color.

Personal Context

       I was born in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1973; not a remarkable year, for the most part as there was not anything truly exceptional that year. Nobody goes to a car auction looking to buy a classic car from 1973 and the number one song in 1973 was, "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree." If there was a highlight of 1973, it might have been the Academy Award for the Best Movie of the Year, which was The Godfather. As unremarkable as 1973 was from a historical perspective, for me in my little world, I would have had no way of knowing how genuinely remarkable was the situation into which I was born. I, like every other child born in 1973, was born color blind. That is, many of us had to go to school to learn what it meant to be black or white, and in my case what it meant to be a product of both races.

       I was the outcome of a loving relationship between Charles Edward Stewart, a three time-married, 6-foot-4 inch African American from the south side of Indianapolis, Indiana with two other children from two previous marriages and Mary Alice Lee, an Irish Catholic girl from Galesburg, Illinois who had recently left the convent as a nun. Charles was an only child; Mary Alice was the fourth of seven children. Charles was raised by his mother, Travana, and his father, Charles; Mary Alice was raised by Anastasia Lee, a widow. Charles went to a segregated high school, Crispus Attucks, and then into the Air Force before going to work for General Motors. Mary Alice went to the only high school in town and later on to the St. Mary of the Woods College and then on to a long career in education, from a one-room classroom to the Dean of a College. Aside from a few small details, they could have been like just about every other couple in America.

Fast forward a few months and this new family has relocated from Indianapolis, Indiana, to the Quad Cities, in Illinois and Iowa. These were a small collection of towns along the Mississippi River and if you combine all of the cities in the Quad Cities it still was not as large as Indianapolis. It was a blue-collar/farming community, where if you did not own a farm or work on a farm, you probably worked at one of the three major farm implement companies in the area: John Deere, International Harvester, or Case. They were the equivalent to Detroit's "Big Three" where everyone had a connection to one of them. When we moved to the Quad Cities, it was a big deal. That is, not a big deal for my family and me, but it was a big deal for the community.

Growing up in a mixed-race house in small-town rural Illinois in the 1970s, I saw and experienced a lot of discrimination and racism. It was not to the extent of anyone who worked during the Civil Rights Movement ten years earlier, instead it was more like watching people in restaurants move tables when your family sat down, or when you would go to a neighboring town to a carnival, and you had to leave abruptly because the man on stage made it clear to your father that this was a "Sundown" town. At the age of five, it was a term I did not know, but I learned on the ride home that the term was not familiar to my mother as well. "Sundown towns" were communities that formally or informally kept out African Americans or other brown groups. They got their name because of the signage on their city limits that would say things like "Nigger, Don't Let The Sun Go Down On You In Our Town" or "Whites Only Within the City Limits after Dark." As a child, I knew our family was different. I knew we were treated differently and that both sides of my family did things differently including church and holidays and funerals, but that despite the differences there were similarities. It was about family. It

was about the celebration. It was the elders sitting around a table eating, drinking, and usually smoking. They were talking about the good old days and how things used to be. As a kid, I knew things were different, but I thought everyone else's family was just like mine.

Later, much later, when I was in my 20s, I found out that there were many things that my parents did, specifically that my father did to prevent me from being placed in a situation that could have caused me to confront racism before I was ready. Little things like my father not allowing my mother to sign me up for tap dancing lesson because it was too stereotypical, or the fact that to this day, as a child, I cannot remember my father ever eating fried chicken in public. As an adult, I asked him about that, and he told me he never wanted to tempt some redneck from saying something that he would regret. I laughed, and I told him that I had found myself doing similar things, from not eating chicken around people I did not know and trust or the same way that I adopted not eating donuts whenever I was in uniform because I did not want to have to listen to comments that someone might say to me.

Growing up and learning how to navigate the lines or borders between those two worlds has made me the person that writes this paper. My point of view is often so much different than those around me because of my experiences growing up. I have developed a unique employment background with diverse experiences from K-12 education, law enforcement, human resources, and higher education. I have functioned as a leader in various work contexts and developed my view and perspective on leadership based on the fantastic leaders and occasionally, less than skilled leaders, I have worked with throughout my 25 plus year career in public service. I have always appreciated the skills

and values I have been able to learn through working with others. I have defined leadership more by what I have observed or not observed, rather than fully exploring and identifying the leadership characteristics that can empower change, transform, and innovate.

Intervention—A Brief Introduction

The intervention consisted of didactic and interactive workshop sessions among the district leadership team, guest speakers, and the teacher leaders on both campuses. During these sessions, the teacher leaders had the opportunity to think critically about their growth and interactions as teacher leaders on campuses that were majority-minority schools. They worked through issues having critical conversations with each other. Teacher leaders were provided with opportunities to explore their limitations with respect to cultural awareness and to address these issues in ways appropriate for each teacher leader who was on different levels of cultural awareness and cultural responsiveness. An essential aspect of the workshops was that teacher leaders began to discuss what each of them would do to incorporate culturally responsive teaching into their instruction based on the group conversations (DeLaMare, 2014). Providing an intervention for teacher leaders included the foundational ideas around servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977); critical race theory (Bell, 1992); and culturally responsive school leadership (Khalifa, 2018). These procedures allowed teacher leaders to become more self-efficacious and culturally competent and confident educational leaders (Stovall 2005).

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Thus, the purpose of the study was to explore the influence of didactic instruction in conjunction with support and dialogue focused on increasing cultural competency through discussions with colleagues. Teacher leaders engaged in self-reflection to increase their (a) cultural competency, (b) use of culturally relevant teaching approaches, and (c) self-efficacy for using culturally relevant teaching (DeLaMare, 2014). The following research questions guided the conduct of the study.

1. How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' servant leadership abilities?

2. How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' use of culturally relevant teaching in their classroom?

3. How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' self-efficacy for using culturally relevant teaching?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARACH GUIDING THE PROJECT

"Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing

can be changed until it is faced." — James Baldwin

In Chapter 1, I provided national, local, and personal contexts for this study.

Through the theoretical perspectives and research in chapter 2, I have provided a

collection of supportive literature highlighting the importance of supporting a team of

educators and demonstrating how that team functions to meet the needs of all students.

Teacher leaders, as members and agents of a team, influenced team performance in a way

that combined individual qualities and interaction with subordinates (Li, Zhou, Zhao,

Zhang, & Zhang, 2015). To create culturally responsive educators, this intervention

relied on three main theoretical frameworks:

(a) servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977); (b) critical race theory (Bell, 1992); and (c)

culturally responsive school leadership (Khalifa, 2018). Finally, I reviewed Wenger's

(1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) community of practice (CoP) framework.

This review supported the Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT), which was the

CoP vehicle in this study that was used to support the teachers as they considered and

implemented culturally responsive teaching (CRTchg), the primary objective of the

study.

Greenleaf's servant as leader model (1977) was included to illustrate the

importance of a leadership style that highlights service to others. The lenses of Bell's

critical race theory (1992) and Khalifa's (2018) culturally responsive school leadership

were included to demonstrate how race has contributed to educational policy, practice,

theory, and action; and the need for teacher leaders to account for this in their work with students. Additionally, the lens of critical race theory offered conceptual mechanisms for examining how race and racism have been institutionalized, sustained, and influenced educational practice. It provided a relevant foundation for analyzing the 'whiteness' of teacher leaders in education and re-conceptualizing how it might be approached. Where race has been undertheorized in education in general, it has been absent in leadership education (Sleeter, 2016).

Greenleaf's Servant as Leader

Researchers have studied leadership styles for decades seeking to understand specific characteristics and behaviors required of leaders to meet the needs of their teams. In addition to overlapping leadership styles, research on leadership development has been hindered by the ambiguity or lack of a definition of leadership (Propst & Koesler, 1998). Most teachers have not experienced coursework or training in leadership preparation including development of the required skills, qualities, or attributes of successful leaders.

Robert Greenleaf coined the concept of servant leadership in 1970. Greenleaf (1977) discussed the need for a leadership model, one that put serving others including employees, students, and community as the number one priority of the leader. Servant leadership has been characterized as a style where leaders put the needs of others before their own. When leaders effectively served their employees, their organizations' goals have been met.

Compared to the various types of leadership that have been studied over the years, servant leadership has continued to emerge as an educational leadership approach because it has spoken to the soul of what it meant to be an educator. When exploring the

characteristics of the servant leader, and considering the challenges and the role of an educator, it was clear there was a powerful synergy between them. When connected to one another, the terms servant and leader appeared to be an oxymoron. How can you be a servant and a leader simultaneously?

Nevertheless, those who have approached leadership with an attitude of service and support have brought out the best in others (Spears, 2004). Individuals who possessed the qualities of the servant leader and led a team in this manner were seen as stronger and more effective (Spears, 2008). According to Spears, servant leaders must have developed skills such as listening, empathy, healing, persuasion, awareness, foresight, conceptualization, commitment to the growth of people, stewardship, and building community (see also Herman & Marlowe 2005). Given these outcomes, servant leadership was an approach to leadership that teacher leaders needed to consider as they aspired to support peers and students, and aid the community in surmounting their daily struggles while encouraging students to engage more fully in learning (Fitzgerald, 2015).

Servant leadership has been consistent with teacher leaders' actions within teacher-led schools where they served on educator teams. Servant leaders have seen their role as developing the inherent potential in all people and clearing away barriers others faced to empower them (Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2010). By focusing on and supporting other staff members, servant leaders, in turn, made their entire organization or school stronger and healthier (Newton & Shaw, 2014). For example, Newton and Shaw found there was a significant positive relation between teachers' perception of their principal's use of servant leadership and their level of job satisfaction, as well as their intent to remain at their schools.

Some have been reluctant to adopt the theory of servant leadership because they felt that it was overly religious or holy. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus explained that he was not sent to earth to be served, but rather to serve (Mark 10:44-45). Nevertheless, when other successful or popular leadership styles were examined including those espoused in Stephen Covey's (1991), *The seven habits of highly effective people*; Simon Sinek's (2014), *Leaders eat last*; or John Maxwell's (1999), *The 21 indispensable qualities of a leader*; the characteristics may have been given different names, however, the attributes were the same and largely reflected those of servant leadership. For example, it might be referred to as person-centered leadership or 'finding your why.' Yet, the proponents all returned to ideas of servant leadership based on Greenleaf's (1977) efforts and those who have continued his work. The ultimate perspective of a servant leader was to put the needs of followers first and to lead by serving (Hine, 2014).

Spears' 10 characteristics of a servant leader. Spears (2010) has written extensively about servant leadership. He summarized his work by identifying 10 characteristics of servant leadership, which I have presented in Table 1. For example, Spears claimed servant leaders had to be good listeners, empathetic, committed to the growth of their people, and so on. See Table 1 on the next page.

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Table 1

Ten Characteristics of a Servant Leader (Spears, 2010, pp. 27 -29)

- Listening

The servant-leader listens intently to others; they listen receptively to what is being said and unsaid.

- Empathy

The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People want to be accepted and recognized as being special and unique.

- Healing

The servant-leader works with many people who have suffered from many forms of trauma.

- Awareness

Awareness, especially self-awareness helps the servant leader understand issues involving ethics, power, and values.

- Persuasion

The servant-leader uses persuasion, rather than on one's positional authority, in making decisions within an organization.

- Conceptualization

The servant-leader has the ability to look at a problem or an organization from a conceptualizing perspective; the leader has to think beyond day-to-day realities.

- Foresight

The servant leader understands the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and envisions the likely consequence of a decision for the future.

- Stewardship

The servant-leader is committed to serving the needs of others and emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control.

- Commitment to the Growth of People

Servant leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers.

- Building Community

Servant leaders seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution.

Teachers and teacher leaders commonly reported choosing to become educators for altruistic reasons like wanting to help others, wanting to give back to society, and wanting to make a difference in the lives of children (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Watt & Paul, 2007). These underlying motivations showed how current and future educators believed teaching was moral work and wanted to work in schools for those reasons

(Sanger, Osguthorpe, & Fenstermacher, 2013). Similarly, servant leadership has been focused on making those around you better, taking a personal interest in what they were doing in the present, *and* empowering them to get where they desired to be in the future. Empowerment was a process that engaged teachers by helping them take ownership of their growth and problem-solving abilities (Hammond, 2018). Servant leaders empowered those they served. The function of lead teachers was to educate students *and* they had the additional responsibility to empower the adults they led. This empowerment process has taken shape in many forms including "teacher empowerment as a process of sharing administrative power, allowing teachers autonomy, the opportunity to take risks, grow, make decisions, and develop new skills" (Hammond, 2018, p. 24).

Whatever the term used, the focus of true servant leadership has been about making those around the leader and the organization better regardless of title. This was also reflected in educators who worked to make their teams better so those teams made differences for students. Servant leadership has been a follower-focused approach to leading that was rooted in trust (Hammond, 2018) and the principles that have grounded servant leadership, which mirrored a universal ethic including characteristics such as humility, honesty, trust, empathy, healing, community, and service (Bowman, 2005). Moreover, the employment of servant leadership fostered in others feelings like they were cared for and that they were more than just an employee or customer.

Implications for the study based on servant leadership. Servant leadership takes traditional leadership models and turns them upside down. The servant leadership structure places the employee on top and the leader at the bottom of the structure; thus, servant leaders are entrusted with serving the employees with whom they work. Servant

leaders possess a 'serve first' mindset and they are focused on empowering and uplifting those who work around them. They serve instead of command, show humility instead of authority, and implement ways to develop their staff members to be successful. Further, the servant leader moves away from the transactional aspects of leadership and attempts to develop employees' senses of purpose within the organization's mission. Servant leadership traits include empathy, listening, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Spears, 2010).

I choose to use servant leadership as one of the three lenses because of the common traits and the synergy with culturally responsive educational leadership and culturally responsive teaching, in addition to the teacher-led model that the school is currently using. Moving teachers toward a more culturally responsive mindset is stressful; it requires an acknowledgement of unconscious biases and the motivation to change. It requires attending to triggers and stereotypical responses. Most importantly, it requires time to practice new strategies designed to eliminate the automatic associations that linked a negative judgment to behavior that is culturally different from their own (Hammond, 2014). This project is full of highly emotional topics, so using a leadership model that focuses on empathy and awareness and listening as parts of its foundation is critical to the success of the intervention.

Further, in current teacher-led schools that serve large numbers of minority students, it is important for teacher leaders practicing servant leadership to build social capital with those around them. Specifically, as teacher leaders probe deeply into issues of diversity and the sensitive topics that naturally follow, they are going to need that

capital so that others know they are operating from a position of care and concern for them. As the practices of culturally responsive school leadership and teaching are discussed, race and racism are always difficult to discuss because those discussions unavoidably shine a light on the pain of oppression, which has the potential to bring up emotions of resentment, anger, guilt, and frustration (De La Mare, 2014). It is vital that people know that the leadership team is coming from a place of concern and care for the students, employees, and those in the community.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory ([CRT], Bell, 1992) was included as a theoretical framework *and* as an analytical lens because such matters have not been provided, leaving a gap in education preparation programs, in leadership preparation, and in professional development for experienced teachers. CRT had its origins in critical legal studies and served as a lens for analysis that shifted the boundaries of legal scholarship as it refocused the ways in which race and racial power were created and interpreted in American culture and society, in general (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995, Davis, Gooden, & Micheaux, 2015).

If educators wanted to move into leadership roles within a school, including administrative roles or coaching/mentoring, typically master's level coursework provided exposure to leadership principles. Although advances have been made recently, generally leadership programs have not included race and how race has influenced every aspect of American society, especially within the K-12 school system. Thus, to implement an intervention that would support teacher leaders to be successful in the current setting, it was necessary to include a perspective that helped to create awareness

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about race and culture within the context of classrooms where the race of the teacher did not align with the race of the students being served.

One of the core tenets of CRT has been that racism was more common rather than being an exception. Racism was not isolated individuals misbehaving; instead, racism was the standard order of things in American society (Bell, 2000, Davis, Gooden, & Micheaux, 2015, Ladson-Billings, 2013). Ladson-Billings (2013) noted one reason there was very little literature addressing the specific educational needs of African-American students was the refusal of American educators to recognize African Americans as a distinct cultural group, not just a separate racial group. Specifically, Ladson-Billings (2013) suggested, "It is presumed that African American children are exactly like white children but just need a little extra help" (p. 10).

Today, teacher education programs regularly advertise orientations toward social justice and preparation for culturally responsive teaching. Interestingly, the vast majority of teacher preparation programs continue to turn out roughly 80% Caucasian teachers although Caucasian students are less than half of the K-12 population (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Sleeter, 2016). Going forward, race will become an even more urgent educational issue as the U.S. student population grows increasingly diverse. Accordingly, teacher leaders cannot afford to overlook matters about race under such changing circumstances (Davis et al., 2015). CRT has helped to move beyond superficial analyses of 'disconnects' between teacher education and the diverse students in the schools. Proponents of CRT have investigated ways that racism and white privilege operate together to dominate institutions and systems. They discard the prevailing notion that scholarship about race in America should be race neutral, color-blind, and objective

(Bell 1992, Davis et al., 2015). Concepts of color blindness or formal boundaries of equality, which insist on treating all people equally, promote hiding white racism in plain sight. Thus, white perspectives take on the form of being normal, natural, and fair, as it operated in the background in activities like policy construction (Davis et al., 2015). Color-blind conceptions of quality teaching have failed to account for ways race mattered in education and supported the continued whiteness of teacher education (Sleeter, 2016).

CRT scholars like Bell (2000), Freeman (2011), and Stovall (2005) generally countered liberal assumptions that the law and other fundamental frameworks such as educational administrations were normatively color blind. Because race has been central to how American society was organized across all spheres and networks of power, they argued, any analysis of law, education, economics, or public policy and so on could not have been racially neutral (Bell, 2000; Freeman, 2011; Stovall 2005).

In his work, Freeman (2011) suggested there are six common themes in CRT. First, proponents of CRT maintained racism was not an irregularity of democracy, justice, and equality, but instead it is deeply embedded within the organization of American society. The invisibility of this structural racism makes it difficult to unwrap it, and consequently, it allows continuing racial privilege despite banning the most visible signs of racial discrimination. Second, proponents of CRT claim race and racism serve vital psychological and tangible interests in the minds of Americans. To affirm color blindness, for instance, allows one to isolate racism as being outside the norm of American democracy while supporting the failure to see racial privilege. Moreover, at the same time, for change to occur that benefits excluded racial minorities, it must somehow benefit the interests of the majority, as well. Third, CRT proponents stated

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race was a social construction that had no biological or genetic basis. Notwithstanding, racial categories have been created by law to normalize race and bolster white racial privilege according to the CRT writers. Fourth, CRT proponents contend the symbolism and meaning of racial groups has changed over time and place depending on social, political, and economic needs. For example, the Supreme Court, in its 1923 decision in the case of U.S. *v*. Bhagat Singh Thind, deemed Asian Indians ineligible for citizenship because U.S. law allowed only free whites to become naturalized citizens. The court conceded that Indians were "Caucasians" and that anthropologists considered them to be of the same race as white Americans, but argued that, "the average man knows perfectly well that there are unmistakable and profound differences." Only in 1946 did Congress begin to recognize that India would soon be an independent and significant world power and passed a new law that allowed Indians to become citizens (Aroon, 2018). Fifth, CRT proponents recognize the intersectionality of multiple identities and argue that concentrating solely on race, class, gender, sexuality, or disability, without recognizing the complex ways in which these identities interact with one another has the potential to lead to further patterns of marginalization. Finally, proponents of CRT insist the voices of people of color are unique and must be heard to understand how structures of power work and how these adversely affect lives. Thus, they claim marginalized individuals are sometimes more effective in comprehending both the intended and unintended consequences of laws or actions enacted by public bureaucracies (Freeman, 2011).

Proponents of CRT have demonstrated how racism continues even with laws and court decisions that purportedly prohibit racial discrimination (Crenshaw, 2017, Ladson-Billings, 2009). Nevertheless, patterns of racial inequality have appeared to be

strengthened in housing, education, employment, and criminal justice. In doing so, proponents of CRT challenged the assumption of neutrality in the American education and legal system in regard to race. This challenge was significant because if individuals were not able to accept that race and racism have an influence on education and society in 2020; then it would be difficult for those individuals to deal with other principles with respect to employing culturally responsive educational leadership, engaging in culturally responsive teaching, and exercising genuine critical self-reflection.

Implications for the study based on CRT. Taken together, the evidence from CRT suggests teachers will need to confront racial biases to move forward in adopting culturally responsive teaching and leadership approaches at their schools. Specifically, teachers will need to understand and accept that racism in various forms adversely affects students whom they are teaching. Further, this understanding and acceptance will be critical as they move forward to learn about, adopt, and employ culturally responsive teaching and culturally responsive leadership at their school sites.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership

What if teacher leaders adopted students' realities as part of their schooling, rather than defining success in school as an abandonment of everything that has sustained and carried students this far in their lives? What if teacher leaders included the community *and* worked with students, parents, and other community members to make use of community resources for instructional purposes and designed school curriculum to address historical community problems? What if the school, the students, and the community were on the same side? These questions were based in the work of Khalifa (2018) who has written cogently about culturally responsive school leadership.

Twenty-five years ago, culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally responsive pedagogies (Gay, 1994) emerged and, arguably, became a compelling topic as educators sought to enact educational reform. Following the effective schools research of the previous era, researchers in this area attempted to unearth and explicitly define ways in which classroom teachers could address the unique learning needs of minoritized students. Specific approaches were produced as a result of this work, which directed educational research on pedagogy in new, quite different directions. For example, teachers were encouraged to use cultural referents in both pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and classroom management (Weinstein, Tomlinson, Clarke, & Curran, 2004). Moreover, culturally responsive classrooms have been expanded to include various epistemologies as distinct as Indigenous (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008) and even hip-hop approaches (Khalifa, 2013).

Culturally responsive school leadership was the final lens that completed the theoretical frameworks for this study. Culturally responsive school leadership has been developed around three fundamental propositions. First, cultural responsiveness was a necessary element of powerful school leadership. Thus, for example, educational leaders have had to be responsive to the hurdles and opportunities of leading and educating students from different backgrounds. Second, if cultural responsiveness was to be present and sustainable in schools, it needed to be consistently developed by school leaders. Moreover, culturally responsive school leaders must have accounted for developing and engaging the school community. Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis (2016) stated culturally responsive leadership in schools required leaders to lead in ways that asked educators to participate in critical self-reflection and develop school communities

that included *and* engaged all students. Third, culturally responsive school leadership

was defined by a core set of leadership behaviors including (a) being critically self-

reflective; (b) developing and sustaining culturally responsive teachers and curricula; (c)

developing inclusive, anti-oppressive school contexts; and (d) engaging students'

Indigenous or local neighborhood community connections (Khalifa, 2018).

Regrettably, most teachers have not had the opportunity to be trained as culturally

responsive educators. Moreover, the curriculum often used in classrooms with diverse

students neglected and may have even been hostile toward students' cultural identities.

Teachers did not always understand how their perceptions of minoritized students

interfered with their ability to be effective teacher leaders (Ladson-Billings, 2013). For

example, in the current setting, a few of the teacher leaders expressed a common

frustration that they did not know how to obtain the cultural knowledge needed to

improve their craft or make critical personal connections with their students (see also

Davis et al., 2015, Khalifa, 2018). Deficit thinking has been at the core of the most

pervasive and damaging practices demonstrated toward marginalized students and

communities. By essentially blaming the student and the community where students

lived, deficit thinking camouflaged the adverse effects of societal factors such as poorly

resourced public schools and systemic discrimination (Spillane, 2015).

Notably, schools automatically have propagated systems of privilege or

oppression, even without any deliberate effort or thought. If teacher leaders remained

neutral, claiming they did not individually initiate the system and stating they had

policies that were not oppressive and promoted inclusion, then the oppressive structures

and practices would almost certainly be reproduced in the schools they led (Khalifa,

2018). Khalifa suggested culturally responsive school leaders had to protect and promote practices that included minoritized students in the spaces where they existed. They had to have been active and even engaged in proactive acts of anti-oppression to fully demonstrate culturally responsive school leadership. Finally, culturally relevant leadership has served as an approach that empowers people intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 2013).

   Implications for the study based on culturally responsive school leadership. Taken together, teaching, as currently configured, is not allowing or supporting teachers to meet the needs of all of today's students, which suggests we need a new model. Such a model might include teacher leaders, who might guide a team with distributed expertise to meet the culturally relevant needs of their students and build an exciting and diverse work environment that will encourage educators to stay in the classroom, become experts in their area of passion, and connect with their peers and students to create a more collaborative and sustainable future. Specifically, the implications for this study are (a) developing culturally responsive teacher leaders who consistently and systematically challenge traditional beliefs about marginalized students and (b) developing culturally responsive and proficient school leaders who possess the needed strategies to engage all students in a culturally diverse school setting.

Communities of Practice and Culturally Responsive Action Teams

   Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) suggested communities of practice (CoPs) were composed of three important areas including "a *domain* of knowledge, which defines a set of issues; a *community* of people who care about this domain; and the

shared *practice* that they are developing to be effective in the domain" (p. 27, italics in

original). The domain was the shared knowledge of members in the community, which

resulted in a common identity and purpose. The practice was how the members operated

and how knowledge was shared. The community was the network of participants who

engaged together in this endeavor and who supported one another in their learning and

implementation of CRTchg in this study.

Wenger et al. (2002) maintained, "The *domain* of a CoP creates a common

ground and sense of common identity …. The domain inspires members to contribute and

participate, guides their learning, and gives meaning to their actions" (p. 27-28, italics in

original). In the current context, the domain for these teacher leaders was knowledge

about and implementation of culturally responsive teaching and leadership.

In terms of community, Wenger et al. (2002) asserted, "The community creates

the social fabric of learning. A strong community fosters interactions and relationships

based on mutual respect and trust" (p. 28). Thus, the community was viewed as a

collaborative group where participants willingly interacted with one another and

developed relationships that facilitated and supported their efforts of implementing

culturally responsive teaching and leadership.

"The *practice* is a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language,

stories, and documents that community members share. … the domain denotes the

topic… [whereas] the practice is the specific knowledge the community develops, shares,

and maintains" (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 29, italics in original). Thus, the practice

consisted of the various ideas information, and so on needed to implement culturally

responsive teaching and leadership, which the community shared.

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Additionally, Wenger (1998) described members of CoPs as having a shared purpose, producing their identities through learning experiences. Wenger's (1998, Wenger et al., 2002) work with CoPs demonstrated they were an effective way to sustain the progress made by members of the community by affording opportunities to support one another. Thus, CoPs have been used to support and sustain new efforts in various settings (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002).

Implications for developing a Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT) for the study. CoPs exist in every industry and context. Notably, CoPs develop around things that matter to those members of the CoP. As a result, CoPs' practices reflect the members' understanding of what is essential. At MCRSD, we have a high minority student population and a small population of minority teacher leaders. This results in our teacher leaders doubting their self-efficacy, preventing them from achieving many of their classroom goals, and dwelling on what could go wrong. Similar to the experiences of beginning teachers, it is challenging to achieve classroom goals when fighting self-doubt on a daily basis. The ability of non-minority teacher leaders to establish relationships with non-white students is critical in helping to close the education gap between white and non-white students who are in poverty (Gay, 2018).

In the current project, one of the goals is to create a more culturally responsive learning environment with the help of the Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT), a specialized CoP that focuses on creating and sustaining a more inclusive learning space for minoritized youth. Thus, the CRAT CoP is focused on developing culturally responsive teacher leaders, which is essential for the ongoing success of these teacher-led schools and its students. The CRAT is intended to fulfill several functions including the

creation, accumulation, and diffusion of culturally responsive practices (see for example, Lave &Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998). Moreover, CRAT members work to develop a shared understanding of their campus and community and they operate to communicate their efforts to make it useful and relevant to other members of the community. Because the CRAT serves as a community of practice within the school, they help to preserve the knowledge that formal standard operating procedures fail to capture. For this reason, they are ideal for initiating new members and sustaining follow-up opportunities for the community.

Moreover, people who engage in the process of learning in a shared domain form CoPs to support one another in learning and growing their craft. As members of the CRAT participate in the pursuit of a common goal of becoming more culturally responsive, they interact and establish valuable relations with each other. Wegner notes that collective learning results in practices that reflect the CRAT's pursuit of a common goal (Wenger, 1998). Additionally, the CRAT helps to sustain changes in awareness and thinking that generate changes in practice. Moreover, over time, the work and knowledge that is developed among CRAT members can be translated and infused into a school-wide CoP; one in which there is a shared fundamental vision to help students and a commitment to working together to improve the school community that is necessary for school improvement. Notably, the goal of the CRAT is that members of the community discuss ideas, work together on problems, and keep up with developments inside and outside the community (Khalifa, 2018). Crucially, participants in CoPs recognize and develop knowledge as a critical asset. Knowledge is expected to be created, shared,

organized, revised, and passed on within the campuses as the CoP members work with all their colleagues at their campuses.

Finally, teacher leaders who serve as members of CRAT are expected to work to establish an identity through a process of documenting competencies associated with culturally responsive teaching and leadership, and servant leadership that signify growing professional expertise in a community of practice. After the professional development sessions, the CoPs are expected to afford teacher leaders with continuing opportunities to become more self-efficacious and culturally competent and confident educational leaders (Stovall, 2005). Research about communities of practice suggests they are supportive environments where members critically engage in self-reflection, free from judgment. Notably, teacher leaders in the CRAT are allowed to safely challenge each other to combat exclusionary practices to attain higher levels of culturally responsive teaching and leadership.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

"Culturally relevant teachers understand that learning is facilitated when

we capitalize on learners' prior knowledge. Rather than seeing students'

culture as an impediment to learning." — Gloria Ladson-Billings

In Chapter 2, I provided supporting scholarship about the influence of school

leaders, the positive effects of servant leadership, and the potential for implementing

critical race theory and culturally responsive school leadership to develop teacher leaders

CRTchg. In this chapter, I have written about the research design, methods, instruments,

and procedures that were used in this study. Additionally, in this chapter, I have

described foundational and philosophical reasons for utilizing action research and the

intervention.

Action Research and Overall Research Design

An action research approach was utilized for this project. Action research

involved cycles of planning the research, implementing the plan, gathering data and

devising the next action plan, and reflecting on the process (Mertler, 2020). Thus, action

research was ideally suited for dealing with problems of practice, which were context

dependent. For example, in this project, I used action research to examine how my

intervention, a series of workshops and on-going support had affected teacher leaders'

understanding and implementation of culturally responsive teaching (CRTchg) and

leadership at two unique school sites, which served predominantly minority students in

the MCRSD.

Moreover, in this project I employed a mixed-method research focus that allowed me to fully explore the intervention and articulate the journey of the teacher leaders in the schools. Data were gathered from interviews, surveys with both closed- and open-ended items, and digital narratives that afforded teacher leaders opportunities to reflect critically on the process. As part of the mixed method process, I used a retrospective, pre-intervention survey and a post-intervention survey to provide quantitative data to assess changes in teacher leaders' beliefs regarding the four principles of servant leadership theory—listening, empathy, awareness, and building community; their implementation of CRTchg; and their self-efficacy for using CRTchg.

The goal of this intervention was to consider the influence of servant leadership characteristics, the power of critical race theory, and the role of culturally responsive school leadership on the practices, beliefs, actions, and thinking of teacher leaders through interactive workshop sessions, personal reflection opportunities, and open discussions. The workshop sessions allowed teacher leaders to talk in a safe environment about these key ideas and their own practices and identify how their personal beliefs and biases could be creating barriers to their relational and instructional efforts and how that may have adversely affected student learning and academic achievement.

Setting

This study took place in the Maricopa County Regional School District (MCRSD) #509. MCRSD has served as a public, non-charter school district. It was classified as an accommodation district and its work was carried out under the authority of the elected County School Superintendent. As an accommodation district, MCRSD was tasked with providing educational services to homeless children and alternative education programs.

These alternative programs provided for the modification of the school course of study, teaching methods, materials, and techniques to offer a quality education for those students in grades kindergarten through 12 who were unable to profit from the regular school course of study and environment. Recently, MCRSD has provided education services to homeless students through the Pappas Schools, students in juvenile detention, and unaccompanied minors detained in private facilities throughout Maricopa County.

In 2016, a non-traditional public high school was opened in the district to meet the needs of students who struggled to find a fit in their 'home' high schools. A year later, an elementary school was opened for a similar population. The students at MCRSD students were culturally diverse, came from adverse environments, and required an alternative school setting because of behavior and academic reasons. To meet the needs of the students, the staff was committed to culturally responsive teaching, implementing trauma-informed practices, and using a restorative justice approach to behavior management.

MCRSD's academic standards encouraged inquiry, discovery, and innovation. Thus, lessons, and units were based on the interests and passions of the students. Assessments were authentic and used to determine growth, identify gaps, and to develop interventions/enrichment. The practice of teaching social, emotional skills and regulation were deemed just as important as teaching academic content. Teacher leaders prioritized relationships and ensured students' basic needs were being met. One of the schools' goals was to stop feeding the school to prison pipeline by analyzing data, uncovering implicit biases, and not suspending students from school. By reimagining education in this manner, teachers in MCRSD schools were convinced they would be able to produce

an environment where an underserved population felt safe and connected to the school in order to learn, take risks, and be their authentic selves. Additionally, the two schools had recently transitioned to being teacher-led and student-centered, which added an additional level of complexity, i.e., wickedness, to the process.

Participants

The 22 participants in this study were teacher leaders and educators from the Esperanza Elementary School and Hope High School in MCRSD. All teacher leaders were provided with a recruitment consent letter. A copy of that letter has been provided in AppendixA. These teacher leaders were educators who had authority to make dramatic changes that were needed to improve student learning. These changes included personalizing learning for students, determining professional development for teachers, increasing the sense of ownership and accountability among teacher leaders in areas where they have authority to make decisions, and collaborating with district administrators to boost student achievement.

Between the two schools, all 29 teachers were invited to participate in the study. The sample was a purposeful. A majority of the teacher leaders at the elementary school and high school were newly hired for the 2019-2020 school year. In February of 2019, the district administration team developed two teacher-led schools in the district to meet some of the concerns of the survey about retention of teachers including teacher autonomy, teacher pay, and smaller class size. In all, 18 new teacher leaders were hired; the most junior teacher leader had four years of teaching experience, two teacher leaders had six years of experience, four had eight years of experience and 11 teacher leaders had 11 years or more years of experience. Of the 18 teachers, two were former Arizona

Teacher of The Year Award winners, four were National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT), and three were in the process of attaining their NBCT certification. Four of the teacher leaders were former coaches and peer evaluators for the Maricopa County School Superintendent's Office, and one was a former advisor for the Arizona Department of Education CTE Department.

Initially, it was believed these teacher leaders would be able to meet the needs of all students because of their experience, dedication, and motivation. Additionally, low student to teacher ratios, more resources, and extended autonomy within the classroom were other compelling factors that were anticipated to generate academic success. Nevertheless, these 'teachers' experienced high levels of stress and encountered doubts similar to those of first-year teachers. After interviewing all of the teacher leaders and observing staff meetings, it was clear they struggled with their own limitations of (a) understanding students and their backgrounds, (b) implementing culturally responsive teaching, and (c) employing a teacher leadership model.

I recruited participants from these qualified teacher leaders in mid-May 2020, when I offered information about the study, and explained my role as facilitator and researcher. See the Procedure for details about recruitment and consent for the teacher leader participants.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I played the role of a participant-observer. Notably, my positionality was a combination of insider and outsider. I worked for Maricopa County Regional School District as the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and was known to faculty and staff members of the two schools in various capacities including my work in

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recruitment and hiring, facilities management, technology use, and school safety. At the same time, I had conducted previous professional development sessions, participated in classroom walkthroughs, and, when necessary, implemented improvement plans for educators failing to meet the expectations of the district. Nevertheless, I did not participate in any curriculum development, student discipline, or establishing class schedules.

With respect to the researcher role, I collaboratively developed the workshop sessions and organized them. Thus, I was involved in determining content, activities, and follow-up efforts. Further, I created the survey instruments, interview protocols, and the journal reflection prompts. I gathered the data at the end of the study including survey, interview, and journal reflection data. I analyzed the data, interpreted it, and wrote results about it.

Intervention

Workshop sessions. The intervention consisted of eight interactive, professional development, workshop sessions with teacher leaders from both Esperanza and Hope campuses that included a series of virtual meetings and weekly reflections prior to meetings using a Google form. A copy of the CRAT schedule is provided in Appendix B.

Because Workshop 1 was an introduction to the overall intervention, it did not follow the same format as the remaining workshops. It served as an introduction to the problem of practice and the structure of the workshops to follow. It included an introduction to the MBC journals and the prompts that would help guide our thinking for the week, which would be an introduction to the topic followed by a deeper dive into that topic the following week. For example, Workshops 2, 4, and 6 were introductions to

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servant leadership, culturally responsive school leadership, and critical race theory, respectively. Prior to each of these sessions, participants were provided with articles to read and reflect on in the MBC journals prior to the workshop as well as a prompt for participants to keep in mind as they read and participated in the workshops.

To illustrate the nature of the workshops, consider the following example. Workshop 2 was the introduction to servant leadership. At the beginning of the session, we discussed group norms and expectations. Then I described servant leadership and the four aspects on which that session was focused including awareness, listening, empathy, and building community. Next, we discussed some of the muddy points and burning questions participants had expressed in the MBC journal entries. We watched a brief video about servant leadership and then broke into small groups. These same groups were used throughout the intervention workshop sessions. Participants discussed the article, shared their thoughts, and then came together in the large group and shared information from the small group discussions. This was followed by a quick wrap-up and general end of workshop discussions.

Workshops 3, 5, and 7 afforded participants with opportunities to engage in deeper dives into servant leadership, culturally responsive school leadership, and critical race theory, respectively. Again prior to each session, participants were given articles to read and reflect on in the MBC journals and a prompt for participants to keep in mind as they read and participated in the workshops. The main structural difference between the introductory sessions and the deeper dive sessions was the lack of the small group breakout times, and a guest speaker presented and led discussions. The speaker specifically addressed the topic and helped connect the readings and the theory to

tangible, real-world applications teacher leaders could use. Additionally, the speaker fielded questions and offered stories and illustrations to solidify the concepts. For example, in Workshop 3, we built on the introduction to servant leadership, reviewed some of the MBCs from the last session, and the guest speaker presented information and held a question and answer session. Because the workshop sessions were virtual, I helped manage the chat window and would either ask the question written or create the opportunity for participants to ask their questions. At the end of the session, we concluded by taking care of matters related to preparing for the next workshop. Samples of the workshop agendas are provided in Appendix C.

In the sessions, a safe space was created and small group breakout rooms were made up of the same participants, so teacher leaders could have frank, open discussions and find opportunities to think critically about their role in culturally responsive education, their own culturally motivated thought patterns, and their social privilege. It was anticipated that teacher leaders would articulate challenges they saw in employing culturally responsive teaching as well as their concerns and confusions; and examined, with other teacher leaders, ways of mitigating such matters (De La Mare, 2014). Because teacher leaders had distinctive needs, it was necessary to begin by discussing what each of the teacher leaders needed as individuals and wanted to get out of the group discussions (De La Mare, 2014). The subsequent sessions were conducted to delve more deeply into specific topics and included managing change and keeping people motivated while always trying to incorporate aspects of critical race theory like the idea of whiteness as property, intersectionality, and so on.

Muddiest points, burning questions, and connections/applications (MBC).

Each week, participants were assigned readings and/or thought-provoking videos that were specific to the week's topic around developing a Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT) and implementing CRTchg. Before each class, participants were asked to complete a digital MBC reading reflection journal Entry where the researcher and participant could have small short dialogues about areas where they might have been struggling with the readings or identifying opportunities to connect what they had read to their professional practice. Specifically, they were asked to identify a "muddiest point (M)" in these weekly readings and explain why they think they might be struggling with this idea. They were to explain to what they attributed this difficulty. They also noted whether the article was abstract or academic. Participants were asked to identify at least one "burning question (B)" related to the readings. What did they want to know more about or understand better, and why? Finally, participants were asked to make at least one "connection to scholarly practice" (C). Participants were asked how these ideas related to their classroom, community of practice, or workplace. The idea behind the MBC journal entries was to challenge the participants to grapple with complex ideas in a small, safe environment with the researcher while also providing insight into issues with which the larger group might be struggling, but which might not be disclosed in a larger group setting.

The leadership intervention was a multi-layered process where teacher leaders gained the knowledge and skills to aid them in becoming more efficacious in their new, non-traditional, educational setting and to facilitate thinking, implementing, and reflecting on CRTchg. Specifically, the intervention was intended to build teacher leader

leadership skills and self-efficacy with respect to establishing classroom environments that were culturally responsive to students' educational and individual needs. Because teacher efficacy beliefs shaped the standardizing climate of a school, they had strong influences on teachers' practices and, consequently, student achievement including overcoming difficult external influences (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000).

Instruments

Surveys. I employed four instruments during data collection. First, a post-intervention survey was followed by a retrospective, pre-intervention survey to gather quantitative data to assess six constructs that included (a) servant leadership with four constructs—awareness, listening, empathy and community building; (b) using culturally responsive teaching; and (c) self-efficacy for using culturally responsive teaching in the local school setting. Examples of survey items for servant leadership, included, "As a servant leader, I understand the influence of how my personal background affects my interactions with my students;" and "In my classes, I build community by implementing a community circle at the beginning of every day." See Appendix D for the complete set of items assessing servant leadership. Examples of survey items that assessed culturally responsive teaching were, "As I teach, I take into account ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) differs from my students' home cultures;" and "I critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes." See Appendix D for the complete set of items that assess culturally responsive teaching. Finally, examples of survey items that assessed self-efficacy included, "I am comfortable implementing strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture;" and "I am

comfortable teaching students about their cultures' contributions to society." The

complete set of items assessing self-efficacy have been provided in Appendix D.

Reflection journals. Additionally, teacher leader reflective journals were used to

collect other qualitative data. Examples of prompts for the reflective entries were "How

do you guide colleagues who are resistant to doing this work;" "What does your team do

to monitor incidents of exclusionary practices in your school;" "What is a brief activity

that you could do during every meeting to allow co-workers to be critically self-

reflective?" The reflections afford teacher leaders' opportunities to consider and think

about their experiences during their personal journeys through the intervention.

Interviews. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teacher

leaders. Examples of interview items were "What challenges is your team facing

now/previously;" "How have those been handled;" and "Are there any specific pieces of

training that would benefit your team?" The complete set of interview items has been

provided in Appendix E.

Thus, pre- and post-intervention surveys, weekly digital responses in the

reflective journals, and interviews provided data on the effects of these sessions and

supports, as well as changes that occurred in teacher leaders' self-perceptions on these

matters. The alignments between research questions and data sources have been

provided in Table 2. See Table 2.

Table 2

Alignment of Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Questions	Data Sources
RQ1: How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' servant leadership abilities?	Surveys Teacher Leader Reflection Journals Interviews
RQ2: How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' use of culturally relevant teaching in their classroom?	Surveys Teacher Leader Reflection Journals Interviews
RQ3: How, and to what extent, did participation in culturally relevant teaching workshops influence teachers' self-efficacy for using culturally relevant teaching?	Surveys Teacher Leader Reflection Journals Interviews

Procedure and Timeline for the Study

IRB approval was obtained for the study. A copy of the IRB approval for this study has been provided in Appendix F. Once IRB approval was granted, I worked with the deputy superintendent of the school district to find a site(s) in the district to conduct the study. Consent forms were provided when I recruited teacher leaders, as well as an explanation of the study and expectations of participation in the study. The recruitment and consent letter has been provided in Appendix A. Participation in the study was open to all 29 teacher leaders and educators from two campuses. Of these, 22 participated in the study. As noted in the intervention, eight virtual, professional development workshop sessions were conducted.

The intervention took place between July 2020 and November 2020. The intervention was organized, directed, and some sessions were conducted by me. Other sessions were led by content experts in the particular areas. Following the eight virtual professional development sessions, which were held on Wednesday afternoons during the intervention window. Participants were provided with opportunities to make eight electronic entries that included muddy points, burning questions, and connections to scholarly practice (MBC), i.e. self-reflection opportunities.

At the conclusion of the study, I administered the post- and retrospective, pre-intervention surveys electronically to all participating staff members. I also gathered MBC self-reflection journal entries, which were written on a weekly basis, prior to the weekly professional development sessions. Finally, seven selected participants were interviewed. Interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the intervention. Interviews with teachers were conducted during a visit to their classroom or virtually using Zoom at a mutually agreed upon time. The interviews were audio recorded using an external microphone and a laptop computer. During the interview, participants were asked to respond to the questions and subsequent follow-up or probing questions from a semi-structured interview.

To summarize, the study was conducted to address the three research questions noted above and took place between June 2020 and November of 2020 with data analysis following the study. The details of the timeline for the study have been provided in Table 3 on the following page.

Table 3

Timeline and Procedures of the Study

Time frame	Actions	Procedures
June 2020	Obtain IRB approval Identify participants for research study	● Submit IRB documents. ● Contact district and then faculty members to seek/obtain research study participation.
July 2020	Offer PD Workshop Session #1 Journaling by participants	● Develop content and offer it to participants in session. ● Provide prompts for journaling experience.
August - November 2020	Offer PD Workshop Sessions #2 - #8 Journaling by participants	● Develop content and offer it to participants in sessions. ● Provide prompts for journaling experience.
November 2020	Conduct post-intervention and retrospective, pre-intervention surveys, Conduct interviews, Gather journals	● Surveys will be sent through email to participants with appropriate follow-ups. ● Organize and carry out interviews
December 2020 – February 2021	Analyze data	● Conduct qualitative analysis. Conduct quantitative analysis.

Data Analysis

The retrospective, pre- and post-intervention surveys, reflective journal entries, and interviews provided multiple sources of data which reflected changes that occurred and insights gained by teacher leaders over the course of the intervention. All of these sources provided quantitative and qualitative data that were analyzed. For the quantitative data, SPSS was used to analyze the reliabilities of the quantitative data prior to conducting a repeated measures analysis of variance to determine changes in the scores for the teacher leaders. For the qualitative data, I explored the data to determine themes that emerged from the data. Considering this goal, a grounded interpretive approach (R. Buss, personal communication, Jan. 15, 2021) was utilized. The analysis process included reading and re-reading the qualitative data. As I conducted my interpretive work, I used the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) throughout the process. I began the interpretive process by developing initial codes that provided labels for concepts. After completing the initial coding, I gathered the codes into larger categories, which I called theme related concepts. Then, I aggregated the theme-related concepts into themes. From the themes, I developed assertions. Taken together, the assertions and themes helped to reveal the story of how these new teacher leaders learned and implemented culturally responsive teaching and servant leadership in these two Maricopa County Regional School District accommodation schools.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

> *"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when*
>
> *you know better, do better.*"   — Maya Angelou

This study was conducted to determine how and to what extent professional development sessions for white teacher leaders in a majority black and brown school changed their views and relationships with students and their teaching styles with respect to culturally responsive teaching. Additionally, data were collected to examine teacher leaders' self-efficacy with respect to using culturally responsive teaching. The following research questions were examined.

> 1. How and to what extent was a servant leadership culture developed in a teacher-led school?
>
> 2. How and to what extent was a culturally responsive educator and teaching culture developed in a teacher-led school?
>
> 3. How and to what extent did the newly developed culture influence teacher self-efficacy?

Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Quantitative data included post-intervention survey scores and retrospective, pre-intervention survey results for 13 teacher leaders who completed the Teacher Leader Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT) surveys on the two occasions. These data were used to assess change in servant leadership variables including awareness, listening, empathy, and building community; using CRTchg; and self-efficacy for using CRTchg.

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Qualitative data included responses from post-intervention interviews of teacher leaders and digital journal entries, which participants recorded during the intervention.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 25 (IBM Corp., 2017), which allowed for the analysis of reliability of the data prior to analysis to determine whether there were differences in the retrospective, pre- and the post-intervention means. To assess the differences between means, repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were used.

By comparison, the qualitative data were analyzed using the following grounded interpretive procedures (R. Buss, personal communication, Jan. 15, 2021). First, I read and re-read the transcripts four times. Second, I used the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) for each step of the process from coding to categorizing to determining themes. That is new text or content was compared with previous codes or categories to determine whether there was an existing code or category, if there was, the new text of content was given that code or category, if not a new code or category was created. . Beyond this approach, the actual coding process involved developing initial open codes, including keywords or short phrases. Subsequently, these initial codes were grouped into larger categories also called theme-related components. These theme-related components were then collected into themes. The themes led to the development of assertions, which were supported by quotes from the original data.

Quantitative Data Results

Reliability of the measures. Before analyzing the quantitative data, I computed Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for all six measures using the retrospective, pre-

intervention data and observed reliabilities that ranged from .72 to .94 with a median of

.85. The reliabilities were all well above .70, which has been used as a criterion for

acceptable levels of reliability. Thus, these data were reliable. The individual reliabilities

have been presented in Table 4, below. See Table 4.

Table 4

Reliabilities for the Six Measures from the Survey

Survey Measure	Reliability
Servant Leadership Awareness	.86
Servant Leadership Listening	.77
Servant Leadership Empathy	.83
Servant Leadership Building Community*	.72
Using Culturally Responsive Teaching	.94
Self-Efficacy for Using Culturally Responsive Teaching	.91

*—*Note*. One item, #22, was deleted, so this scale was based on five items.

Repeated measures ANOVA. Subsequently, a repeated measures analysis of

variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were differences between

the retrospective, pre- and the post-intervention scores for the six dependent variables.

The overall repeated measures ANOVA was not significant, multivariate-$F(6, 7) = 2.90$,

$p < .095$. Typically, the analysis would have stopped at this point. Because this is the

initial work in this very important area, the individual follow-up ANOVA analyses were

conducted for the six measures. For Servant Leadership all four means were significantly

different for the two points in time. For example, the repeated measures analysis for

Servant Leadership Awareness was significant, $F(1, 12) = 19.84$, $p < .001$, with partial η^2 = 0.623, a very large with-in subject effect size. There was a significant difference between the means for Servant Leadership Awareness, 4.54 vs. 5.37. The means and standard deviations for six measures have been presented in Table 5. See Table 5.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations* for Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores for the Six Measures

from the Survey (n = 13)

Survey Measure Scores	Pre-Intervention Scores	Post-Intervention
Servant Leadership Awareness	4.54 (0.75)	5.37 (0.42)
Servant Leadership Listening	4.60 (0.67)	5.52 (0.50)
Servant Leadership Empathy	4.40 (0.75)	5.18 (0.54)
Servant Leadership Building Community	4.49 (0.77)	5.12 (0.57)
Using Culturally Responsive Teaching	4.04 (0.92)	5.14 (0.57)
Self-Efficacy for Using CRTchg	3.89 (0.88)	5.03 (0.56)

*—Note. Standard deviations have been presented in parentheses.

Moreover, the repeated measures analysis for Servant Leadership Listening was significant, $F(1, 12) = 17.61$, $p < .001$, with partial $\eta^2 = 0.595$, a very large within-subject effect size. Again, there was a significant difference between the means for Servant Leadership Listening, 4.60 vs. 5.52. The repeated measures analysis for Servant Leadership Empathy was significant, $F(1, 12) = 16.12$, $p < .002$, with partial $\eta^2 = 0.573$, a very large within-subject effect size based on Cohen's criteria (Olejnik & Algina, 2000).

Thus, there was a significant difference between the retrospective, pre- and post-intervention means for Servant Leadership Empathy, 4.40 vs. 5.18. Similarly, the repeated measures analysis for Servant Leadership Building Community was significant, $F(1, 12) = 7.33$, $p < .019$, with partial $\eta^2 = 0.379$, a very large within-subject effect size. Again, there was a significant difference between the means for Servant Leadership Building Community, 4.49 vs. 5.12.

Notably, both of the repeated measures ANOVAs for Using CRTchg, and for Self-Efficacy for Using CRTchg were significant. Specifically, the repeated measures ANOVA for Using CRTchg was significant, $F(1, 12) = 26.47$, $p < .001$, with partial $\eta^2 = 0.688$, a very large within-subject effect size based on Cohen's criteria (Olejnik & Algina, 2000). Thus, there was a significant difference between the retrospective, pre- and post-intervention means for Using CRTchg, 4.04 vs. 5.14. Moreover, the repeated measures analysis for Self-Efficacy for Using CRTchg was significant, $F(1, 12) = 22.19$, $p < .001$, with partial $\eta^2 = 0.649$, a very large with-in subject effect size. There was a significant difference between the means for Self-Efficacy for Using CRTchg, 3.89 vs. 5.03.

In sum, significant changes in the dependent variables were evident across all six variables with scores changing between 0.73 and 1.14 points. These outcomes were substantial and indicated real change because all the effect sizes were large.

Qualitative Data

Muddy points, burning questions, connections to scholarly practice (MBC). Based on the readings, each week participants were asked to complete a digital MBC reading reflection journal entry that was used by the researcher and participants to

interact around areas with which they might have been struggling in the readings or identifying opportunities to connect what they had read to their scholarly practice.

Interviews. Interviews also contributed insights into how the CRAT professional development sessions affected them. These included participants sharing thoughts and responses to the readings, the significance of having the opportunity to hear from and interact with subject matter experts who helped interpret the theories of servant leadership, and focus on culturally responsive school leadership examples and explore how critical race theory might be put into practice.

The code cloud provided below in Figure 1 reflected the represented concepts were present in the qualitative data. See Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Code Cloud Reflecting Proportions of Responses*

Qualitative Data Results from Interviews and Self-Reflection Journal Entries

Interpretive results for the qualitative data have been presented in this section. Three main themes were identified in the qualitative data including Engaging in Awareness/Mindfulness; Building Relationships and Community; and Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRTchg). Notably, each theme was developed based on

theme-related components, which emerged from examples of the codes as shown in

Table 6. Three assertions, which were based on the themes and theme-related

components, were developed from the analysis of the post-intervention interviews and the

digital self-reflection MBC journals. The data have been presented in Table 6, which has

been provided to make the qualitative interpretive process more transparent and to serve

as an advance organizer for the reader. In the subsequent portions of the chapter, I have

presented each of the assertions, themes, theme-related components, and quotes from the

data that support these interpretations. See Table 6.

Table 6

Codes, Themes-related Components, Themes, and Assertions Based on the Qualitative

Data

Theme-related Components and Codes	Theme	Assertion

Considering Practice
  Reflecting on practice
  Differing points of view
    about schooling/content
  Differing points of view
    about educational
    priorities related to
    cultural perspectives
  Recognizing bias in
    instructional practices
	Theme 1—Engaging in Awareness/Mindfulness	*Assertion 1*—Based on their participation in CRAT, teacher leaders questioned educational and cultural assumptions that influenced their instructional practices and revised them to make instruction more meaningful to students.

Developing Community at School
  Listening to students
  Listening to staff members
  Expressing empathy for
    students
  Trusting their teaching
    colleagues
  Recognizing differences
	Theme 2—Building Relationships and Community	*Assertion 2*—Teacher leaders built relationships internally with staff and students and externally with the community and families.

between staff members and students Attempting to build community in the classroom *Connecting with the community to support community at school* Listening to students' families/community Expressing empathy for families/community Recognizing differences between staff members and community		
Trying/Executing CRTchg Expressing concerns about CRTchg Considering use of CRTchg Applying CRTchg Fostering student participation Desiring feedback on CRTchg Supporting colleagues who struggled Supporting colleagues to use CRTchg Reflecting on their CRTchg	Theme 3—Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRTchg)	*Assertion 3*—After participating in CRAT, teacher leaders articulated visions for CRTchg and implemented CRTchg, achieving varying degrees of initial success and self-efficacy for using CRTchg.

Theme #1—Engaging in Awareness/Mindfulness

Assertion 1—Based on their participation in CRAT, teacher leaders questioned educational and cultural assumptions that influenced their instructional practices and revised them to make instruction more meaningful to students. This assertion was rooted in Theme #1, Engaging in Awareness/Mindfulness. In particular, teacher leaders became aware of personal and educational biases and cultural differences that created roadblocks

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for learning and a majority of teachers adapted their instruction based on their new understandings. Notably to move to more meaningful instruction, teacher leaders engaged in mindfulness approaches and became aware of personal and educational biases along with cultural differences that created roadblocks, which had prevented them from developing meaningful instruction that better related to their students' needs. After their engagement in CRAT, they adapted instruction to be more meaningful for students, which was reflected in the theme-related component—considering practice.

Considering practice. In their MBC journals and during the interviews, teacher leaders described how they were considering adaptations to their practices. Specifically, they were considering how to make adaptations to improve their practices by better engaging students in the learning process, which resulted from thoughtful consideration of their teaching, the material presented during the CRAT workshops, and their comparison with one another.

Reflecting on practice. All teacher leaders who talked about the importance of adapting their practice to becoming more culturally responsive and meaningful to students mentioned the importance of reflecting on their own instructional practice. For example, teacher leader Tina (pseudonyms were provided for all CRAT participants) mentioned in her MBC journal how being deliberate about reflecting on her instruction gave her a better sense of awareness when she wrote, "awareness is a somewhat intangible skill that is valuable in teaching. It is similar to what many educators call 'with-it-ness,' and it seems essential to being an effective culturally responsive teacher leader." Teacher leader Daphne reflected in her journal about how she felt she needed to adapt the materials in her specific classroom to help students make more meaningful

connections when she wrote, "Students need access to books and art created by people of different ethnic backgrounds." Along similar lines, teacher leader Wendy mentioned in her interview,

> It [CRTchg] can feel daunting, particularly when it comes to units and lessons that I have done in the past, but I recognize the importance of it. I wish we had more time devoted to creating action steps to work towards this action, but I look forward to making it part of my routine moving forward.

Other teacher leaders spoke about the importance of reflecting on instruction with peers. For example, teacher leader Wendy stated, "conversations we have together as staff or small groups of colleagues are the things that can change practice and experiences for students." Teacher leader Jennifer mentioned in her journal, "...as a teacher leader, what adjustments do I need to make to meet the demands of students who struggle with chronic absences? How do I ensure that students are prepared for their post high school careers?"

Differing points of view about schooling and content. Teacher leaders were also adapting their practice because they recognized there were limitations in developing instruction based on what they learned when they were learning how to become educators as well as realizing challenges to their own past teaching practices. In his interview, teacher leader, Quinten spoke about how CRTchg challenged the way he had perceived educational instruction when he claimed, "it seems like school isn't in alignment with the world that we live in. It's in an alignment with a world that's long gone." Echoing this disconnect between traditional school structure and a need to meet better students' needs,

educator Jennifer expressed, "It's not about the students observing and interpreting my lesson, it's about engagement."

Teacher leader Natalie discussed the frustrations she felt after she became more aware of developing a more culturally responsive classroom and interacting with others on her campus who had yet to start thinking about adapting their practices when she said,

> Conversing with people who are not working with the same amount or depth of understanding when it comes to culturally responsive instructional practice, this is the heart of where I continue to struggle ... I wonder how to navigate these conversations in a productive, respectful way when I realize the pool of historical knowledge is significantly lacking.

Teacher leader Kennedy mentioned in her journal her recurring difficulty when wanting to change the way she was teaching students when she stated, "What frustrates me within the education world is how our focus is so heavily on student performance, rather than student process."

Differing points of view about educational priorities related to cultural perspectives. Some teacher leaders shared thoughts about how their past attitudes about things like student behavior or student academic effort had changed over time. For example, teacher leader Hank shared an example of this during his interview when he declared,

> take a class like algebra, and then the student says, 'Well, I finished. That was meaningless.' The expectation is that you graduate from high school and go to work in the community where the student comes from, so yeah, algebra, the class might not seem very valuable. But, if you open up that class and look at all of the

specific skills in algebra and what those skills could mean and those skills get

fleshed out for their value. The completion of those skills in an algebra class can

be celebrated.

When teacher leader Yousef considered the presentation from Dr. Miller, one of the

experts who presented at a workshop, when he discussed the importance of creating

authentic relationships so that students can bring their entire identity into the classroom,

he wrote, "I believe this will impact the conversations I have about behavior expectations

and learning." When connecting an awareness of the influences of the differences

between the culture at home and the culture at school, teacher leader Olivia-Grace noted

in her journal, "I sought to know lots about my students, and I had the benefit of reading

students' writing to gain more insight into their worlds."

   Recognizing bias in instructional practices. For many of the teacher leaders,

questioning the reasoning or assumptions of traditional educational instruction allowed

them to become more sensitive to their own personal and educational biases. Teacher

leader Natalie reflected on these matters in past educational experiences and work

environments in a journal entry where she wrote,

   Previously, my colleagues and supervisors subtly implied accommodations were a

   way of lowering expectations for students who simply couldn't perform at the

   same level of their peers. I appreciate the shift in thinking with CRAT to viewing

   accommodations as a right for all students to have what they need to be

   successful, particularly in cases where racist systems and racist curriculum

   continue to impede their success in schools.

Teacher leader Daphne mentioned in her MBC reflective journal, "I find myself noticing the whiteness of some of the resources that are easily accessible to teachers." This comment attested to the systemic issue of race and racism in the educational system. The expectation was that if you wanted to make your classroom more culturally diverse, you had to do extra work because the resources were out there, but they were not as easy to find. Teacher leader Bree touched on this matter in one of her journal entries when she wrote, "where is the line between dominant cultural norms that oppress and simply universal norms of what is appropriate behavior in a professional environment?"

In another example, educator Oliva-Grace struggled with a previous practice of "accepting 'misbehaving' students from teacher leaders' classes into her classroom. ... However, I thought I was being helpful. The suggestion that this could be an oppressive behavior and supporting colleagues' exclusionary behaviors toward students would fall under muddy for me."

Summary of Theme 1—Awareness/Mindfulness. Taken together, the data suggested teacher leaders were thoughtfully considering information from the CRAT workshops and how that was relevant to their instruction. They recognized how issues such as differing points of view on instruction, differing cultural perspectives, and instructional biases affected their teaching and considered how to make adaptations to their instructional approaches to serve better their students' needs.

Theme #2—Building Relationships and Community

Assertion 2—Teacher leaders built relationships internally with staff and students and externally with the community and families to enhance their instruction. This assertion was rooted in Theme #2 Building Relationships and Community. Teacher

leaders recognized the importance of building relationships by valuing the cultures represented in their classrooms and including multiple community stakeholders.

Developing community at school. Teacher leaders recognized that it took a great deal of work and that they had to be intentional in designing community at school. They engaged with students and staff members in various ways to facilitate closer connections that built school and classroom community.

Listening to students. Developing relationships was a process that occurred over time, and one practice that facilitated building those relationships was listening. For example, Teacher leader Quentin reflected on how he used active listening when interacting with his students when he said, "I try and practice active listening. It communicates a sense of respect and lets my students know I am interested in what they have to share." Several teachers spoke about how they used community circles as an intentional practice so listen to their students in their classrooms. Teacher leader Daphne illustrated in her journal how she used community circles when she wrote,

> I use community circles in class to hear from my students, break the ice, and
> gauge where they are from a social-emotional perspective. Sometimes, it's better
> to focus on where they are than to try and move on to my lesson.

Teacher leader Kennedy discussed during her interview that listening was more than just hearing the words; it included how the words were said, "I would start each class with a community circle and just take time to check-in and process where they were as a group." Teacher leader Emelia described in her journal that she had been more deliberate in not just listening to her students, but trying to make sure that all students felt comfortable

speaking when she recorded, "because not all students come from the same background, it's important to encourage those who don't [think they have a voice] to have a voice."

Listening to staff members. Part of developing teams and relationships involved the ability to listen to all participants to lead and inspire within the community. Teacher leader Natalie discussed in her journal about ways her team created opportunities to have space to listen to each other when she wrote, "the restorative and community circles were a great way to build a foundation of empathy and healing for our group. For me, I still need a lot of work around listening, particularly when stakes and stress are high." Teacher leader Yousef articulated how he appreciated how his team deliberately structured staff meetings to ensure there was time for listening to each other when he maintained,

> the way our Monday, Wednesday staff meetings are structured gives staff
> opportunities to engage in professional discussions and develop skills related to
> cultural responsiveness, and flexibility in adapting their content, curriculum, and
> teaching strategies. It gives us the chance to learn from each other.

Teacher leader Kennedy indicated how she benefited from having the opportunity to listen to her peers as she visited their classrooms when she stated, "I feel like that's been helpful to me as the people like find success with their, in their rooms, or in their interactions with kiddos, and then share it with me."

Expressing empathy for students. Teacher leaders realized that the ability to understand and feel what others were feeling was more than offering kind words. They came to recognize empathy was being able to imagine distinctly living others' experiences as if they were their own. For example, teacher leader Quinten expressed in

his journal how seeing things differently and really imagining his students' perspectives was influencing his instruction. Specifically, he recorded, "being more empathetic, and seeing things differently or at least trying to see things through a different lens that I'm going to be better at making decisions and adapting for the needs of my students." Teacher leader Wendy spoke about how she struggled with expressing empathy when she declared,

> I think I tend to be a pretty, empathetic person naturally. It's almost like you
>
> believe you are empathetic, and then someone challenges your empathy, and then
>
> you realize I'm not as good at that as I need to be. So, I have to increase my
>
> capacity to understand perspectives from my students' perspective.

Teacher leader Natalie spoke about how empathy helped her establish relationships with her students when she claimed, "getting to know my students as individuals is key. Understanding their academic, cultural, and social identities helps create authentic relationships."

Trusting their teaching colleagues. Results showed teacher leaders trusted their colleagues in two ways within the school setting. First, they trusted their colleagues in terms of a professional relationship with peers that was typically task-focused. Second, they also trusted colleagues in personal relationships, which were more emotional in nature. There was no way to expedite the trust-building process; it took time. People began to feel like they could trust others when they felt connected and valued.

Teacher leader Jennifer addressed how she overcame peer resistance and tried to generate a culture of trust when she stated, "I try to build trust by following through on my words; do what I say I'm going to do. I also try validating people when they

communicate feelings of unfairness or unworthiness." Teacher leader Natalie considered

in her journal how her team had built trust over time when she wrote, "our use of

community circles to start meetings and restorative circles when feelings have been hurt

has created our team's spaces to begin our trust-building process." Teacher leader

Wendy stated during her interview how her team addressed the need to develop trust

when she said, "As part of the communications committee, we created specific trust-

building activities because we knew having that trust was needed if we were going to

move forward as a team." During his interview, Teacher leader Quinten considered

overall trust in the building among his colleagues when he stated, "I don't think it's true

for everyone, but I trust everybody on the team I really do. I don't think there's anybody

that I'd have to be careful what I say."

Recognizing differences between staff members and students. Teacher leaders

recognized differences between themselves and their students, but used these to their

advantage. Although there were questions about whether it was better to minimize or

celebrate differences within the community, they came to understand that to create

authentic relationships the recognition of differences was required. For instance, when

asked to talk about ways to demonstrate incorporating culturally accountable responsive

measures into instructional practices, teacher leader Kennedy commented, "as I'm

building it [classroom community], it's about relationship building and understanding

that we carry differences, culturally, economically, linguistically between all of us. So

the work is developing a space where the differences can be expressed." Educator Bree

was reflecting on how a teacher leader had an 'ah ha' moment while teaching virtually

due to COVID. The teacher genuinely was shocked by what she perceived as normal

home life and what she was observing with one of her students when she related, "a teacher leader recently told me that her student's house was so loud that she didn't know how he could learn at home." Teacher leader Wendy commented on the differences between her kids now and those in her past teaching experience when she stated, "this has been a struggle for me since starting here. When I first started teaching, it was in a very affluent community, and I was the one with a different background; this is a very different experience."

Attempting to build community in the classroom. When considering his early attempts at having community circles at the beginning of class, teacher leader Aidan stated, "I was very disappointed in myself for not being able to gain traction with this activity. I suppose the issue was I had failed to establish an environment where students could comfortably express themselves and expose their vulnerabilities." Teacher leader Hank commented on his ability to get students to participate because of his personal experiences as a student when he claimed,

> I was that kid in high school who fell asleep in class and then I ended up teaching
> high school. I hated every second of school because I didn't see the value in it. I
> get the resistance. I get it. I get it and the pushback. I was there once.

Teacher leader Wendy talked about a successful experience she had when she commented, "I read Ezra Jack Keats books, and the kids were spellbound. I think it was because up to that point, not a lot of kids saw themselves in books."

Connecting with the community to support community at school. Teachers came to view family and community engagement within the school as an essential component of developing a culturally responsive school environment. Their thinking

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about listening to students' families, expressing understanding and empathy for families and the community, and attempting to build community clearly illustrated these matters were important to teacher leaders.

Listening to students' families/community. Teacher leaders learned that listening was an activity that generated trust and created a sense of connection. When participants were asked how they built working relationships with families and stakeholders outside of the campus, they described how they tried to create opportunities for families and the community to share what they needed. For instance, teacher leader Natalie indicated in her MBC journal, "listening to our families allows us to learn about any past trauma families might have experienced in dealing with school." Teacher leader Quinten considered a parent night experience that influenced his thoughts on an intervention for students with excessive absences when he commented, "I can see that I need to have a community service mindset rather than [a] punitive feeling intervention. What strategies can we use to make sure that it feels like we are helping, rather than another bureaucracy?" Being mindful of the dynamics at home, teacher leader Kennedy noted, "as culturally responsive school leaders we need to work at breaking down barriers that keep families from participating in their children's education, work schedules, child care, language issues." When asked about ways her campus tries to make connections with families, teacher leader Wendy stated, "providing opportunities for students and families to share about themselves and learn about each other helps develop a positive, healthy community. It helps to build positive connections and understanding."

Expressing empathy for families/community. In their journals and in the interviews, teacher leaders indicated their concern for families and the community and

developed their abilities to connect with them and relate the feelings expressed by them. For example, teacher leader Quinten mentioned in his journal the connection between CRTchg and empathy for the community when he wrote,

> So I always feel like if you just keep bringing back the idea of cultural responsiveness to the idea of being more empathetic to the experiences of the community, we can learn so much about how to deliver instruction better.

Teacher leader Natalie demonstrated a closer connection to families in her MBC journal when she recorded,

> part of being a culturally responsive educator is making the assumption our parents want to be involved in their child's education, so we worked to remove barriers to participation. For example, we had several successful drive-thru family nights and met a lot of families.

Some participants expressed difficulties in expressing empathy. Not difficulties as a form of resistance, rather difficulty in staying true to the ideals of empathy. Educator Bree mentioned in her interview,

> I've noticed the hardest part about empathizing is making that connection and not try[ing] and fix something right there. I still have to be really cautious of feeling like I know what's best. Or not feeling like I know what's best.

Teacher leader Kennedy talked about how being more empathetic has made her more open when she said, "I've been learning a lot about myself in all this. How do I be more empathetic and compassionate and learn from these interactions? Will this cause me to adapt in ways, but not be so scared?"

Recognizing differences between staff members and community. When talking about how to recognize and value students' cultures in our classroom, teacher leaders spoke about how it was critical to seek out opportunities to meet with members of the community. For example, teacher leader Wendy mentioned how her team worked within their community when she declared, "we see ourselves as members of the community and use our roles to collaborate with local agencies and organizations to arrange resources that families need." Teacher leader Natalie described what she felt she needed to do to ensure cultural differences did not limit instruction when she noted, "I feel we need to continually seek to learn more about our community and families' expectations and needs for their kids' education." Teacher leader Daphne suggested the importance of identifying cultural differences were necessary to implement and sustain a culturally responsive community when she stated, "working with parents, grandparents, or guardians is a critical piece of creating a culturally responsive school."

Summary of Theme 2—Building Relationships and Community. To summarize, the data suggested teacher leaders were working at building better relationships with students and their families. These better relationships in turn influenced how they related with students including using community circles during class as a part of their instruction, which demosntrated listening, empathy, and building community to serve better their students' needs.

Theme #3—Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRTchg)

Assertion 3—After participating in CRAT, teacher leaders articulated visions for CRTchg and implemented CRTchg, achieving varying degrees of initial success and self-efficacy for using CRTchg. This assertion was rooted in Theme #3 Implementing

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRTchg) in which teacher leaders considered the use of CRTchg, implemented it in different ways with varying success, and reflected on their CRTchg efforts, finding differing levels of self-efficacy.

Trying/Executing CRTchg. Among other outcomes, teacher leaders expressed enthusiasm for incorporating culturally responsive instructional methods and expressed concerns about using CRTchg. They applied CRTchg to their classrooms, encouraged those who were a bit hesitant to the work toward using CRTchg, and reflected on their attempts at implementing CRTchg.

Expressing concerns about using CRTchg. Concerns with regard to using CRTchg were of two kinds. The first type tended to be more philosophical in nature and the second kind was rooted in the implementation of CRTchg. For example, when discussing CRTchg, teacher leader Quinten commented, "I am both challenged by my views of education and learning that some of the feelings that I have had below the surface are indeed true." Teacher leader Aidan reflected on his early struggles when he said, "How do I gently and lovingly push back against the misguided notions of who I am and who many of my colleagues are? We are not opportunistic carpetbaggers nor do we envision ourselves as 'white saviors.'" Teacher leader Natalie reflected in her journal her struggles with how to become a more culturally responsive school leader when she wrote, "my question is how school leaders can strategically dismantle historical inequities of success on a state or federal level while simultaneously being a successful school leader." Finally, teacher leader Nancy suggested, "the importance of belonging and being recognized as having value and worth stood out to me as a powerful tool as a teacher leader here."

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By comparison, the second set of concerns arose when teacher leaders tried to implement CRTchg. For example, teacher leader Quinten expressed his concerns around implementing culturally responsive teaching when he said, "I feel like when people are resistant, it's those little pitfalls of confusion around the real purpose of being more culturally responsive and being more open to seeing things through the lens of our students." Teacher leader Gloria wrote early on in her journal a common struggle related to culturally responsive practices. It was the idea of being aware of systemic inequities that were in place and how it was expected to hold them to the same standard as everyone else, "...how do you effectively balance being a culturally responsive teacher while holding people accountable for results?" Teacher leader Aidan expressed frustrations with implementing a true culturally responsive school model,

> as a school with a decidedly small population, community-building should be a relatively 'easy' task. In truth, it has proven to be anything, but. Upon reflection, it is apparent to me that as a leadership team we failed to adequately and appropriately respond to the varied and diverse needs and wants of our students, their families, and the community we serve.

Teacher leader Clarice reflected in her journal her roadblocks to implementing a culturally responsive school, "...the question and ultimately, my struggle is, short of showing up, listening, and doing the work, how do my colleagues and I gain the trust, credibility, and support of those we serve?"

Considering use of CRTchg. When implementing anything new, there are the early adopters, the late adopters, and those in the middle who are not against the idea, but still have some issues they need to figure out before they are willing to commit to

implementation. For example, teacher leader Uriel wrestled early on with the "how" of the implementation process when he said,

> I really like the idea of culturally responsive leadership but struggle with 'the how to' truly share the leadership. As I continue to reflect on my education history, I am struck by the idea that I was more culturally responsive when I first began teaching and didn't have 'best practices.' I realize that I have been indoctrinated and am struggling to get back to where I was as a new teacher, but with the knowledge that I have gained since.

Educator Olivia-Grace, had issues navigating how all of the new systems would look in practice, when she said, "given the current autonomies, teacher leaders are in a position to influence changes in curriculum, engagement, safety, and community focus where do they begin?" Teacher leader Natalie was working through the finer points of implementing a culturally responsive classroom when she noted, "having a culturally responsive classroom looks different for everybody. As a teacher leader, it is up to me to identify specific aspects of how students' lives connect to my classroom."

Applying CRTchg. The classrooms reflect families of varying races and cultures; thus, the teacher leaders had to change how they interpreted and delivered instruction. For instance, teacher leader Quintin communicated how he and his team have tried to adapt how they deliver instruction when he commented, "we really tried to make sure that the curriculum was culturally responsive, we made the first project all about the students. Reflecting on their strength as a person and the things that make them who they are." In her journal, teacher leader Jennifer shared about an activity that she has used in her classroom that allowed students to share with the group things that were important to

them when she wrote, "I use Interest Boards using online chalkboards like Padlet or a Google sheet. They have been particularly effective for students to share news, interests, and celebrations. It's a 21st-century version of Show n' Tell for high schoolers." Teacher leader Uriel reflected in his journal how he had moved toward a more culturally responsive environment when he penned, "I begin lesson planning by considering my students where they live, what language they speak at home, how they identify themselves, versus how I was taught, which is 'start with the standards.'" Teacher leader Wendy asserted, "our student relationships are more than the community we create in our classroom; it has to be part of our curriculum and our culture as a school." Teacher leader Tina reflected in her journal an essential piece of culturally responsive education when she wrote, "to make our instruction relevant to our students, we have to think about the way they learn, not get stuck in the way we learn."

Fostering student participation. When talking to teacher leaders about fostering student participation, more than one commented on how these approaches were not just teaching strategies for 'our kids;' rather they were good teaching strategies for everyone. For example, teacher leader Hank described how he and his team have made changes to how they develop course work when he commented,

> we did a lot of very student-driven projects. We kind of let them design what work they wanted to do around the topics that we were, we were working through. We really individualized what it was that they were doing, so we incorporated a lot of student voice.

Teacher leader Quinten revealed some of the ways that he had worked to create an environment where students felt safe to participate when he said,

I've adopted some African American literature, I've used Mexican American

literature, I've used music. I think those things create the connection, but at the

same time, just asking the more meaningful questions and giving students a voice

to answer within those more significant ideas.

Teacher leader Wendy talked about how she was even more intentional in

developing her lessons when she noted,

we talked a lot about how you do, you guys do it and your traditions, and what

types of things you do at your houses as a point of pride. We've talked about

some of those things, how people celebrate different things and celebrate things

differently.

Teacher leader Natalie expressed an aspect of encouraging student participation in

a culturally responsive classroom when she said,

listen to your students. If you take time to listen, they will start sharing about their

traditions, holidays, family, and cultural activities they enjoy. Once I know what

they like, I try incorporating some of these traditions or activities into my

instruction.

Desiring feedback on CRTchg. Developing an acceptance of feedback mindset

takes work, courage, and a desire to want to develop your practice. For example, when

asked how she could demonstrate incorporating culturally accountable responsive

measures into her instructional practices, teacher leader Wendy indicated, "I would love

feedback because I've struggled with what CRTchg looks like for kindergarten."

Educator Bree spoke about how she has been trying to engage teacher leaders in

incorporating more culturally responsive practices in their instruction when she said, "just

encouraging those instructors or teacher leaders to really solicit feedback from the students."

Teacher leader Quinten touched on the importance of feedback, especially around something like culturally responsive leadership when he suggested,

asking for feedback and receiving feedback are two very different monsters. I know I need to get better at being more culturally responsive; however, I need to be in the right place in order to be able to receive it because I know I can be better.

When she was journaling, teacher leader Alicia recorded, "I feel like we have leaders who come in, observe and give feedback. There have been so many intentional efforts to provide feedback and start conversations."

Supporting colleagues who struggled. Based on their previous responses, some participants were asked about strategies they used to engage peers who were more hesitant about the work related to culturally responsive leadership. Teacher leaders offered a variety of strategies. For example, teacher leader Hank stated,

So I feel like some of the resistance comes from people feeling helpless. There's a lot of white guilt. When I hear that from my team, I need to practice empathy. I need to let them know I understand their resistance and help them.

Teacher leader Quinten commented about his struggle with being empathetic enough when working with and trying to support a peer when he claimed, "I feel like, as educators, we are naturally empathetic people. I think I'm an empathetic person until someone challenges it, then I realize I'm not as good as I should be."

Supporting colleagues to use CRTchg. When asked about developing critical

friends and allies from whom they sought advice when the work became difficult, many

teacher leaders spoke about creating environments on their campuses that benefitted the

community. For example, teacher leader Quinten stated,

> As a teacher leader on campus and working to develop a more culturally
>
> responsive environment, it is in the team's best interest to help any member that
>
> might be struggling. Creating a positive place for educators to teach and lead
>
> becomes a productive place for students to learn and grow. I have always known
>
> that feeling like 'you belong somewhere' is the first step in anything.

When describing how they supported a peer in moving towards more culturally

responsive teaching, teacher leader Gloria discussed how servant leadership influenced

her decisions when she noted, "I think that this lens makes the difference between those

with empathy and those who are clearly without empathy for others' experiences. We

cannot see that which is not [perceptible with] our lens." Educator Bree reflected on her

experience with her team when she commented, "I have strong colleagues in the

leadership team who have been really supportive. First of all, having a great sense of

humor and creating a safe space to talk about things as they develop."

Reflecting on their CRTchg. In their responses, teacher leaders described

reflection as being important as they implemented CRTchg. For example, teacher leader

Nancy indicated she reflected on her experiences as she moved towards becoming a more

culturally responsive teacher leader when she said,

> I think without careful reflection and honest conversation, culturally responsive
>
> leadership can quickly turn to 'savior leadership.' This is particularly true when

leaders focus on their perception of 'deficits' of a community and work to address these perceived 'deficits' in a way that forces the community to rely on the leader, rather than empowering the community and providing opportunities for them to leverage their own unique strengths.

When asked about becoming a more culturally responsive leader, teacher leader Kennedy stated,

Culturally responsive school leadership is something that I fully stand for and agree with, what frustrates me with education is how our focus is so heavily on student performance on tests, rather than student understanding the why of the process.

Other teacher leaders offered their reflections, as well. For instance, teacher leader Uriel commented, "I contend that when students are allowed to be themselves and are not 'over-policed' and pressured to change, they can then get on with the business of learning." Teacher leader Quinten commented,

If school is a white colonization and assimilation tool, then it is operating on a broken foundation. Part of me feels that building on a broken foundation is a futile task, but that developing as a culturally responsive school leader is starting the process.

Finally, teacher leader Aidan admitted his difficulties with the process of becoming a culturally responsive teacher leader when he noted, "I struggle, as a teacher leader finding the proper balance between accepting cultural norms and preparing students for a workplace that has certain expectations that may not coincide with [a] groups' cultural identities."

Summary of Theme 3—Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching

(CRTchg). Taken together, the data suggested teacher leaders were implementing CRTchg to varying degrees and with varying success. Additionally, they fostered student engagement by using CRTchg, supported others in implementing CRTchg, wanted feedback on their use, and reflected on their efforts of implementing CRTchg finding that their self-efficacy for CRTchg was increasing, but it varied by teacher leaders and where they were in the process of implementing CRTchg.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

"We are a society that has been structured from top to bottom by race. You don't get

beyond that by deciding not to talk about it anymore. It will always come back; it

will always reassert itself over and over again." — Kimberle Williams Crenshaw

In this study, I examine the effects of the Culturally Responsive Action Team

(CRAT) professional development workshop sessions on teacher leaders. Specifically, I

explore changes in teacher leaders' beliefs regarding four principles of servant leadership

theory including listening, empathy, awareness, and building community; using culturally

responsive teaching; and self-efficacy for using culturally responsive teaching.

Ultimately, the study was seeking to define how and to what extent professional

development sessions for white teacher leaders within a minority-majority school setting

influenced their views and teaching styles with respect to using culturally responsive

teaching practices and their self-efficacy for doing so. The discussion includes

complementarity of the quantitative and qualitative data, discussion of findings,

limitations, implications for practice, implications for future research, personal lessons

learned, and conclusion.

Complementarity and Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

For this research study, I use a mixed-methods approach. The benefit to using

mixed methods is that it allows quantitative and qualitative data to complement each

other in a manner that produces a complete picture of the results (Greene, 2007). This

method is beneficial for action research, which focuses on solving genuine, specific

dilemmas in local contexts (Mills, 2011; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010). Further,

problems of practice contain subtleties of context that challenge the idea that a single type of data can capture those nuances.

In this study, the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate high complementarity. That is to say, consistent with Greene's (2007) characterization of complementarity, the quantitative and qualitative data support one another and point to the same conclusions. Recall, there are significant increases in all of the quantitative variables including servant leadership constructs such as awareness, empathy, listening, and building community; using CRTchg; and self-efficacy for using CRTchg. Moreover, the qualitative data indicate teacher leaders also increase with respect to these constructs. For example, in their interviews and the MBC journal entries, teacher leaders also describe increasing levels of awareness, empathy, listening, and building community. Further, teacher leaders indicate they are implementing CRTchg to a greater extent, and have more self-efficacy and they feel more comfortable using CRTchg.

Understanding the Results

In the next section, I explain the findings and make connections to the literature. I describe ways to understand the Servant Leadership constructs, using CTRchg, and self-efficacy for using CRTchg in separate parts of this section.

Servant leadership awareness. Awareness is a process in which practitioners gain a better understanding of themselves, their strengths and weaknesses, and their influence on others. Based on both the quantitative and qualitative data, it is evident that teacher leaders grow in terms of their awareness of potential cultural biases. They also grow in recognizing ways that systemic issues influence their classroom instruction and interactions with students and families. This outcome may be explained in part by the

intervention, which is explicitly designed to make teachers more aware of their implicit

biases and cultural differences, although the degree to which they are affected is certainly

a nuance of the study. Specifically, Workshop Sessions 1-5 highlight the concept of

awareness during instruction and activities with the intent to increase teachers' awareness

of how their personal and professional beliefs influence their instruction. Readings, and

in particular discussions and reflections all contribute to increasing awareness on the part

of teacher leaders as the qualitative data illustrate.

These results are consistent with other research findings. For example, Beck

(2014) examines awareness as one of the characteristics of servant leadership and found

that 92% of his participants learn more about themselves to develop a clearer

understanding of how they affect those around them. Moreover, Barbuto, Gottfredson,

and Searle (2014) suggest that leaders' awareness of the feelings, beliefs, and internal

states of others played an essential role in the leader's capacity to lead with a servant-

leader philosophy.

Servant leadership listening. Listening is a powerful tool; it allows us to gain

insights, lead, solve problems creatively, and facilitate learning and growth. Based on

both the quantitative and qualitative data it is evident that teacher leaders develop a

commitment to listen intently to others, demonstrate ways to acknowledge they

understand what others are saying to them, and create an environment for people to be

heard and carry these actions out. This outcome may be explained in part by the

intervention, which is explicitly designed to encourage teacher leaders to listen to

students and their families. Specifically, Workshop Sessions 1, 2, 3, and 5 include

listening as a feature of the sessions. For example, in Workshop 3, which was a deeper

dive into the examination of Servant Leadership with guest speaker, Father James

Bracke, C.S.C.   Father Bracke connects the theory about servant leadership, to real-life

practice when he says, "as a servant leader, we are here to listen and walk the path beside

you."

These results are consistent with other research results, such as Waterman (2011)

who finds leaders need the skill of listening to understand and value other individuals or

groups to be persuasive communicators and provide constructive feedback. Moreover,

Russell & Gregory Stone (2002) claim that active listening enhances communication

clarity and is an essential way leaders show respect and appreciation of others. Teacher

leaders understand the need to listen to those around them to determine how to best meet

the needs of those they are serving as teachers clearly describe in the qualitative data.

Servant leadership empathy. Empathy means thoughtfully considering the

feelings of others without judgment and criticism. Based on both the quantitative and

qualitative data it is evident that teacher leaders grow in terms of moving towards a great

understanding of the ability to see things from another's perspective. This characteristic

of empathy helps teacher leaders to build a friendly and kind environment within their

classrooms and school community. This outcome may be explained in part by the

intervention, which is explicitly designed to make teacher leaders more aware of the

importance of empathy's role in instruction and developing a safe learning culture. In

particular, Workshop Sessions 1, 2, 3, and 5, feature the concept of empathy during

instruction and activities. For instance, in Workshop 2 the participants watched a video,

The Positive Power of Servant Leadership, TEDx talk by Thomas Thibodeau, a

distinguished professor of servant leadership at Viterbo University. The quote that resonated with the small groups was "empathy is love made visible."

These results are consistent with the findings of other researchers like McClellan (2007) who finds that in addition to nurturing deep knowledge and effective relationships, empathy also contributes to growth and learning. Further, Mittal & Dorfman (2012) show that empowering and developing leaders' empathy is associated with effective leadership. Although teacher leaders generally understand empathy as a personality trait, they also recognize empathy as a way to provide emotional support to peers and students as teacher leaders demonstrate in the qualitative data.

Servant leadership building community. Similarly, both the quantitative and qualitative data results show teacher leaders grow in terms of their willingness to build community. That is, they seek out and include multiple stakeholders through such practices as implementing classroom community circles and adding family night events. This outcome may be explained in part by the intervention, which is explicitly designed to make teachers more aware of the importance of building community and community involvement. Specifically, Workshop Sessions 1-5 and 7 highlight the importance of building community and ways to engage in doing so. For instance, in Workshops 4 and 5, after reading various materials, participants discuss issues such as humanizing school communities, culturally responsive leadership in shaping curriculum and instruction, and culturally responsive practices in school community. These discussions provide opportunities to consider and implement various issues related to building community. Moreover, in Workshop 5, Dr. Tamecca Fitzpatrick shares with the participants a clear framework they can use to guide and reflect on their work toward building community.

These results are consistent with other research outcomes such as Ebener & O'Connell (2010) who find building community fosters participation, nurtures helping behaviors, encourages initiative, and enables many people to develop their knowledge and skills, and abilities. Moreover, Crippen (2004) suggests leaders seek to identify means for building community using several approaches that include giving back through service to the community and caring about one's community.

      Culturally responsive teaching (CRTchg). CRTchg is more than a practice. Specifically, it is a way of thinking about instruction and curriculum to allow for adaptability in teaching. Based on both the quantitative and qualitative data, it is evident that teacher leaders grew in terms of utilizing CRTchg approaches from how they design their classroom environment to incorporate various cultural backgrounds to examining their curriculum to determine whether it included materials with which students could connect readily. Notably, I explicitly designed the intervention to make teachers more aware of the culturally responsive mindset and cultural differences in education. However, the degree of influence varies by teacher. Some teachers engage in the implementation of CRTchg more than others as the qualitative data shows.

      With respect to increasing CRTchg, I design the workshop sessions to promote and advance CRTchg by using various content, instruction, and activities. I design the workshops intentionally to foster *awareness*, *listening*, *empathy*, and *building community*, the four skills selected from the Servant Leadership framework. As part of the workshops, I provide knowledge and devise activities to make teachers more *aware* of personal and professional instructional beliefs and how those beliefs affect their current instruction. Further, I ask teachers to consider their teaching practices and how those

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intersect with the culturally rich content of students and the community. In other workshops, I focus on increasing teachers' *listening* to their students to better understand and relate to them. I also include content on *empathy* to support teachers to be more empathetic of students' life situations and understand the perspectives of their families and the community. Additionally, I provide information and ways for teachers to *build community* with their students to support more culturally relevant, effective instruction. Taken together, these approaches collectively influence teachers' knowledge and their implementation of instructional approaches that represent CRTchg.

These results are consistent with outcomes from other research studies. For example, Hammond (2014) suggests culturally responsive teachers need adequate background knowledge and usable information to know how to apply culturally responsive strategies. Building background knowledge starts with becoming knowledgeable about the community as well as building knowledge about the larger social, political, and economic conditions that create inequitable education outcomes. Moreover, Gay (2010) suggests CRTchg is most effective when environmental factors, such as previous experiences, cultural backgrounds, community settings, and ethnic identities of teachers and students, are included in its implementation. Finally, Khalifa (2020) notes that CRTchg entails promoting a culturally responsive curriculum and instructional practices that include lesson plans and content that value students' cultural backgrounds and references.

Self-efficacy for CRTchg. Individuals with high self-efficacy view challenges as something to be mastered rather than avoided (Bandura, 1977, 1993). Based on both the quantitative and qualitative data, it is evident that teacher leaders' self-efficacy grew in

terms of becoming more culturally responsive in their practices. In particular, teacher leaders express an increase in confidence about using CRTchg strategies, a greater sense of comfort in teaching students about their cultures' contributions to society, and increased confidence in their ability to use students' cultural backgrounds to help make meaningful learning decisions. These outcomes are anticipated because I designed the intervention to make teachers more aware of the culturally responsive mindset and cultural differences in education. Based on the design of the intervention, all workshop sessions are involved in influencing self-efficacy concerning culturally responsive teaching through the instruction and activities. Participants come into the intervention with different levels of understanding and comfort about CRTchg. Importantly, each session offers opportunities for participants to make connections and learn how to implement more effectively CRTchg into their practices.

These results are consistent with the results of other research studies. For example, Gay (2010) suggests teachers' willingness to implement CRTchg is influenced by their knowledge and comfort with diversity and their confidence about being able to engage in CRTchg. Moreover, Ladson Billings (1995) claims teachers' make conscious decisions to be a part of the community from which their students come, which is reflected in teachers' attempts to support and instill community pride in students. Finally, Seung, Park, and Lee (2019) maintain that teachers' attempts to implement a new way of teaching and their movements towards mastery experiences increases their self-efficacy as they engage in opportunities to design and teach engaging activities and lessons.

Limitations

There are several possible threats to validity. These include the Hawthorne effect and the experimenter effect (Smith & Glass, 1987). The Hawthorne effect can occur when the teacher leaders feel they are being singled out and made to feel special. In the case of the intervention, it is intentionally conducted with a group of teacher leaders who may feel unique and valued. To minimize this threat, I indicate to them that I need authentic and genuine responses.

The experimenter effect occurs when the researcher's bias influences the participants. In this research study, I serve as the researcher (experimenter) in my specific context where I examine my problem of practice. Because I serve as the primary researcher and have a supervisory role as the Assistant Superintendent for the teacher leader participants, results may be due, in part, to the experimenter effect. Specifically, participants may be reacting to me because I am the researcher and I know them. Thus, they may be responding with answers they feel I want to hear. This threat to validity may be particularly relevant during the interviews. As far as possible, I try to mitigate this by asking interview participants to be honest in their responses.

The length of the study is another limitation. During the course of this study, which includes eight sessions spread out over a 16-week period. Outcomes suggest that the intervention is effective. Nevertheless, I question how much more effective the intervention could be if it is offered over an entire school year and the teachers have opportunities to implement CRTchg to an even greater extent in their classrooms.

With respect to credibility of the qualitative findings, interpretation of the qualitative data is always of concern to those who read this research. To mitigate the

effects of bias and ensure more consistency in my interpretations, I use the constant comparative method throughout the qualitative analysis; engage in careful reflection at each step of the process to ensure my interpretations are supported by the data; and employ analytic memos to guide and direct the interpretation processes.

Implications for Practice

This is just the beginning of this work on CRTchg. The purpose of this intervention study is to create a systemic network of support for teacher leaders to develop a greater sense of cultural responsiveness to influence how they evaluate curriculum, provide instruction, and work as a team. One implication for practice in my setting would be a more in-depth exploration of servant leadership, culturally responsive teaching (leadership), and critical race theory. Providing more opportunities to work with those ideas and apply them in a practical context within classrooms could have a more meaningful influence on teacher-student relationships and the instruction that occurs in classrooms.

Servant Leadership. Further exploring the four tenets of servant leadership, with more time and opportunity, would be beneficial to deepen teachers' understanding of leadership. The four characteristics considered in this study are awareness, listening, empathy, and building community, but they are explored quickly. For example, in future work, developing greater understanding of listening may be worthwhile. Listening is a skill that can develop over time and it is a skill that could be considered to be perishable if it is not continually practiced. Listening is essential for those desiring to be teacher leaders. Through listening, the other characteristics of empathy, awareness, and community building are nourished (Beck, 2014). Thus, empowering teachers with more

fundamental building block behaviors like listening affords teachers with skills to engage in culturally responsive teaching.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL). A deeper exploration of CRSL would also benefit teacher leaders as they advance the efforts of their Culturally Responsive Action Team (CRAT) and as they continue to implement CRTchg. Notably, teaching in more challenging schools requires maturity and commitment to the public good (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Initially, the CRAT helps teacher leaders to develop a culturally responsive school environment. Sustaining that environment requires CRTchg behaviors to be used on a continuing basis, otherwise it is common to fall back on past practices when situations become difficult or challenging. Continued employment of the CRAT system will provide the necessary support teacher leaders require as they move towards mastery of CRTchg. As Kahlifa (2020) suggests, "One of the key roles of culturally responsive school leaders is to help develop humanizing and culturally responsive behaviors" (p. 139).

Critical Race Theory. A more thorough examination of critical race theory would allow teacher leaders to explore their beliefs around the underlying causes of the variations among their culturally diverse students. Teacher leaders' ability to create change in educational instruction depends on their understanding of the dynamics that influence society. For example, critical race theory suggests political and educational policies have historically benefited the interests of whites and suppressed black and brown communities (Allen & Liou, 2018).

Additional time for teachers to explore this perspective will be beneficial because the application of critical self-reflection or awareness to deeper understandings of the

issues of race and education will help to establish a more comprehensive foundation for application of this work to their teaching/learning settings. Because we are human beings in a dynamic profession, teachers constantly find themselves in situations where they have to reevaluate and assess their environment to determine where they need to make changes to deliver meaningful, comprehensible instruction for all students.

Implications for Research

This is the first iteration of the CRAT intervention work. In the current work, the goal is to determine how and to what extent professional development sessions for white teacher leaders serving in a majority black and brown school change their views and teaching styles to reflect a CRTchg approach and their perceptions of self-efficacy with respect to CRTchg.

One implication for future research would be lengthening the time period and conducting a longitudinal study where teachers would have more time and more opportunities to implement CRTchg. Longitudinal work would provide for following teachers as they try new CRTchg practices out in their classrooms to determine how they influence students' performance or attitudes toward school.

A second implication for future research is to identify a small group of teacher leaders who are the early adopters and motivated about the ideas around CRTchg and conduct a case study of their efforts. Specifically, the study could be conducted to examine what practices are being implemented and use that to draw some conclusions to guide other teacher leaders interested in adopting CRTchg.

Third, I would like explore in more detail the effects of the MBC self-reflection journal activity. If teacher leaders are more self-reflective and actively practice self-

reflection, as they move towards mastery of CRTchg might they experience more meaningful growth?

Regarding broader educational practices, the literature has not addressed the group of teacher leaders who work in schools without a principal. Notably, the literature does not address the unique content needed for continued professional development with his group. In a future study, exploring appropriate professional development content and delivery to this group is warranted.

Finally, focusing on self-reflection, trust development, and the idea that culture is not limited to race and ethnicity would be possible enhancements to consider. Thus, additional topics including LGBTQ, generational poverty, and disability awareness can add to developing a culturally responsive school culture.

Personal Lessons Learned

Although I tried a couple of action research cycles in my setting and worked on data collection, I never felt confident about collecting data until I knew what my focus was going to be. Once I was able to focus on servant leadership and CRTchg, I was able to appreciate which data I was going to be collecting. Through this program and as a result of engaging in cycles of action research, I am now much more inclined to focus on the essential work of collecting data as an integral part of any intervention. You cannot do an intervention without collecting some data to determine its effectiveness. Thus, my beliefs on this matter are consistent with Lewin who said, "No action without research, and no research without action" (Marrow, 1969, p. 193).

Another lesson I learned is using theory to drive my understanding and conceptualization of my problem of practice. I feel this program highlights the

importance of reading the literature and seeing what others have done in this area; how they interpret a theory to work in their setting and how I could draw upon their work to adapt it to fit my situation. It also gives me more confidence when talking to others to be able to refer back to a theoretical framework or data based on a theoretical framework as a means to support that we are moving on the right path.

Finally, if I were going to pass on the most critical information that I learned throughout the entire EdD program, from the summer of 2018 to the spring of 2021, it would be to trust the process. It is an example of action research in action, and if you follow the plan, you will finish the process. Sometimes you will struggle, and that too is part of the process.

Conclusion

It will be crucial to continue to modify and improve the CRAT model to provide support structures for CRAT team members and the students and schools whom they serve to ensure more effective CRTchg is employed to benefit students and their learning. Utilizing interviews and questionnaires will provide district leaders with an accurate picture of how the work is going and what adjustments will need to be made to ensure the enhancement and sustainability of the CRAT model. Further, additional research may clarify tools that help culturally responsive teacher leaders adjust and negotiate the challenges of sustaining culturally responsive teaching and learning environments. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) observe that the more support teachers leaders have available, the greater the likelihood of success. My personal and professional commitment and the best use of my talent is to continue working to analyze and customize assistance to meet our

teacher leaders' needs for professional development that ultimately cultivates a culturally

responsive school community.

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APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT AND CONSENT LETTER

Recruitment Consent Letter

Dear Colleague:

My name is Michael Stewart and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Ray Buss, a faculty member in MLFTC. We are conducting a research study on teacher leaders' perceptions of teaching and leadership. The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of a series of professional development sessions on culturally responsive teaching and leadership on your teaching and leadership efforts here at your school.

I am inviting you to participate in a program that will include:
- A series of six professional development sessions about 1 hour each
- Six brief online journal entries related to the sessions
- Two brief 10-minute surveys at the conclusion of the program
- A brief 15- to 20-minute interview about your thoughts on the sessions and your use of the strategies (for some of you who will be randomly selected for the interviews)

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not your standing at your school site. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

The benefit to participation is the opportunity for you to learn strategies and practices related to culturally responsive instruction and servant leadership, which have the potential to benefit your students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

For those selected for the interviews, I will request to audio record your responses. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know.

Your responses will be anonymous. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – michael.stewart@mcrsd.org or (623) 764-7104 or Ray Buss at ray.buss@asu.edu or (602) 543-6343.

Thank you,

Michael Stewart, Doctoral Student

Ray Buss, Associate Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Ray Buss at (602) 543-6343 or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX B

CRAT WORKSHOP SESSION SCHEDULE

Session	Topic	Format	Activities	Reflection Homework	Resource	Data Collected
1	Introduction to Innovation	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection	Small-Group Break Out Rooms Black self White world Discussion	MBC - Introduction to MBCs	Black Self White World	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
2	Introduction to Servant leadership	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection	Small-Group Break Out Rooms Article Discussion	MBCs -Leader, Becoming Leo: Servant Leadership as a Pedagogical Philosophy, (plus A or B) (A)Practicing Servant Leadership, (B)Teacher as Servant	Servant Leadership	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
3	Deeper Dive into Servant Leadership	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection	Group Discussion		Guest Speaker - Father James Bracke CSC "Servant not Savior."	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
4	Introduction to Culturally Responsive School Leadership	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection		MBCs -(A)Rethinking Successful School Leadership in Challenging U.S. Schools: Culturally Responsive Practices in School-Community Relationships (B) Humanizing school communities Culturally responsive leadership in the shaping of curriculum and instruction	Culturally Responsive School Leadership	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
5	Deeper Dive into Culturally Responsive	Norms Expectations Outcomes	Group Discussion		Guest Speaker - Dr. Tamecca Fitzpatrick "Culturally Responsive	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
	Servant Leadership	Reflection			Leadership"	
6	Introduction to Critical Race Theory	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection		MBCs "Critical Race Theory - Fact vs. Feeling" Dr. Daniel Solorzano: Critical Race Theory Part I Dr. Daniel Solorzano: Critical Race Theory Part II Why's everyone pretending to be mad about Critical Race Theory?	Systemic Racism Video	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
7	Deeper Dive into Critical Race Theory	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection	Group Discussion		Guest Speaker- Dr. Newton Miller "Why Some Seeds Don't Grow: Creating Culturally Responsive Systems"	• Session Reflections • Individual MBCs
8	So What Now What	Norms Expectations Outcomes Reflection		Culturally Responsive Action Team - Padlet Activity		• Post Intervention Survey • Session Reflections
9	Follow Up Check-In /Application of Key Concepts into Practice					• Interview Transcripts • Retrospective Pre Intervention Survey
10	Follow Up					
	Check-In /Application of Key Concepts into Practice					

APPENDIX C

CRAT WORKSHOP SESSION AGENDAS (EXAMPLES)

CRAT Intervention

Lesson Plan for PD Session 1 - Introduction
Prepared by M. D. Stewart

Overview & Purpose

Introduce the participants to the intervention, the theoretical perspectives that are going to be used as part of the intervention. Outline expectations and field questions from the group about the process.

Introduction

1. Slidedeck introducing the intervention (10 minutes)
2. Outline the process for the next seven meetings (5 minutes)
3. Establish rules and norms for meetings (5 minutes)
4. [Black Self / White World](#) (10 minutes)
5. Open floor / Next steps (10 minutes)
6. Pre-Survey (20 minutes)

Materials Needed

TAKE AWAY ACTIVITY

MBC activity introduction

CRAT Intervention

Lesson Plan for PD Session 2 - Introduction to Servant leadership
Prepared by M. D. Stewart

Overview

Introduction to Servant leadership, break into small groups to review selected readings and MBC articles

Introduction

1. Group norms and expectations (2 minutes)
2. Servant leadership introduction (20 minutes)
3. Small group break out discussions (20 minutes)
4. Small group report out (15 minutes)
5. Next steps (5 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

Readings:

- Practicing Servant Leadership, (In-Class Group A)
- Teacher as Servant Leader, (In-Class Group B)
- Homework opposite article
- Becoming Leo: Servant Leadership as a Pedagogical Philosophy (Optional Reading)
- How might servant leadership work? (Optional Reading)
- Teacher Empowerment and Teacher Perceptions of the Principal's Servant Leadership (Optional Reading)

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Articles (sent before the start of the meeting)
2. Video link about servant leadership

TAKE AWAY ACTIVITY - Question to Guide Our Thinking

How will servant leadership influence your practice?

References

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CRAT Intervention

Lesson Plan for PD Session 3 - Deeper Dive into Servant Leadership
Prepared by M. D. Stewart

Overview

Building on the introduction to Servant leadership, review some of the MBCs from the last session, and introduce a Servant Leader practitioner.

Introduction

1. Group norms and expectations (2 minutes)
2. Servant leadership discussion MBC review (5 minutes)
3. Guest Speaker (35 minutes)
4. Open Forum Q & A (15 minutes)
5. Next steps (5 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Depending on the needs of the speaker

TAKE AWAY ACTIVITY - Question to Guide Our Thinking

How will servant leadership help you create community?

APPENDIX D

TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEYS

POST-INTERVENTION SURVEY & RETROSPECTIVE, PRE-INTERVENTION
SURVEY

Teacher Leadership Survey, Post-intervention Survey

Survey To protect your confidentiality, please create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, please record the first three letter of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your post-intervention survey responses and your retrospective, pre-intervention responses when we analyze the data.

My unique identifier is:_____ _____ (e.g., Sar 6789, see paragraph above)

Demographic Data

How many years have you been in education?

How long have you been with your current school district?

Directions: Think about how you feel/think/act now, after your participated in this project. For the following sections please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements regarding teacher leadership. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, and 1= *Strongly Disagree*.

Items about Culturally Responsive Teaching

1. After participating in the project, I utilize culturally responsive teaching approaches in my classroom.
2. After participating in the project, as I teach, I take into account ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) differs from my students' home cultures.
3. After participating in the project, I implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
4. After participating in the project, I use my students' cultural background to help make teaching decisions.
5. After participating in the project, I design my classroom environment to incorporate a variety of cultural backgrounds.
6. After participating in the project, I critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
7. After participating in the project, I teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.

Items about Servant Leadership (Listening)

8. After participating in the project, I have made a deep commitment to listen intently to others so that I can identify the passion of the group.

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9. After participating in the project, during a conversation, I repeat points back to students to demonstrate my understanding of what they are saying.
10. After participating in the project, when I am listening, I look at the student who is speaking.
11. After participating in the project, I have a deep commitment to listen to my students, so that I can identify the passion or priorities of the group.

Items about Servant Leadership (Awareness)

12. After participating in the project, as a servant leader I take into account my students' experiences.
13. After participating in the project, as a servant leader, I understand the influence of how my personal background affects my interactions with my students.
14. After participating in the project, as a servant leader, I use reflective thinking considering the oppressive challenges my students face in their communities.
15. After participating in the project, in my servant leadership efforts, I employ mindfulness techniques that cultivate compassion in the service of others.
16. After participating in the project, I am mindful of my students' backgrounds and needs.

Items about Servant Leadership (Empathy)

17. After participating in the project, I normally assume the good intentions of others.
18. After participating in the project, I understand my students by accepting their unique spirit.
19. After participating in the project, before criticizing someone, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in her/his/their place.
20. After participating in the project, I find it easy to see things from my students' points of view.
21. After participating in the project, I look at everyone's side of the issue before I make a decision.

Items about Servant Leadership (Building Community)

22. After participating in the project, I involve multiple stakeholders to build community at my school
23. After participating in the project, to encourage community building in my school, my families have an open invitation to visit the school.
24. After participating in the project, to encourage community building in my school I participate in family night events held on my campus.
25. After participating in the project, in my classes, I build community by implementing a community circle at the beginning of every day.

26. After participating in the project, in my classroom, I build community by encouraging small group work during class.
27. After participating in the project, I build community in a variety of ways with my students.

Items about Self-efficacy

28. After participating in the project, I am confident about using culturally responsive teaching strategies.
29. After participating in the project, I am certain I can identify ways the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home cultures.
30. After participating in the project, I am comfortable implementing strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
31. After participating in the project, I am confident I can use my students' cultural background to help make meaningful learning decisions.
32. After participating in the project, I am confident I can identify how students communicate at home which may differ from the school norms.
33. After participating in the project, I can design my classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures.
34. After participating in the project, I am comfortable teaching students about their cultures' contributions to society.

Teacher Leadership Survey, Retrospective, Pre-intervention Survey

Survey To protect your confidentiality, please create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, please record the first three letter of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your post-intervention survey responses and your retrospective, pre-intervention responses when we analyze the data.

My unique identifier is:_____ _____ (e.g., Sar 6789, see paragraph above)

Demographic Data

How many years have you been in education?

How long have you been with your current school district?

Directions: Think about how you felt/thought/acted <u>prior</u> to your participation in this project. Now answer the questions indicating your level of agreement with each of these statements regarding teacher leadership prior to participating in the project. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, and 1= *Strongly Disagree*.

Items about Culturally Responsive Teaching

1. Prior to participating in the project, I utilized culturally responsive teaching approaches in my classroom.
2. Prior to participating in the project, as I taught, I took into account ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) differed from my students' home cultures.
3. Prior to participating in the project, I implemented strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
4. Prior to participating in the project, I used my students' cultural background to help make teaching decisions.
5. Prior to participating in the project, I designed my classroom environment to incorporate a variety of cultural backgrounds.
6. Prior to participating in the project, I critically examined the curriculum to determine whether it reinforced negative cultural stereotypes.
7. Prior to participating in the project, I taught students about their cultures' contributions to society.

Items about Servant Leadership (Listening)

8. Prior to participating in the project, I made a deep commitment to listen intently to others so that I could identify the passion of the group.
9. Prior to participating in the project, during a conversation, I repeated points back to students to demonstrate my understanding of what they were saying.
10. Prior to participating in the project, when I was listening, I looked at the student who was speaking.
11. Prior to participating in the project, I had a deep commitment to listen to my students, so that I could identify the passion or priorities of the group.

Items about Servant Leadership (Awareness)

12. Prior to participating in the project, as a servant leader I took into account my students' experiences.
13. Prior to participating in the project, as a servant leader, I understood the influence of how my personal background affected my interactions with my students.
14. Prior to participating in the project, as a servant leader, I used reflective thinking considering the oppressive challenges my students faced in their communities.
15. Prior to participating in the project, in my servant leadership efforts, I employed mindfulness techniques that cultivated compassion in the service of others.
16. Prior to participating in the project, I was mindful of my students' backgrounds and needs.

Items about Servant Leadership (Empathy)

17. Prior to participating in the project, I normally assumed the good intentions of others.
18. Prior to participating in the project, I understood my students by accepting their unique spirit.
19. Prior to participating in the project, before criticizing someone, I tried to imagine how I would have felt if I were in her/his/their place.
20. Prior to participating in the project, I found it easy to see things from my students' points of view.
21. Prior to participating in the project, I looked at everyone's side of the issue before I made a decision.

Items about Servant Leadership (Building Community)

22. Prior to participating in the project, I involved multiple stakeholders to build community at my school
23. Prior to participating in the project, to encourage community building in my school, my families had an open invitation to visit the school.

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24. Prior to participating in the project, to encourage community building in my school, I participated in family night events held on my campus.
25. Prior to participating in the project, in my classes, I built community by implementing a community circle at the beginning of every day.
26. Prior to participating in the project, in my classroom, I built community by encouraging small group work during class.
27. Prior to participating in the project, I built community in a variety of ways with my students.

Items about Self-efficacy

28. Prior to participating in the project, I was confident about using culturally responsive teaching strategies.
29. Prior to participating in the project, I was certain I could identify ways the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) was different from my students' home cultures.
30. Prior to participating in the project, I was comfortable implementing strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
31. Prior to participating in the project, I was confident I could use my students' cultural background to help make meaningful learning decisions.
32. Prior to participating in the project, I was confident I could identify how students communicate at home which may have differed from the school norms.
33. Prior to participating in the project, I could design my classroom environment using displays that reflected a variety of cultures.
34. Prior to participating in the project, I was comfortable teaching students about their cultures' contributions to society.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. How does servant leadership influence your work at your school? (Servant Leadership)

2. From your perspective, what is the most critical aspect of servant leadership? How do you use that in your work at school? (Servant Leadership)

3. How have teacher colleagues and students responded to your use of servant leadership? (Servant Leadership)

4. Describe some ways you have incorporated culturally responsive methods into your instructional practices. (Culturally Responsive)

5. What are some of the strategies that you have/will use to engage teacher leaders who are resistant to the work related to culturally responsive teaching and leadership? (Culturally Responsive)

6. As a teacher leader how have you helped to make critical self-reflection about culturally responsive teaching and leadership an expected practice in your school? (Culturally Responsive)

7. How would your school have been described in the past by stakeholders? How would they describe it now? (Awareness/Mindfulness)

8. How do you recognize and value the cultures represented by the students in your classroom? (Awareness/Mindfulness)

9. How do you recognize your own cultural influences?   (Awareness/Mindfulness)
   ● How do these affect the way you communicate?
   ● How do these influence your expectations?
   ● How do these affect your teaching?

10. As a teacher leader, what have you done to identify the influence of your personal background on your work at this school? (Awareness/mindfulness)

11. How are you building strong, positive working relationships with the parents/guardians of your students? (Building Community External)

12. In your classroom work, how do you build on the cultures represented by the students in your classroom? (Building Community Internal)

13. How do you include multiple stakeholders to build community when implementing changes in school procedures? (Building Community External)

14. In what ways do you encourage community-building in your school? (Building Community)

15. What are the challenges your team is facing now? How are you addressing these issues differently than in the past? (Self-Efficacy)

16. Describe a specific situation in which you recognized the tenets of culturally responsive leadership or teaching would help you in your work at school. (Self-Efficacy)

17. How has your view of your own abilities/strengths changed over time because of your participation in the program? (Self-Efficacy)

18. Talk about how you have used your students' cultural backgrounds to help make their learning more meaningful? (Self-Efficacy)

19. What additional training would benefit your team?

20. Who are your critical friends and allies from whom you can seek advice when the work at school becomes difficult?

APPENDIX F

IRB APROVAL DOCUMENT

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Ray Buss
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus
602/543-6343
RAY.BUSS@asu.edu

Dear Ray Buss:

On 7/10/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
	Developing Culturally Responsive Servant Leaders in Teacher-Led Schools
Investigator:	Ray Buss
IRB ID:	STUDY00012155
Funding:	
Grant Title:	
Grant ID:	

Documents Reviewed:	• Intervention Information Overview, Category: Resource list; • Intervention Information Professional Development 1, Category: Resource list; • Intervention Information Professional Development 2, Category: Resource list; • Intervention Information Professional Development 3, Category: Resource list; • Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol; • Prompts for Journal Entries , Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Recruitment Consent Letter, Category: Consent Form; • Survey, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus

	group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 on 7/10/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc:
      Michael Stewart