

Prairie View A&M University

Digital Commons @PVAMU

---

All Dissertations

Dissertations

---

12-2021

## An Investigation Of Principals' Social Justice Leadership And Black Male Academic Achievement

Brain L. Gibson

*Prairie View A&M University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pvamu.edu/pvamu-dissertations>

---

### Recommended Citation

Gibson, B. L. (2021). An Investigation Of Principals' Social Justice Leadership And Black Male Academic Achievement. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.pvamu.edu/pvamu-dissertations/7>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations at Digital Commons @PVAMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @PVAMU. For more information, please contact [hvkoshy@pvamu.edu](mailto:hvkoshy@pvamu.edu).

AN INVESTIGATION OF PRINCIPALS' SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP AND  
BLACK MALE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

A Dissertation

by

BRIAN L. GIBSON

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies  
Prairie View A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2021

Major Subject: Educational Leadership

AN INVESTIGATION OF PRINCIPALS' SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP AND  
BLACK MALE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

A Dissertation

by

BRIAN L. GIBSON

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies  
Prairie View A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Approved as to style and content by:

---

Douglas Hermond  
(Chair of Committee)

---

Patricia Hoffman -Miller  
(Member)

---

Myrna Cintron  
(Member)

---

Pamela Barber-Freeman  
(Member)

---

Anthony Harris  
(Head of Department)

---

Michael McFrazier  
(Dean of College)

---

Tyrone Tanner  
(Dean of Graduate School)

December 2021

**ABSTRACT**

An Investigation of Principals' Social Justice Leadership and Black Male Academic  
Achievement

Brian Gibson, B.S., Sam Houston State University

M.Ed., Prairie View A&M University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Douglas Hermond, Ph.D.

Black males in K-12 school systems across the nation continue to face formidable challenges such as low graduation rates, overrepresentation in special education, high out-of-school suspension rates, and underperformance in the classroom (Bryan, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Powell, 2018). Despite decades of research devoted to addressing the educational and social injustices Black males face, many scholars contend that such attention has resulted in minimal change, and a revised narrative for managing the state of Black males is needed (Adedoyin et al., 2019; Carter, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017).

Some scholars have insisted that the academic outcomes among racial groups can be addressed through social justice leadership (Ezzani, 2020; Gullo & Beachum, 2019; Ogden, 2017; Theoharis, 2009). Additionally, they contend that social justice leadership of the principal is critical in developing equitable educational opportunities for diverse students (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; Ezzani, 2020; Grogan, 2017; Theoharis, 2009).

This quantitative study was to investigate how the level at which principals engage in social justice leadership behaviors is related to Black male academic achievement. Consequently, the study relied on Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) which postulates that intentions to perform various behaviors are subjected to the attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Four research questions guided this study. They were:

1. What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in school-specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?
2. What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?
3. What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?
4. Can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

The implications for research and practice are that the results of this study provide educational leaders and policymakers with a lens through which strategies could be created to break the cycle of educational racism faced by Black males and students of

color. In so doing, challenges related to low graduation rates, overrepresentation in special education, high out-of-school suspension rates, and underperformance in the classroom will be easier to overcome.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to all who remain in the fight for social justice in our country. To our ancestors such as Fredrick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Dubois, Thurgood Marshall, and Martin Luther King Jr, I thank you for paving the way. In the spirit of the life you lived; I will carry the torch for doing my part in serving all mankind. I also dedicate this dissertation to my God, our faithful Father in Heaven. I thank you for choosing me, giving me the strength to endure this race, and dispersing your angels to cover my life.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge God, who has been the complete source of my strength for forty-three years. I am in awe of his blessings every day and I'm thankful he did not let the vision of me earning my Ph.D. die.

To my parents, Brian L. Gibson Sr and Gerridean Gibson, I would not be the man I am without their support. They have loved and supported me all these years and I will always be grateful for the sacrifices they made for me to follow my dreams.

M. Nash, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the support, he has shown me these past three years. I will always appreciate him for being there to help catch the slack and being patient while I balanced a myriad of professional and personal responsibilities.

Next I would like to acknowledge Pastor L.D. Lee Sr and First Lady Alfredia Lee. I am proud to call them Pastor and First Lady. They have been my extended family. I appreciate both of them for always staying in God's ear about me and my family

God saw fit to place some very important people in my life along this journey, and I'm so grateful for every nugget of wisdom they have poured into me. Dr. Thomas Randle, Dr. Kathleen Bowen, Dr. Karen Mumphord, Dr. Vonda Oliver, Dr. Jasmine Williams, Dr. Frances Hester, and Henva Medlow: All of these individuals have been a huge part of my professional success and played critical roles in helping me through this process. I will be forever grateful for their leadership, professional guidance, and always taking time to be there for me.

Friends who have become family and my biggest cheerleaders are one of the many blessings I thank God for daily. Tiffany Foster, Chelsey Arnold-Buhr, and Elijah Gibson are all



near and dear to my heart and I can't thank them enough for always being there when I need them.

Lastly, I would like to thank my chairperson Dr. Douglas Hermond and my advisement committee Dr. Pamela Freeman, Dr. Patricia Hoffman-Miller and Dr. Myrna Cintron. Your knowledge, expertise, time, and guidance have been invaluable to my success as a doctoral student.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
DEDICATION .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xiii
LIST OF TABLES .....	xiv
CHAPTER I .....	16
INTRODUCTION .....	16
An Overview .....	16
Social Justice and School Leadership .....	20
Statement of the Problem .....	21
Purpose of the Study .....	25
Significance of the Study .....	26
Theoretical Framework .....	27
Research Questions .....	30
Population .....	31
Definition of Terms .....	32
Next Steps .....	33
CHAPTER II .....	34
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	34
Overview of Black Males and Academic Achievement .....	34

Black Male Educational Disparities.....	36
Black Male Educational Disparity Solutions .....	38
Race/Ethnicity of Students v. Race/Ethnicity of Principals.....	40
Culturally Responsive Teacher Practices.....	41
<i>CRT and CRP</i> .....	43
Culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant teaching .....	44
Culturally responsive pedagogy.....	48
Leadership Theory Overview .....	54
Transformational Leadership.....	55
Social Justice Leadership.....	57
Challenging injustice .....	59
Facing barriers .....	60
Developing resilience.....	60
School Principals and Social Justice Leadership .....	61
Social Justice Leadership Behaviors and the SJBS .....	65
Self-Focused Social Justice Leadership Behaviors.....	65
School Specific Social Justice Leadership Behaviors .....	67
Community-minded Social Justice Leadership Behaviors .....	68
Theoretical Framework.....	69
Summary .....	72
CHAPTER III .....	74
METHODOLOGY .....	74

Research Questions and Null Hypotheses .....	74
Type of Quantitative Inquiry .....	75
Research Design.....	77
Population and Sample .....	79
Data Collection .....	80
Instruments and Measurements.....	82
Validity and Reliability.....	83
Data Analysis .....	85
Ethics.....	87
Risks.....	88
Summary .....	89
CHAPTER IV .....	90
Results.....	90
Research Questions and Null Hypotheses .....	91
Descriptive Statistical Techniques .....	92
Inferential Statistical Techniques.....	96
Summary .....	104
CHAPTER V .....	106
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	106
Overview of Study .....	106
Research Question and Null Hypothesis.....	109
Discussion.....	110

Discussion of Theory of Planned Behavior .....	114
Implications for Teachers, Educational Leaders, and Policymakers .....	115
Suggestions for Future Research .....	116
Concluding Thoughts.....	118
References.....	119
CURRICULUM VITA .....	141

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1: <i>Ladson-Billing’s Culturally Relevant Teaching Theoretical Framework</i> .....	47
Figure 2: <i>George Theoharis (2009) Framework for Social Justice Leadership</i> .....	59
Figure 3: <i>Dr. Icek Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior</i> .....	70
Figure 4: <i>TPB as a Framework to Explore Social Justice Leadership Behaviors</i> .....	71
Figure 5: <i>Research Procedures</i> .....	87
Figure 6: <i>Algebra and English 1 Black Male EOC Met Standard Average (Percentages) for the years 2018, 2019, 2021</i> .....	94

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1: <i>National High School Drop Out Rate</i> .....	38
Table 2: <i>Self-Focused Items on SJBS</i> .....	66
Table 3: <i>School Specific Items on SJBS</i> .....	67
Table 4: <i>Community-minded Items on SJBS</i> .....	69
Table 5: <i>Description of Independent and Dependent Variables</i> .....	76
Table 6: <i>School Districts in Texas Education Region IV</i> .....	80
Table 7: <i>Descriptive Statistics for Black Male Algebra and English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate</i> .....	93
Table 8: <i>Descriptive Statistics for Black Male Algebra and English 1 Met Standard Rate for the years 2018, 2019, and 2021</i> .....	95
Table 9: <i>Descriptive Statistics for the Overall Average SJBS Scores</i> .....	96
Table 10: <i>Correlations Between the Dependent (Black Male Algebra EOC) and Independent Variables</i> .....	99
Table 11: <i>Correlations Between the Dependent (Black Male English 1 EOC) and Independent Variables</i> .....	99
Table 12: <i>Model Summary for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate</i> .....	101
Table 13: <i>Model Summary for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate</i> .....	101
Table 14: <i>Analysis of Variance for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate</i> .....	102
Table 15: <i>Analysis of Variance for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate</i> .....	102
Table 16: <i>Coefficients for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rates</i> .....	103

Table 17: <i>Coefficients for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rates</i> .....	104
--	-----



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **An Overview**

Educational leadership for social justice is gaining increased attention due to the prevalence of racial injustices seen in society today (Emproto, 2020; Desilver, Lipka, & Fahmy, 2020; Schott Foundation, 2020). Educators across the nation bear witness to the tensions and traumas associated with the United States' political climate and see the daily manifestations of racial inequities in their institutions. Events such as the White Nationalist rally, "Unite the Right," the shooting of Breanna Taylor and the killing of George Floyd in the spring of 2020 prompted civil unrest across the nation (Booker, 2020; Dastagir, 2021; Hill-Berry, 2019). As a result, educational leaders responded to the implications this would have on school communities by articulating comprehensive plans to eliminate systemic racism embedded in school policies and practices, as well as articulating plans for developing critical consciousness through professional development (Andrews & Harper, 2021). Systemic racism continues to grow worse, which is problematic given the public-school system serves a majority population of students of color (McGee, 2021; Noguera & Alicea, 2020; The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018)

In the wake of these national demonstrations that have occurred, there has been a growing body of research on educational leadership for social justice and the role school leaders play in shaping cultures and contexts that are equity-oriented (Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStafano, 2019). Zemblayas (2010), combined many definitions of social justice leadership. He described it as "leadership that disrupts and subverts unjust teaching

practices and policies and promotes inclusion and equity for all students” (p. 611).

Contrarily, educational leadership for social justice in schools is often overshadowed by school funding disparities, harsh disciplinary practices, and implicit educator bias, all of which have historically perpetuated system inequities and the marginalization of minority students (Grogan, 2017; Miller P. , 2019).

At the federal level, the historical underpinnings of exclusion in public education are alarming. Having access to free public education is a constitutional right for all Americans (Black, 2019; Schott Foundation, 2020). However, history has demonstrated that the United States school system has not acknowledged this right as a public good due to the large portion of students not reaping all the benefits of education (Grogan, 2017; Kemp-Graham, 2015). The data shows that Black, Hispanic, and low-income students are enrolled in some of the lowest-performing schools in the nation and are less likely to graduate on time and enter post-secondary institutions (Schott Foundation, 2020). These statistics represent a significant portion of students enrolled in public schools. According to the United States Department of Education (2017), non-White students accounted for 48% of those enrolled in elementary and secondary schools.

One example of the disparity in education is the underfunding of schools comprised primarily of Black and Hispanic students. Between 2005 and 2017, United States public schools were underfunded by \$580 billion in federal dollars (The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018). It is essential to note that these funds were specifically targeted to support minority students living in some of the most vulnerable communities (The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018). Furthermore, the notion of funding a quality education for Black and Hispanic students historically has not been a priority.

Contrarily, by some estimates, money has been spent trying to control them, with 24% of elementary schools and 42% of high schools have sworn law enforcement officers on campus (The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018). Research indicates that school resource officers' presence elevates the number of arrests and court referrals for low-level matters that could be addressed with the school administration (Bugden, 2017; Liberman & Fontaine, 2015).

Not surprisingly, it is well documented in the literature that Black males are more likely to be impacted by the educational system's injustices than other racial groups (Allen & White-Smith, 2017; Brenneman, 2018; Brisport, 2013; Government Accountability Office, 2018). More specifically, some researchers and scholars argue the public-school system directly contributes to the destruction of Black males, which becomes evident as early as fourth grade (Bryan, 2020; Kunjufu, 2005; Powell, 2018). In tandem, schools are viewed by many as barriers to the academic success of Black males, as evidenced by lower graduation rates, higher suspension and expulsion rates, overrepresentation in special education programs, and underrepresentation in advanced placement courses (Brisport, 2013; Ford, 2014; Lynch, 2016; Nance, 2016; Peltzer, 2020).

The statistics supporting the injustice Black males face in the educational system are conspicuous. In a recent annual Condition of Education report published by the National Center for Education Statistics, Hussar et al. (2020) found that 17.6% of Black male students received one or more out of school suspensions, with Black males out of school suspension the highest among male students of any racial/ethnic group. This percentage was near twice the rate of the next highest racial/ethnic group – American

Indian/Alaska Native male students at 9.1% (Hussar et al., 2020). In 2016, the statistics for dropout rates illuminated some of the problems highlighted by Hussar et al. (2020). For example, Black males ages 16-24 had the fourth-highest dropout rate at 7.8%, behind American Indian males (10.4%), Hispanic males (9.6%), and Pacific Islander males (8.9%) (McFarland et al., 2019). Furthermore, Black males account for 20% of American students labeled as mentally retarded even though they represent only nine percent of the population, and on the other end of this extreme Black males are 2.5 times less likely to be classified as gifted and talented even when their academic record shows potential (Lynch, 2016).

A well-documented phenomenon impacting the Black male school experience is the school-to-prison pipeline. To illustrate, Black males ages 18-19 are 12.7 times as likely to be imprisoned as White males of the same ages, the highest Black to White racial disparity of any age group (Carson, 2020). Additionally, the national-level statistics for students who received disciplinary actions referred to law enforcement are comparable. Black males had the second-highest rate for male student groups who had a disciplinary infraction referred to law enforcement at one percent; White males were at .5%, Hispanics at .6, Asians at .8%, American Indian at just over one percent, and two or more races at .8% (United States Government Accountability Office, 2018).

Researchers identify the school-to-prison pipeline as a conceptual framework to illuminate how practices and policies within the educational and criminal justice systems work in tandem to push Black males out of school and into prison (Basile, 2020; Bryan, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2019). According to Ezzani (2020), Black males have historically been the victims of gendered racial discrimination in the public school system due to a

lack of comprehension of racism and how it manifests itself in school policies and practices. As a result of Black males victimization influenced by institutional racism, many scholars have argued that the effects lead to overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, lower academic achievement, high rates of downward economic mobility, and overall lower quality of life (Adedoyin et al., 2019; Chetty et al., 2018; Kunjufu, 2005, de Brey et al., 2019 ).

### ***Social Justice and School Leadership***

Some scholars have insisted that some of the academic outcomes amongst racial groups can be addressed through social justice leadership (Ezzani, 2020; Gullo & Beachum, 2019; Ogden, 2017; Theoharis, 2009). Additionally, Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStafano (2019) stated, “through actions and behaviors as well as internal mindsets, beliefs, and understandings; teachers and leaders can better serve and align with diverse communities, interrupt systemic inequities, confront biases and prejudices, and work toward more inclusive and just outcomes” (p. 3). Furthermore, based on the research of scholars, to be an effective leader, principals must be responsive to the context and culture in which a school is situated and must support students from diverse groups with a wide range of needs (Ogden, 2017; Schlechty, 1997; Shaked, 2019). Accordingly, this study will investigate the relationship between socially just principals and Black male academic achievement.

Allen and White-Smith (2017) argued that school leaders were in pivotal positions to realize social justice in today’s schools versus having it viewed as just a value that one holds. Additionally, Grogan (2017) discussed those who had the most accountability for the justice or injustice in school policies and practices were principals

and superintendents because of their decision-making power. Beachum and Gullo (2020) reiterated that school leaders who had social justice leadership orientations could decrease the damaging effects of implicit bias in their schools. In sum, educational scholars contend that principal social justice leadership is critical in developing equitable educational opportunities for ethnically, culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse students (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; Ezzani, 2020; Grogan, 2017; Theoharis, 2009).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Students enrolled in American public schools have become more diverse economically and culturally; however, the principalship has remained homogenous, in that they are overwhelmingly White and middle class (Bailes & Guthery, 2020; Kemp-Graham, 2015; National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). As stated previously, the majority of students attending public schools are non-White (Hussar et al., 2020). Specifically, 47% of students are White, 15% are Black, 27% are Hispanic, five percent are Asian, one percent are American Indian, and four percent reported two or more races (Hussar et al., 2020). In contrast, 77.7% of principals in the United States are White, 10.5% are Black, 8.9% are Hispanic, 0.9% Asian, 0.2 % Pacific Islander, 0.7% American Indian/Alaska Native, and two or more races at one percent (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018).

These statistics are comparable in Texas, where this study took place. For example, 61.3% of Texas principals are White, 12.7% are African American, 23.9% are Hispanic, 62% are Asian, Pacific Islander 36%, American Indian/Alaska Native at 32%, and two or more races at .88% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). Kemp-Graham (2015) joined a long list of educators and researchers who argue that the

difference in race and culture between students and the educator workforce account for lower academic achievement among students of color (Cherng, 2017; Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Noguera & Alicea, 2020).

Therefore, according to Kemp-Graham (2015), DeMatthews et al. (2015), and Gay (2002), it is this paradox of cultural incongruence that has resulted in a disconnect in the leadership needed for culturally responsive pedagogies and practices required in 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools to meet the needs of a racial, cultural, and linguistically diverse student population. Consequently, school leaders' cultural disconnect may contribute to exacerbating achievement gaps, disproportionate student discipline, and dropout rates (Kemp-Graham, 2015; Gullo & Beachum, 2019).

Over the past four decades, a growing number of studies have explicitly focused on race and social justice as a means of breaking the cycle of systemic inequity in the K-12 education system (Dover et al., 2019; Kemp-Graham, 2015). However, according to Dover et al. (2019), rather than address some of the outcomes of inequitable practices, policymakers instead have implemented increasingly complex accountability mandates such as high stakes standardized assessments, educator evaluation value-added measures of teacher effectiveness, and increasing labeling and tier practices of schools and communities. Just as instructive, principals are at the heart of the accountability mandates (DeMatthews et al., 2015). Empirical research has consistently documented the demands placed on principals, with dynamic marginalization issues near the top of the list (DeMatthews et al., 2015). Thus, Dover et al. (2019) asserted that principals are directly responding to growing accountability mandates, systematic perpetuation, and

“normalization of hegemonic” structures that continue to disenfranchise and marginalize students of color in schools (p. 46).

Black males in K-12 school systems across the nation continue to bear the brunt of marginalization and face formidable challenges such as low graduation rates, overrepresentation in special education, high out of school suspension rates, and underperformance in the classroom (Bryan, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Powell, 2018). In addition to the recent displays of social injustices endured by Black males in society today, like the multiple officer-involved shootings at the heart of nation-wide protests this past spring and summer, the existing literature is rich with theoretical and empirical research that illuminates the prevalence of the cultural misalignment Black males faced in both the past and present (Basile, 2020; Kunjufu, 2005; Grace & Nelson, 2019). Despite decades of research devoted to addressing the educational and social injustices Black males face, many scholars contend that such attention has resulted in minimal change, and a revised narrative for managing the state of Black males is needed (Adedoyin, et al., 2019; Carter, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017).

To illuminate the long-standing history of Black males' marginalization, the following studies are a small representation of the existing literature related to the particular challenges Black males have endured within the educational arena. Allen (2015) conducted a qualitative study that explored the ways teachers think and talk about their Black male students using system structural and cultural explanations of the educational and social outcomes of Black males. In a later study, Hotchkins (2016) examined how Black males responded to racial microaggressions by White teachers and administrators in culturally diverse high school settings. Powell (2018) took a different



approach. He conducted a quantitative study that investigated the influence that non-cognitive variables such as positive self-concept, leadership experience, successfully handling systemic racism had on the academic success of Black males.

The studies cited above focused on the psychosocial dimensions or the teacher's cultural responsiveness impacting the academic success of Black males. Few recent studies have highlighted principal social justice leadership and the academic achievement of Black males. More specifically, after a comprehensive review of the literature from the past five years, one case study revealed data-informed leadership was a significant influence for the principal enacting social justice leadership, which involved prioritizing systemic professional development opportunities for teachers' core values and beliefs and growing the collective consciousness of teachers as a group and individually (Ezzani, 2020).

Ezzani (2020) explored an urban elementary school principal's effort to advance reflective and anti-oppressive practices to counter teachers' beliefs and behaviors toward their Black male students. The findings in this study revealed the "deliberate practice of coaching teachers for critical reflection elicited cognitive dissonance, which in turn led many teachers to change their beliefs and ultimately changed behaviors toward their Black male students" (p. 15). Furthermore, this study implied that for principals to be influential leaders, they must be socially just leaders able to develop anti-oppressive practices in their teachers, leading to a more inclusive and nurturing school environment that positively affects all students' academic achievement students, especially Black males.

Ezanni's (2020) study serves as an impetus and guide for investigating the relationship between Black male academic achievement and social justice leadership. More information is needed to truly understand if principal social justice leadership significantly impacts Black male academic achievement. Accordingly, to continue the expansion of research related to challenges Black males endure within the K-12 educational system, this study will fill a void in the literature by investigating the relationship between Black male academic achievement and principal social justice leadership.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study's primary purpose was to investigate the relationship between Black males' academic achievement and principals' social justice leadership. As stated previously, despite decades of research devoted to the challenges that Black males face both in society and in the educational arena, reducing the immense marginalization faced by Black males will require efforts that increase upward mobility, such as receiving a quality education (Chetty et al., 2018; Chezare et al., 2016; Johnson & Bryan, 2017). Thus, educational researchers continue the call for how school principals and K-12 educational system district-level leaders could go about changing an education system that continues to fail certain student populations (Basile, 2017; Casey, 2020; Grogan, 2017; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Warren et al., 2016).

Secondly, the purpose of this study was to illuminate how or whether leadership for social justice within the K-12 educational system positively impacted educational outcomes for traditionally marginalized Black and Brown students. It was the hope of this researcher that this study might provide data that could shed light on how educational

leaders can be in a unique position to contribute to dismantling the practices of policies that work counter-productively for male students of color. Ogden (2017) and Schlechty (1997) contended that when negative trends across contexts support one another, they may contribute to reinforcing isolation and thus increasing decline in individuals' access to resources, both human and social. In short, it is well known amongst scholars and researchers that a quality education increases the likelihood of economic mobility and a better quality of life (The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018; Gorski & Pothini, 2018; Schott Foundation, 2020). By investigating the relationship between social justice leadership and Black male academic achievement, educational leaders and policymakers may have a lens through which strategies could be created to break the cycle of educational racism faced by Black males and students of color.

### **Significance of the Study**

As mentioned previously, Black males have historically been victims of the school-to-prison pipeline (Carter, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Wolf L. , 2017). Consequently, empirical research has established linkages exist between educational attainment and incarceration with Black males between the ages of 20 and 24 who do not have a high school diploma (Stullich et al., 2016). Accordingly, a report by CNN (2018) and research findings by Stullich et al. (2016) indicated state and government expenditures on prisons and jails had increased three times faster than spending on elementary and secondary education over the last decade.

Some educational researchers contend that social justice leadership has significant impacts on traditionally marginalized students (Grogan, 2017; Theoharis, 2009). Furthermore, for decades scholars have argued that culturally responsive educator

practices have substantial implications for the educational outcomes of minority students (Brown M. , 2007; Gay, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015). Equally important, the literature suggests principal leadership plays a vital role in influencing culturally responsive teachers' development and the educational process's overall effectiveness (Ezzani, 2020; Hill-Berry, 2019; Khalifia, 2018). In short, principals are considered to have a great deal of decision-making power within a school system and are considered to be the most accountable for ensuring equity across diverse student bodies (Grogan, 2017; Kemp-Graham, 2015; Warner, 2020).

Finally, this study's findings may provide invaluable insight into how social justice leadership may be positioned to break the cycle of systemic inequities in school systems. Investigating the relationship between the degree to which principals engage in social justice leadership behaviors and Black male achievement could provide a prism in which educational leaders and policymakers can evaluate and address traditionally marginalized student groups' academic outcomes. Most importantly, this study may cause a shift in how educational leaders prioritize critical professional development.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework is the lens through which the research problem is viewed that conceptualizes the study's focus (Fraenkel et al., 2012; Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). According to Creswell (2018), it is utilized as a broad explanation for study participants' behavior and attitudes. This quantitative study will use Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a theoretical framework.

TPB is well-substantiated in empirical studies addressing health-related behaviors, energy conservation, and behavior change interventions (De Leeuw et al.,

2015; Godin & Kok, 1996; Madden et al., 1992). The key idea that TPB illustrates is that intentions to perform various behaviors can be predicted accurately based on the attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) explained that these intentions, together with behavioral control perceptions, account for a high amount of variation in actual behavior. Additionally, it is essential to note that the “relative importance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in the prediction of intention is expected to vary across behaviors and situations” (Ajzen, 1991. p. 188). Furthermore, this model serves as a reminder that the importance of attitude towards behavior performances is a conscious reflection and interrogation of bias needed by those committed to social justice work (Flood, 2019).

Correspondingly, TPB as a theoretical framework for this study serves as a natural fit for the instrument that will be utilized in this study. In this study, the researcher will use the Social Justice Behavior Scales (SJBS) developed by Dr. Lee Flood (2019). The initial phase of the SJBS development involved a meta-analysis of existing literature, which included the empirical findings on the “nature of social justice leadership” (p. 312). Beyond that, a hybrid in vivo and process coding schema was utilized to identify the behaviors principals engage in that embrace social justice (Flood, 2019). As a result, Flood’s (2019) study on the instrument creation and peer validation of the tool means that it can reliably measure three components of social justice leadership: school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused.

The school-specific component relates to principal behaviors that directly impact the school the principal leads (Flood, 2019). To illustrate, principals work to foster a warm and welcoming school climate, directly address inequitable practices, and

implement school programs that support diverse student bodies and actions that encapsulate behaviors within this component (Flood, 2019; Theoharis, 2009). Secondly, the community-minded piece refers to principal behaviors that reach the community and families the principal serves (Flood, 2019). Scholars such as Theoharis (2009), Gorski and Pothini (2018), and Flood (2019) are amongst a growing list of scholars who have conceptualized principal behaviors within this component who engage the community as a means to impact educational outcomes for all students. Lastly, the self-focused part involves actions that directly relate to an individual's beliefs and attitudes toward social justice leadership and is not directly linked to the principal's work in the school or the community (Flood, 2019).

Ajzen's (1991) TPB theorizes behavioral achievement depends jointly on intention and the individual's belief in their ability to engage in the behavior. The pairing of Flood's (2019) SJBS for the instrument and Ajzen's (1991) TPB are well suited for this study. Flood (2019) pointed out that investigating the linkage between social justice education and how intentions are shaped could provide a pathway for understanding the actual impact of social justice leadership on an array of student outcomes.

The three scales outlined above will be used to investigate the degree to which principals engage in self-reflecting on their own biases and how it affects their leadership, as well as the degree principals engage in leadership behaviors that lead through the community's perspective. Finally, the three scales will be used to investigate leadership behaviors that advocate for equality within their schools. In conclusion, according to Ajzen's (1991) TPB, the development of subjective norms that favor social justice, creating positive attitudes towards social justice, and expanding the perceived behavioral

control around social justice may lead to a rising intention to engage in social justice behaviors.

### **Research Questions**

For this study, Black male academic achievement was operationalized as meeting the State of Texas standards on Algebra 1 and English 1 End of Course exams (EOC).

The following research questions guided this study.

**RQ<sub>1a</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in school-specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement?

**RQ<sub>1b</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement?

**RQ<sub>1c</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement?

**RQ<sub>2</sub>:** Can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) predict Black male students' academic achievement?

### **Research Null Hypothesis**

These hypotheses are numbered consistently with the research questions above.

**H<sub>01a</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in school-specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement.

**H<sub>01b</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement.

**H<sub>01c</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male student academic achievement.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Principal social justice leadership behaviors (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) cannot predict Black male academic achievement.

### ***Population***

The population for the study consisted of 143 high school principals in Texas' Region IV, which serves 48 public school districts covering seven counties in and around the Houston area (Texas Education Region IV, 2020). Region IV has a total of 1,500 campuses and numerous students with diverse backgrounds. Hispanic students make up 52% of the ethnic distribution, White students 20%, Black students 19%, Asian students seven percent, Pacific Islander students 0.1%, American Indian students 0.4%, and two or more races 2.1% (Texas Education Region IV, 2020).

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

Limitations are features of the study that may impact conclusions and the researcher's ability to generalize the research findings (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019; Ross & Zaidi, 2019). It is inevitable that all research is subject to limitations, and this study was no exception in that there were two. The first limitation was the possibility of the existence of personal bias in participant responses to the survey instrument. Even though the researcher assumed respondents were honest in responding to the survey, their



honesty could not be guaranteed. The second limitation was the impact the COVID-19 pandemic may have on the number of principals responding to the survey. The researcher may have encountered issues collecting survey responses from all 143 high school principals due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the survey being issued at the end of the school year.

In contrast, delimitations refer to factors that are within the control of the researcher (Simon & Goes, 2013). There was one delimitation in this study. It was this researcher's decision to only focus on the survey instrument data to determine the level at which principals engaged in social justice leadership behaviors.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following definitions are provided to ensure uniformity and understanding of these terms throughout the study.

***Academic Achievement:*** the ability to demonstrate academic achievement in the acquisition of the planned outcome (Nabizadeh et al., 2019).

***Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:*** cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references, and learning styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning experiences more relevant and useful for them (Gay, 2013).

***Educational Outcomes:*** a child's readiness for school, retention, drop-out, academic achievement, and years of schooling completed (Engle & Black, 2008).

***K-12 Educational System:*** the term used to refer to all primary and secondary education, from Kindergarten to the first year of formal schooling (first grade) through secondary graduation (12<sup>th</sup> grade) (Corsi-Bunker, 2020).

***Marginalization***: the process of downgrading or confining a group or a class of people to a secondary position (Granger, 2013).

***School to Prison Pipeline***: a systematic process through which a wide range of educational and criminal justice policies work in tandem to push Black males out of school and into prison (Smith, 2009).

***Social Justice Leadership***: a philosophical and practical leadership orientation that encompasses taking intentional actions to create school environments that directly face and deconstruct systemic inequalities faced by traditionally marginalized student groups (Williams, 2017).

***Systemic Racism***: the racial stereotyping, prejudices, and emotions of White Americans that involves discriminatory practices and racialized institutions contrived to produce the long-term domination of African Americans and other people of color (Feagin & Barnett, 2004).

### **Next Steps**

In the succeeding chapters, a review of relevant literature is discussed. Next, the methodology for the study is presented. Third, the study's findings are reported, and descriptive and inferential statistical techniques are explained. Finally, findings related to the theoretical framework, implications for educational practitioners, and suggestions for future researchers are discussed in Chapter V.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between Black male academic achievement and principals' social justice leadership. In order to provide context for this study, this chapter examines the literature in five areas. First, an overview of Black males and academic achievement are discussed. Second, the literature on culturally responsive educator practices is analyzed. Next, a summary of leadership theory and transformational leadership theory is presented. Current literature and an in-depth discussion of social justice leadership undertaken by examining studies conducted principally between 2015 and 2020 are also reviewed. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a discussion on the theoretical framework used for this study.

#### **Overview of Black Males and Academic Achievement**

The recent killing of George Floyd and America's current political climate serve as stark reminders for the work needed to equalize opportunities for Black males in society today (Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Obama, 2020; Schott Foundation, 2020). Additionally, within the educational arena, Black males have traditionally faced racial bias, unfair disciplinary practices, negative stereotypes and have been disproportionately under-represented in gifted and talented and over-represented in special education programs (Kunjufu, 1982; Bryan, 2020; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Moore, et al., 2008). As Moore et al. (2008) observed:

More than 50 years after Brown vs. Board of Education, it is unfortunate that African American males continue to experience educational inequalities and inconsistencies in public school systems all around the country. Educational

gaps remain disturbing, persistent, and significant (p. 909).

While *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) was an attempt to dismantle the doctrine of separate but equal, more than three decades of empirical research suggests the public school system has served as a major catalyst in Black males' failure to successfully matriculate through the K-12 public school system (Courtland, 1992, Kunjufu, 1982 Moore et al., 2008, Powell, 2018; Warren et al., 2016).

Dating back to the mid-1980s and continuing through the 1990s, a long list of education advocates, policymakers, scholars, and researchers begin to call attention to the disparate educational outcomes of Black males (Courtland, 1992; Duncan, 2002; Garibaldi, 1992; Holland, 1996; Kunjufu, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Kunjufu (1982) argued the public-school system significantly contributed to the overall destruction of the Black males as early as fourth grade. Similarly, in 1992, Garibaldi concluded negative teacher perceptions on Black male academic achievement impacted their success in school, and failure began early on, leading to them becoming disinterested in school and dropping out before they reached their senior year.

Thus, for more than three decades, scholars have investigated the educational experiences of Black males in areas such as school discipline, academic achievement in core content areas such as math, science, reading, language arts, the social-emotional development gaps, and post-secondary achievement to name a few. Still, the Black male's state in society broadly and education remains explicitly relatively unchanged by all accounts. (Allen, 2015; Courtland, 1992; Johson & Bryan, 2017; Kunjufu, 1982; Warren et al., 2016).

### ***Black Male Educational Disparities***

As mentioned previously, the literature is ripe with the long-standing academic disparities Black males have faced in the K-12 educational system. One of the differences scholars argue that negatively impacts the academic achievement of Black males is their inequitable treatment in school disciplinary practices (Basile, 2020; Bryan, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2019; Lewis et al., 2010; Morris & Perry, 2016; Wolf, 2017). Recall, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that nationally, 17.6% of Black male students received out-of-school suspensions, which were higher than male students from other racial/ethnic groups (de Brey, et al., 2019 ). Yet, Black students account for just 15% of the total student population, which indicates they are being disciplined at a rate that exceeds their proportion (de Brey, et al., 2019 ).

Consistent with the notion that Black males face harsher disciplinary consequences that impact their educational outcomes, Lewis et al. (2010) referenced that higher absenteeism rates due to out-of-school suspensions resulted in lower performance in critical academic areas. In a later study, Morris and Perry (2016) asserted that school discipline is an under-examined factor related to the achievement gap. The consequences of exclusionary school practices negatively impact academic growth, which further perpetuates the racial disparities in academic achievement (Morris & Perry, 2016). Contrarily, Allen (2015) revealed that teachers who worked to keep their Black male students accountable for their behavior acted as institutional advocates who disrupted school processes that have historically limited Black males, such as exclusionary disciplinary practices.

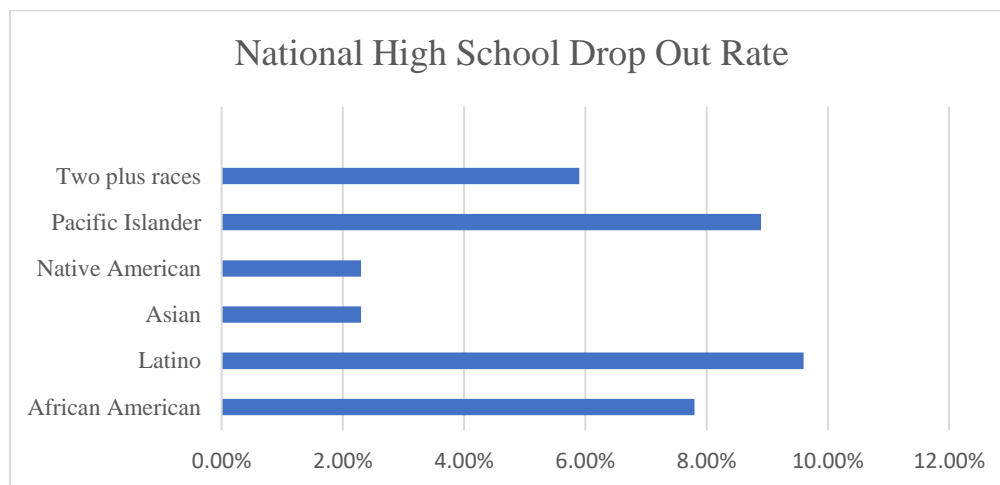
Researchers also argue that school disciplinary practices catalyze funneling Black and Brown males into the criminal justice system (Basile, 2020; Bryan, 2020; Carter, 2019; Liberman & Fontaine, 2015; Morris & Perry, 2016). As previously mentioned, Black males ages 18-19 are 12.7 times as likely to be imprisoned as White males of the same ages, the highest Black to White racial disparity in any age group (United States Government Accountability Office, 2018). Interestingly, Wolf (2014) claimed the federal government supported school resource officer (SROs) presence in schools and correlated their presence with school improvement in school safety and student achievement. However, Liberman and Fontaine (2015) contended that SROs increased arrests and the number of low-level disciplinary matters referred to the court system.

Additionally, Welsh and Little (2018) discovered Black students were more likely to attend schools where SRO presence and school security were more prevalent, which they argued, led to increased victimization rather than feelings of safety. As well, through the lens of Critical Race Theory, Bryan's (2020) theoretical perspective suggested, consistent with Kunjufu's (1982), that the criminalization of Black males started in the early childhood years with the School Playground to Prison Pipeline (SPTPP) as a result of White children's perceptions and fears of African American boys. Thereupon, scholars consistently maintain that Black males' hyper-criminalization through school inequitable disciplinary practices glaringly influences the school-to-prison pipeline (Basile, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2019; Johnson & Bryan, 2017).

Another area that researchers identified as a contributor to African American males' disparate educational outcomes are high school completion rates. Research reveals continued gaps in Black male high school graduation and dropout rates compared to their

male counterparts from different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Addis & Withington, 2016; Casey, 2020; Dee & Penner, 2019; Powell, 2018) . Table 1 is an illustration of the national high school dropout rate disaggregated by race (Hussar et al., 2020).

**Table 1:** *National High School Drop Out Rate*



Even though African American students rank fourth among student groups nationally, the data is different when individual states are examined.

For example, in Texas, where African American students are less than a quarter of the student population (Texas Education Agency, 2020), Black males in grades 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> have the second-highest average annual dropout rate compared to other male ethnic groups. Failure to complete high school is consistently linked to a lower quality of life, lower-income levels, increased risk of incarceration, and more stress-related health disorders (American Public Health Association, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Petrilli, 2017; Quigley & Mitchell, 2018).

### ***Black Male Educational Disparity Solutions***

There have been numerous studies that have concluded that solutions such as school restorative disciplinary practices, mentoring interventions, social and emotional

skills education, the examination of the influence of psychosocial factors, and targeted single-gender interventions comprehensively could increase the upward educational trajectory amongst boys and men of color (BMOC) (Barbarin et al., 2016; Casey, 2020; Dee & Penner, 2019; Hotchkins, 2016; Powell, 2018). An example of an initiative aimed to increase the quality of life and equalize opportunity for BMOC was former President Obama's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative established in 2014 (Dee & Penner, 2019; Givens et al., 2016). The goals of the initiative were communicated in the form of developmental milestones, which were to: enter school ready to learn, reading on grade level by third grade, graduate from high school college and career ready, complete post-secondary education or training, successfully enter the workforce, and reduce violence and provide second chances (Barbarin, et al., 2016). After a little more than a year, nearly 250 communities across the United States accepted the MBK community challenge (Barbarin et al., 2016). More than \$600 million in grants and resources had been secured, and 80% of the initiatives were complete or on track (My Brother's Keeper, 2016).

Single-sex initiatives such as MBK have garnered attention amongst scholars and researchers, with some touting high academic outcomes being achieved for Black boys due to these initiatives (Dee & Penner, 2019; Givens et al., 2016; Quigley & Mitchell, 2018). Givens et al. (2016) referenced the fact that single-sex initiatives could better equip Black males to navigate racism within school systems. Similarly, Quigley and Mitchell (2018) contended that this type of intervention could help increase academic achievement and address mental health challenges amongst Black males.

Dee and Penner (2019) found that targeted educational supports for Black males that focused on social-emotional training, African American history, culturally relevant



pedagogy, and academic supports led to a reduction of dropout rates and increased graduation rates amongst Black males. Although there is consensus in the literature about the success single-sex initiatives can have on Black male student educational outcomes, some scholars such as Dee and Penner (2019), Lane-Steele (2020), and Quigley and Mitchell (2018) also acknowledged that these initiatives could perpetuate inequity amongst male and female racial and ethnic student groups. However, researchers and scholars maintain that caring relationships with adults, culturally responsive pedagogy, and targeted socioemotional supports are amongst a list of factors that could mitigate the disparities endured by Black males within the public educational system (Anumba, 2015; Casey, 2020; Dee & Penner, 2019; Quigley & Mitchell, 2018).

### **Race/Ethnicity of Students v. Race/Ethnicity of Principals**

More than 50 million students are enrolled in K-12 schools in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). White students make up 48% of the population with Black students at 15%, Hispanic students at 27%, Asian less than six percent, Pacific Islander six percent, American Indian one percent, and students two or more races at four percent (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). In comparison, 77.7% of K-12 principals in the United States are White, 10.5% are Black, 8.9% are Hispanic, 0.9% are Asian, 0.2% are Pacific Islanders, 0.7% are American Indian/Alaska native, and one percent are two or more races (Hussar et al., 2020). The diverse student enrollment population and principal demographics data clearly indicate the principal workforce remains overwhelmingly White. As mentioned in Chapter I, research has shown that racial and cultural differences between students and principals

have been linked to lower academic achievement in minority students (Kemp -Graham, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Rasheed et al., 2020; Welsh & Little, 2018).

Culturally responsive leadership has become a vital aspect of cultural education reform (Khalifia, 2018; Khalifia et al., 2016; Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStafano, 2019; Theoharis, 2009). While the literature is ripe with the significant impacts teacher cultural responsiveness has on the educational attainment of students of color, the volume of literature that addresses the impacts socially just and culturally responsive principal leadership can have on the academic achievement of students of color is less robust (Gay, 2002; Khalifia, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Theoharis, 2009). Thus, extracting aspects from the current research on culturally responsive teaching practices is discussed next to provide context for the role school principals play in leading equitable and socially just schools.

### ***Culturally Responsive Teacher Practices***

Over the past four decades, there has been an increasing amount of research on culturally responsive teaching practices to improve the academic performance of students who are culturally, linguistically, ethnically, and racially diverse (Gay, 2013; Howard & Terry, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Warren, 2017). Cazden and Laggett (1981) introduced the concept of *culturally responsive education* with the goal for schools to create learning environments and enact teaching practices that align with how different children learn and for educators to be more responsive to the cultural differences among children. Despite historic school desegregation and school reform efforts, legislative interventions, increased testing, and standards-based education movements, students of color continue to experience academic underachievement compared to their White

counterparts (Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Hussar, et al., 2020). Commensurate with the current literature, culturally responsive educator practices are therefore expected to confront inequitable opportunities for children of color, cultivate the cultural competency of school staff, invite consistent examination of personal beliefs and assumptions, scrutinize school policies and procedures, positively impact student academic achievement, and promote social justice for all students (Dover et al., 2019, Khalifia et al., 2016; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Mette et al., 2016).

The extant literature suggests that minority students have a greater chance of experiencing academic and socioemotional success when educator practices are examined through the lens of cultural responsiveness and (Allen, 2015; Dover et al., 2019; Husband & Kang, 2020; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Mette et al., 2016; Khalifia et al., 2016). Allen (2015), Husband and Kang (2020), and Knight-Manuel et al. (2019) maintained teachers who consistently interrogated their own bias, suspended deficit mindsets about minority students, and displayed a willingness to learn from their students increased cultural competencies needed to educate their students.

To this end, most educator preparation programs continually employ methods to improve program elements designed to help future educators contend with cultural differences within the K-12 educational system (Allen, 2015; Coffey & Fariande-Wu, 2016; Howard & Terry, 2011; Mette et al., 2016). According to Mette et al. (2016), “In truly culturally responsive classrooms, students and teachers experience culturally supported and student-centered instruction that focuses on the strengths of the students to promote achievement for all” (p. 2). Empirical evidence from numerous studies suggests that culturally responsive practices significantly impact student educational outcomes and

increase K-12 practitioners' effectiveness in helping students reach their full potential (Carter, 2019; Gay, 2013; Irving & Hudley, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

### ***CRT and CRP***

Two primary research strands centered around teaching racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse students more effectively are *culturally responsive teaching* and *culturally relevant teaching*. It is common to see both written as CRT.

Educational researchers Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings, are two of the leading researchers who advocate providing equitable educational experiences for students of color (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Warren, 2017).

Their scholarship is identified as either culturally responsive teaching or culturally relevant teaching.

Geneva Gay's (2002, 2003, 2013) work on culturally responsive teaching is centered on teacher practice and "involves using cultures, experiences, and perspectives of African, Native, Latino, and Asian American students as filters through which to teach them academic knowledge and skills" (Gay & Kirkland, 2003, p. 181). The second strand, culturally relevant teaching, is grounded in Gloria Ladson-Billings's (1995, 2009) work. Ladson-Billings (1995) defined culturally relevant teaching as a theoretical model that "helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p. 469). The commonality in both research bodies is social justice education because they capture the classroom as the primary site for advancing the agenda for social change (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Warren, 2017).

To a lesser extent, the other most common strand is culturally responsive pedagogy. Although pedagogy and teaching are essentially identical, culturally responsive pedagogy places a greater emphasis on the interrogation of teacher ideology (Howard & Terry, 2011). Next, the literature related to culturally relevant and responsive teaching and culturally responsive pedagogy is reviewed.

*Culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant teaching.* In education, culturally responsive teaching has garnered increased attention as the United States student population has become increasingly diverse (Cherng, 2017; Kieran & Anderson, 2019). More importantly, scholars contend that educators must consider how student differences affect learning (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Cherng, 2017; Kieran & Anderson, 2019). As stated previously, education scholars and researchers continue to focus on preparing teachers to effectively teach students in culturally diverse schools across the United States (Kieran & Anderson, 2019; Leonard et al., 2018; Mette et al., 2016; Ozudogru, 2018; Warren, 2017; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Gay (2002) referenced that the level of familiarity teachers should have about cultural diversity should extend beyond a general awareness that ethnic groups have different beliefs or cultural characteristics. In turn, she argued that the knowledge and understanding of students' cultural backgrounds and experiences should serve as the knowledge base for culturally responsive teaching. Gay's advocacy for culturally responsive teaching is supported in the literature.

For example, Coffey and Fariande-Wu's (2016) qualitative case study examined the experiences of a first-year Black female English language arts teacher and her Advanced Placement Language and Composition students. Coffey and Fariande-Wu's

(2016) purpose for conducting the study was to research methods in which teachers with similar racial and ethnic groups as their students influenced one first-year teacher's experience with those students. The study was conducted at a Title I high school through the course of one academic year.

The study's teacher was a Black first-year female teacher who taught Advanced Placement English language and composition to mainly Black students. In the class where the observations were conducted, there were 23 students. The racial mix included 16 students identified as Black, five identified as White, and one student identified as Asian. As a result of this study, Coffey and Fariande-Wu (2016) found that in teachers' search for culturally responsive teaching practice, it was imperative they manage their own beliefs and identity coupled with their students' socio-cultural backgrounds and the curriculum. Coffey and Fariande-Wu (2016) joined a core group of scholars and researchers who agreed that culturally responsive teaching was imperative for the academic success in teaching students of color (Gay, 2002, Kieran & Anderson, 2019; Mette et al. Warren, 2017; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018).

In a later study, Leonard et al. (2018) focused on culturally responsive teaching and preparing rural students in computational thinking through robotics and game design. With Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and Information and Communications Technology skills becoming increasingly vital for filling 21<sup>st</sup> Century jobs, preparing minority students in these areas has become both a national priority as well as a social justice necessity (Leonard et al., 2018). In this mixed-methods study, a total of 45 teachers participated in one of three treatment groups: robotics only, game design only, or blended robotics/game design. The study was conducted over three years

with teachers participating in one of three cohorts and included 314 students in year two and 365 students in year three.

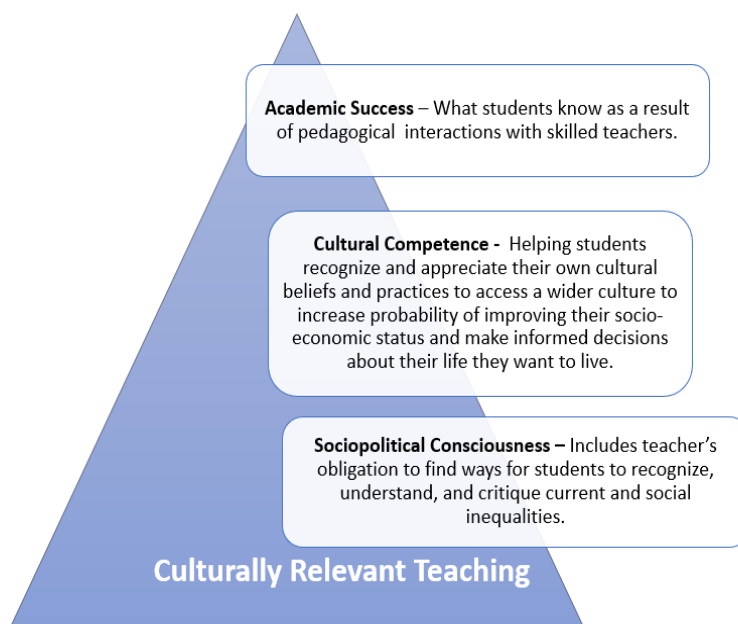
Student demographics in Leonard et al.'s (2018) study were represented by the following: 68% of students were male, and 32% were female. Additionally, 77.8% of students were White, 15.3% were Hispanic, 3.6% were Asian, 2.2% were American Indian, 2.1% were Black, and 2.5% two or more races. The findings in Leonard et al.'s (2018) study revealed teachers' beliefs about culturally responsive teaching and their overall feelings about computational thinking and STEM practices were moldable; however, there was variance depending on the context.

Cruz et al. (2019) reiterated that culturally responsive teaching had positive effects on the educational outcomes for students who were culturally and linguistically diverse. Cruz et al. (2019) investigated culturally responsive teaching by utilizing a quantitative research design to examine teachers' self-efficacy to implement culturally responsive teaching practices. Consistent with many educational scholars, one of the conclusions drawn from the findings of Cruz et al.'s (2019) study was teachers must investigate and be aware of their own biases and suspend deficit mindsets when working with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Cruz et al.'s (2019) findings supported research by Allen (2015), Gay (2002), Hotchins (2016), Mette et al. (2016), Quigley and Mitchell (2018), and Ozudogru (2018).

Recall, culturally relevant teaching is embodied in the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995, 2009). As mentioned previously, Ladson-Billings (2009) refers to culturally relevant teaching as instructional practices that are intentionally designed to imbed the positive value inherent in students' backgrounds and experiences into the

curriculum. Ladson-Billings's (1995) theoretical framework for culturally relevant teaching encompasses three core tenets: academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness/sociopolitical critique. Her conceptualization is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** *Ladson-Billings's Culturally Relevant Teaching Theoretical Framework*



Teachers empowering students to value and appreciate their culture in the learning process positions teachers as learners, embraces collaborative learning, and moves beyond mindsets that view curriculum resources as the primary source of knowledge (Borrero et al., 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Truscott & Stenhouse, 2018). Ladson-Billings (1995) argued that culturally relevant teaching went well beyond standard acceptable teaching practices and contended that traditional pedagogical practices were not comprehensive in addressing the needs of students of color, specifically African American students. Consequently, there is consensus in the literature



that suggests culturally relevant teaching practices improve centrality in the educational outcomes of students who have not been well served by United States' schools (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Borrero et al., 2018; Brown et al., 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Knight-Manuel, 2019).

*Culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP)*

“combines the rich body of research known widely as culturally responsive teaching most popularly attributed to the work of Geneva Gay (2010, 2013) and the highly influential empirical research of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995, 2014)” (Warren, 2017, p. 2). CRP extends beyond a set of teaching practices and consists of a “set of professional, cultural, ethical, and ideological dispositions” (Howard & Terry, 2011, p. 346) that prioritizes racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student backgrounds and experiences to create effective and meaningful learning opportunities (Gist et al., 2019). Whereas Gay (2002) focused her work on the broader context of multicultural education and the similar nature of culturally relevant teaching, culturally efficacious practices, culturally mediated instruction, and culturally congruent teaching practices as it related to improving educational outcomes of ethnically diverse students (Gist et al., 2019). Thus, CRP has become an increasingly relevant tenet in educator practices (Gist et al., 2019, Howard & Terry, 2011; Jolly et al., 2020; Mette et al., 2016; Warren, 2017).

Teacher dispositions are one of the most influential forces in carrying out pedagogical strategies that impact specific student learning goals (Cruz et al., 2019; Truscott & Stenhouse, 2018; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Truscott and Senhouse (2018) illuminated the role teacher dispositions play in implementing culturally relevant teaching. They questioned if teacher dispositions could be pedagogically specific.

In Truscott and Stenhouse's (2018) mixed-methods study, they conducted end-of-program interviews with 19 pre-service teachers who completed their kindergarten through fifth-grade certification requirements and teaching endorsements for working with English language learners. The pre-service teachers who participated in the study were asked to comment on their proficiency in and comfort with their culturally responsive pedagogy implementation. This was the term used in the program. Their findings revealed that teaching dispositions associated with the academic success and cultural competence of Ladson-Billings (1995) culturally relevant teaching framework were prevalent (Truscott & Stenhouse, 2018). Although cultural competency and academic success are often situated as "mutually exclusive," Truscott and Stenhouse (2018) found that pre-service teacher programs were able to nurture teacher dispositions related to academic success and cultural competence (p. 24).

Mette et al. (2016)'s research also zeroed in on CRP. They conducted a quantitative study where they investigated teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy professional development and their impact on their instructional practices. Their participants were 73 teachers in a Midwestern city who worked at a high school where 71% of students were White, and 29% were non-White. Of the 73 teachers who participated in the study, 91.7% identified as being White.

Mette et al. (2016) pointed out that the percentage of White teachers at the school was 20% greater than the White student population and 30% more White than the school district population's average. Most teachers in Mette et al.'s (2016) study agreed that culturally responsive pedagogy helped teachers examine their views on poverty within the context of their students' experiences. However, there was less agreement that

professional development helped close any gaps in achievement. Additionally, teachers in the study reported success of the CRP professional development by having an awareness of cultural differences. On the other hand, teachers reported the challenges of implementing CRP professional development were a lack of time and implementation apathy. Mette et al. (2016) concluded that understanding the perceptions and mindsets of teachers is vital to addressing equity issues and provides context for developing ongoing professional development to close the achievement gap (Mette et al., 2016).

Educational scholars argue that educator practices focused on high stakes standardized testing, bias views on academic achievement, and labeling practices are amongst a list of barriers that negatively impact teachers and teaching as well as their ability to enact culturally relevant teaching (Borrero et al., 2018; Dover et al., 2019; Truscott & Stenhouse, 2018). Borrero et al. (2018) posited that university-based teacher preparation programs could initiate movement in the quest for preparing teachers to teach diverse student populations versus perpetuating teaching practices that sustain a continued focus on standardized testing and “monolithic conceptions” of academic achievement (p. 22). In Borrero et al.’s (2018) study, they focused on the three areas of teacher education programs: advancing towards social justice in education through the experiences of 13 pre-service teachers: critical consciousness, positionality, and capitalizing on cultural assets.

More specifically, Borrero et al. (2018) referenced critical consciousness as work that involves a social analysis based on theoretical and pedagogical frameworks that position students and their communities as knowledge holders who can bring about change and liberation. Positionality is a catalyst that disrupts systemic racism and

oppression through the analysis of power in school contexts and wanting to create change (Borrero et al., 2018). Borrero et al. (2018) presented cultural assets as awareness of the strength students' cultures bring to the educational process and their shared experiences that must be fostered consistently as part of a collaborative learning community.

In this qualitative case study, positionality, critical consciousness, and harnessing cultural assets were used as foundations to explore teacher engagement in culturally relevant teaching. One of the subthemes that emerged in Borrero et al.'s (2018) findings was participants valued space to collaborate while balancing the demands of standardized testing and highlighted the positive effect collaboration could have for teachers struggling to implement culturally relevant teaching practices. Like many educational researchers, Borrero et al.'s (2018) study findings illuminated their position on investing time for teachers to collaborate and engage in professional development opportunities centered on culturally relevant teaching had positive effects on the success of teachers to reach all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Dover et al., 2019; Knight-Manuel, 2019). However, in an earlier study previously mentioned, Mette et al. (2016) found that while professional development helped teachers acknowledge their students' cultural differences, the challenges of lack of time and implementation apathy were revealed as barriers to the success of professional development efforts.

In Green's (2020) ethnographic qualitative study, she examined the implications of individuals in their respective communities who adopted culturally relevant pedagogy and how it affected the educational process of students they worked with. Green (2020) conducted her study in a community-based program termed the Sankofa Project. More than 80% of students who participated in the program were male, with just three female

students participating. Additionally, she conducted semi-structured interviews with students and teachers in the program and utilized videography to collect data. Green (2020) discovered through the implementation of Ladson-Billing's (1995) framework for educators that maintaining high expectations for student academic success, fostering cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness positively impacted the socioemotional and educational outcomes for students. Thus, Green (2020) contended that prioritizing and promoting self-worth was essential in the process of educating students and should be valued over students simply recalling information gleaned from curricular resources.

In response to the call for teachers to have beliefs and attitudes that support an equitable educational experience and positive student outcomes for all students, Whitaker and Valtierra (2018) conducted a study to develop and validate an instrument to assess the values, attitudes, and beliefs needed for CRP. Their study's findings resulted in the development of the dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy scale (DCRPS) (Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Whitaker and Valtierra (2018) reported that in the absence of a clear assessment of teachers' willingness to investigate their emotional and cognitive dispositions to teach diverse students, teacher success was questionable. Accordingly, the major implication of Whitaker and Valtierra's (2018) study was that DCRPS could be used as an evaluation component in teacher preparation programs and serve as a growth assessment or impetus for career counseling for teacher candidates.

More recently, democratic education emerged as a major theme in Kulkarni et al.'s (2020) study. This collaborative self-study of three pre-service teacher educators explored how teacher educators promoted democratic education and culturally responsive

pedagogy during political ambiguity. Data collection for the study was comprised of observations, journaling, self-interviews, and document collection. Consistent with Gay and Kirkland (2003) and Zemblayas (2020), Kulkarni et al. (2020) discovered through their findings that embedding democratic principles in teacher education could impact critical praxis, which targets the goal of equal educational opportunities for all students. In short, Kulkarni et al. (2020) illustrated how collaborative self-study employed culturally responsive pedagogy that influenced “pedagogical meta-awareness” amongst pre-service teachers and teacher educators (p. 12).

In sum, there has been a perpetual focus in educational research that supports the notion that teachers who implement culturally responsive and culturally relevant pedagogical practices in their classrooms yield positive educational impacts on students who are racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse from their teachers (Aronson and Laughter, 2016; Cazden and Legget, 1981; Cherng, 2017; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Knight-Manuel, 2019; Truscott & Stenhouse, 2018). However, when viewed through the lens of a racialized history of the United States and the current political climate, students of color continue to fall victim to a legacy of inequitable and insufficient quality educational experiences (Bryan, 2020; Davis & Allen, 2020; Kunjufu, 1982). While the work of Gay (2002) and Ladson-Billings (1995) has paved the way for reform in education and cultural responsiveness pedagogies, the literature, including that by Khalifia et al. (2016), Kemp-Graham, (2015), Ezzani (2020), and Theoharis (2009) indicated the crucial role principals play in advocating for culturally responsive education, reform, and social justice in their schools and communities.

## **Leadership Theory Overview**

For decades, leadership has been regarded as a highly complex topic studied by numerous scholars with varying views on understanding leadership's nature (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Barker, 2001; Kotter, 2012; Northhouse, 2019). While the definition of leadership has evolved throughout the years, Northhouse (2019) defined leadership as a “process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 15). The research on leadership has progressed from being viewed as a trait to personality-based theories suggesting that individuals are born with specific qualities that make them leaders or, once the theories are learned, can become great leaders (Amanchukwu et al., 2015, Barker, 2001; Northhouse, 2019). In short, there is consensus in the literature that organizes leadership theories into three vantage points: viewing leadership as a process or relationship, leadership as a set of traits or personality characteristics, or specific behaviors exhibited by an individual (Barker, 2001; Chemers, 2000; Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Northhouse, 2019).

According to Agosto and Roland (2018), Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Huber (2004), and Roegman and Woulfin (2019), educational researchers have historically favored the legitimacy, and the vital relationship leadership theories have on educational leadership practices. Amanchukwu (2015) examined theoretical developments in educational leadership and management and concluded that closing the gap between theory and practice could provide school leaders with a solid foundation on effective leadership strategies based on theory and practical application. In a later study, Roegman and Woulfin (2018) called for educational leadership preparation programs to engage with and transfer ideas from different leadership theories into coursework. Roegman and

Woulfin (2018) argued that such actions had great potential to promote a deeper level of learning that would positively impact school leaders' future work and influence positive outcomes on school communities. Accordingly, the extant literature on leadership theory and practice supports the conclusion that when school leaders bridge theory to practice, they are positioning themselves to provide effective K-12 leadership (Agosto & Roland, 2018; Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Graham & Nevarez, 2017; Roegman & Woulfin, 2018). Two leadership theories prominent in the literature, transformational leadership, and social justice leaders, are discussed next.

### ***Transformational Leadership***

One of the leadership theories that has gained popularity in educational leadership is transformational leadership. The transformational leadership approach was started with James Macgregor Burns in 1978 (Chemers, 2000; Northhouse, 2019). Northhouse (2019) referenced that transformational leadership entails changes in behaviors that lead to transformation in practices. Agosto and Roland (2018) described transformational leadership as a framework widely based on the following presumptions: (1) realization of how power and privilege dominate, (2) articulating both individual and unified purpose, (3) deconstructing inequitable frameworks and rebuilding them, (4) evenness in critique and securities, (5) impacting equal change, (6) laboring towards transformation, and (7) exhibiting moral fortitude and advocacy. Most important, research by Agosto and Roland (2018), Graham and Nevarez (2017), and Bruce et al. (2019) demonstrated that transformational leadership is viewed as leadership that promotes equitable and just school systems.



In a study, Shatzer et al. (2014) examined the impact school leaders had on student achievement to determine specific leadership practices that increased student achievement. This quantitative study included 590 teachers who rated their principals' leadership styles using one questionnaire to assess transformational leadership and one to evaluate instructional leadership. Student achievement was measured using a criterion-referenced test. Shatzer et al. (2014) found that instructional leadership significantly impacted student achievement more than transformational leadership.

Graham and Nevarez (2017) contended that transformational leadership was a natural leadership style that supported closing student achievement gaps and positively impacted students' educational outcomes, specifically Black males. Like Graham and Nevarez (2017), Shields and Hesbol (2020) argued that school leaders who disrupted inequitable school cultures and advocated for transformative change would influence a culture of justice and success for all.

To illustrate, Shields and Hesbol (2020) conducted a critical transformative multi-case study. They examined three school leaders' leadership beliefs and practices to determine if their methods were consistent with transformative leadership. Shields and Hesbol's (2017) findings supported the claim that students who were traditionally marginalized students felt a sense of respect and felt academically challenged when their campus leaders created an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.

Kwan (2020) reinforced findings from Shatzer et al.'s (2014) study, and referenced instructional leadership had a more significant impact on student achievement. Kwan's (2020) study extended beyond examining transformational and instructional leadership to determine if they complimented or contradicted each other. Interestingly,

Kwan (2020) examined the moderating effects of transformational leadership on instructional leadership. Based on the findings in Kwan's (2020) study, he contended that both modes of leadership should not be examined in isolation and cautioned using both leadership terms separate from each other. Additionally, Kwan (2020) asserted instructional leadership elements were embedded in the origins of transformational leadership, and transformational leadership elements were evident in the origins of instructional leadership.

In conclusion, the aforementioned research is an example of the literature that indicates school leaders having dispositions that confront injustices are needed to address students' and their families' culturally specific needs. While transformational leadership has emerged in the literature, the concept of transformation and social justice are not synonymous, even though some researchers have determined they intersect in vital ways (Ambrosio, 2017, Grogan, 2017; Theoharis, 2009). Transformation refers to changes in how individual groups interact with each other, especially regarding race; and culture, by making it more welcoming and inclusive (Agosto & Roland, 2018; Ambrosio, 2017). Social justice is focused on past injustices and righting the wrongs of centuries of oppression by developing equitable opportunities for traditionally marginalized groups to gain access to resources and opportunities, such as a quality education (Rawls, 1971; Theoharis, 2009). Accordingly, the next section will address social justice and educational leadership.

### ***Social Justice Leadership***

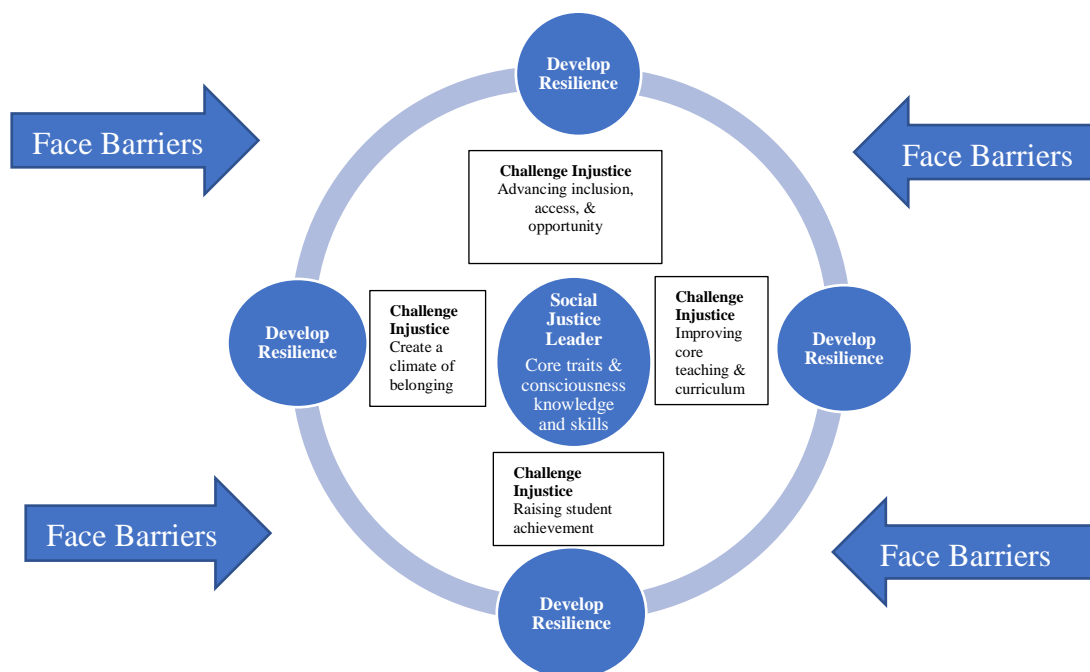
Social justice discourse has become increasingly prevalent in society (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; Booker, 2020; DeMatthews D. , 2018; Emproto, 2020; Gullo & Beachum,

2019). However, the idea of social justice began outside of the field of education and school leaders with the American political philosopher John Rawls (Dutta, 2017; Rawls, 1971). Rawl's (1971) work encompassed two social justice principles, with equality being the foundation: (1) all individuals in society must have fundamental human rights with justice requiring fair and equal treatment of all people, and (2) equal opportunity, with a requirement of justice providing all individuals with a chance. Rawl's (1971) work provided a comprehensive view of the approach of social justice leadership.

While there is no clear definition of social justice leadership, many scholars have various lenses in which they approach this growing body of work (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; Ogden, 2017; Theoharis, 2009; Williams, 2017; Zemblayas, 2010). Recall, Williams (2017) referenced that social justice leadership is a philosophical and practical leadership orientation that encompasses taking intentional actions to create school environments that directly face and deconstruct systemic inequalities faced by traditionally marginalized student groups. Ogden (2017) pointed out that the work of social justice leadership is guided by a set of principles that included but was not limited to "equity, equality, fairness, diversity and inclusiveness" (p. 4). Additionally, Beachum and Gullo (2020) reiterated that social justice has been regarded as a phenomenon rather than a measurable concept and is "contextualized in educational leadership defined by those who pursue it such that they believe that the injustice in our schools is neither natural nor inevitable and leaders must reach for a great opportunity and justice for all children"(p. 431).

Theoharis (2009) narrowed the scope of social justice leadership and provided a framework for its understanding. The framework is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2:** George Theoharis (2009) Framework for Social Justice Leadership



As illustrated in the framework, the leader is at the center and is surrounded by four challenges that require the intentional development of resilience (Theoharis, 2009). The framework demonstrates that the leader is vital in creating a just and transformational educational environment (Ambrosio, 2017; Khalifia et al., 2016; Theoharis, 2009). The components of Theoharis' (2009) social justice leadership are discussed next.

**Challenging injustice.** According to Theoharis (2009), the social justice leader challenges injustices within a school system by scrutinizing structures that marginalize and segregate students, thus harming their learning. Methods for challenging injustices are leading competency building in staff cultural responsiveness, creating welcoming school environments, advancing inclusion, providing equal access to all educational opportunities, and improving the core curriculum and teaching (Khalifa et al., 2016; Theoharis, 2009). In other words, through the lens of raising student achievement, educators challenge their perspective school systems' requirements and look beyond

recommended scripted programs prescribed for them that do not take into account their school population. Educators make a collective effort to implement strategies in their schools to change the injustices influencing the student achievement gap (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; Theoharis, 2009).

***Facing barriers.*** Theoharis (2009) recognized that while principals are engaged in creating just and equitable schools, it is imperative to understand “historical, political, and educational barriers” that leaders encounter when engaging in social justice leadership (p. 87). Like Dover et al. (2020), Theoharis (2009) concurred with the notion that tackling the barriers educators face when challenging injustices within a school system can come at a personal and professional cost. For example, DeMatthews et al. (2015) investigated the relationship between social justice leadership and organizational decision-making to explore recommendations for how principals could make more socially just decisions in challenging school contexts. DeMatthews et al. (2015) found that social justice leadership was a daily struggle for principals. They contended researchers must continue exploring principals' lived experiences to realize the contradictions of social justice leadership and the complexities in principals' decision-making that represent all stakeholders. Otherwise, there can be occasions when those advocating for social justice begin to experience the same bias and judgment they are working to eradicate (Beachum & Gullo, 2020; DeMatthews, 2015; Dover et al., 2020).

***Developing resilience.*** The last component of the model is focused on the resilience a leader must possess when engaging in social justice leadership. According to Theoharis (2009), principals who advanced their work toward social justice utilized both personal and professional strategies. Professional strategies included: communicating

purposefully and authentically, developing an administrator support network, working collaboratively for change, staying focused on the main objective, prioritizing the work, engaging in professional learning, and building relationships (Theoharis, 2009).

Personal strategies that allow social justice principals to have balance while developing resilience included: prioritizing life outside of school, finding ways to distract their minds from school, accepting validation from the outside, participating in regular exercise, giving to others, and having a continued focus on self-care (Theoharis, 2009). In sum, Theoharis (2009) contended that the work of social justice leadership required more than believing in a vision of equity. It also required having the capacity to initiate change and sustain the work and take care of oneself in the process.

### **School Principals and Social Justice Leadership**

Scholars contend that school principals who possess a social justice orientation can work to reduce the impacts of implicit bias in schools and create equitable academic and social opportunities for those students who are racially, linguistically, economically, and academically diverse (Allen et al., 2017; Beachum and Gallo, 2020; Capper et al., 2013; Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2019; Ezzani, 2020; Kemp-Graham, 2015; Miller & Martin, 2015). In an early review of existing literature on social justice in educational leadership, Capper et al.'s (2006) conceptualization of social justice encompassed six key dimensions: curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills. Capper et al. (2006) asserted that the three primary dimensions, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, were vital to developing critical consciousness, knowledge, and skills of future leaders for social justice work. Furthermore, each worked in tandem to inform each other. According to Capper et al.

(2006), school leaders' consciousness, knowledge, and skills needed to lead socially just schools must align with the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in preservice programs for future school leaders. To that end, Capper et al. (2006) called for increased attention to assessing preservice principal preparation programs and how they prepare leaders for social justice. They contended that their conceptualization could provide a deep foundation on what it means to be a social justice leader.

Kemp-Graham (2015) investigated graduates' readiness from a principal preparation program in Texas to engage in social justice leadership. Kemp-Graham (2015) found that there were low levels of understanding of race and oppression and there was a need for preservice principal preparation programs to include leadership for social justice as “ an essential component for the preparation of aspiring school leaders is clear and urgent” (p.124). To this end, Kemp- Graham (2015) concluded that the scope of the principalship has changed drastically, and preservice programs must adequately prepare aspiring school leaders to lead equitable schools with changing student demographics.

Miller and Martin (2015) conducted a multiple case qualitative study where they explored the connection between principals' perceptions and experiences as leaders in demographically changing schools through the lens of educational leadership programs building capacities of social justice leaders. Miller and Martin (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews with the four principal participants and concluded there was a significant disconnect between a leader's perceived responsibility to close the achievement gap through high expectations and data-driven instruction (Miller & Martin, 2015). Furthermore, Miller and Martin (2015) reiterated that the leader's lack of awareness to identify bias and inability to identify biases, assumptions, and deficit-

minded thinking were perpetuating the inequities. Echoing Kemp-Graham's (2015) urgency for principal pre-service preparation programs to embed elements that promote social justice leadership, Miller and Martin (2015) broadened their conclusion by calling for programs to have focused opportunities for candidates to reflect on how their attitudes, values, and past experiences affected their leadership in changing diverse student bodies.

Allen et al. (2017) explored the relationship between a social justice curriculum and dispositions of 112 graduate students enrolled in a pre-service principal preparation program. Allen et al. (2017) discovered in their research findings they were able to understand the students' beliefs, values, and commitments to leadership for social justice and observed a change as a result of the course. Like Miller and Martin (2015), Allen et al. (2017) contended that engaging in critical reflection could positively impact dispositions.

Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano (2019) argued that leaders who had a deeper understanding of their development in diversity could influence and support social justice leadership throughout the educational system. The seven educational leaders who participated in their study were involved in two in-depth interviews. Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano's (2019) findings added to a growing body of literature that supports the value of leaders understanding their personal perceptions about diversity and how this could help them make a positive impact in their work as social justice leaders (Allen et al. 2017; Kemp-Graham, 2015).

Taking a different approach to exploring principal social justice leadership, Ezzani's (2020) case study explored how an elementary school's principal plight to



advance reflective and anti-oppressive practices to counter teacher's perceptions, behaviors, and beliefs could have a positive impact on the success of their Black male students. More specifically, Ezzani (2020) examined one principal's efforts toward social justice leadership" by coaching teachers to advocate for Black male students overrepresented in discipline referrals" (p. 6). Ezzani's (2020) findings yielded three emergent themes: data-informed leadership, teacher core values as anchors, and a model for a cultural paradigm shift. Ezzani (2020) concluded that for principals to be influential leaders, they had to be socially just leaders and create reflective practices in their teachers. Additionally, Ezzani (2020) argued that equal and fair approaches towards Black males should be pursued through professional learning opportunities at both the school and district level, educational leadership programs, and university partnerships (Capper et al., 2006, Kemp-Graham, Miller & Martin, 2015; Theoharis, 2009).

Theoharis (2009) was a forerunner to a long list of scholars such as DeMatthews et al. (2015), Gullo and Beachum (2019), Kemp-Graham (2015), Khalifia et al. (2016), and Ezzani (2020), who contended social justice leadership was more than just good leadership. However, social justice leadership is a call to consider how standard educational leadership practices have disenfranchised marginalized student bodies and have failed in creating equitable educational opportunities for all students (Khalifia et al., 2016; Theoharris, 2009). Consequently, scholars are continuing to advocate for social justice leaders and how this type of leadership can significantly impact the educational outcomes of traditionally marginalized students as a whole. In that sense, this study will fill a void in the literature by investigating the impacts of social justice leadership and Black male academic achievement.

## **Social Justice Leadership Behaviors and the SJBS**

As mentioned previously, according to Flood's (2019) study, the Social Justice Behavior Scale (SJBS) is a valid and reliable tool that measures the three components of social justice leadership: self-focused, school-specific, and community-minded. In the initial phase of the SJBS development, Flood (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of empirical research on the essence of social justice leadership. Flood (2019) utilized a hybrid in vivo and process coding schema to determine behaviors of principals who supported social justice. Consequently, 335 codes were identified that resulted in 15 categories made up of three themes: self-focused, school specific, and community-minded (Flood, 2019). The self-focused, school specific, and community-minded themes in each section of the SJBS were briefly discussed in Chapter 1. Accordingly, the next sections will discuss the social justice leadership behaviors within each theme of the SJBS and the correlation with the Texas principal standards. As outlined by Texas Education Agency (2021), the Texas Principal Standards were developed in accordance with Chapter 149 of the Texas Administrative Code. These standards serve as a guide to improve school productivity, increase student achievement, and promote continuous improvement for all principals throughout the different stages of their careers (Texas Education Agency, 2021).

### ***Self-Focused Social Justice Leadership Behaviors***

The self-focused theme of the SJBS encapsulates behaviors that begin with the individual principal, such as “predispositions, perspectives, positionalities, systems of support, and attitudes toward social justice leadership” that are not directly aligned with the work a principal does in their school or community (Flood, 2019, p. 312). The self-

focused component of the SJBS closely aligns with the Texas Principal Standard 3 – Executive Leadership, Indicator 3d, which states principals must demonstrate the moral imperative to educate all children and follow the procedures of their districts by adhering to the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Texas Education Agency, 2021).

Flood (2019) noted that some behaviors in this theme have some level of objectivity and could, to some degree, be observable. However, these behaviors are more subjective in nature. Furthermore, principals are critical in creating equitable, high-quality learning environments (Flood, 2019). Researchers contend that principals must interrogate their own biases, resist said biases, and lead with transparency (Bishop & McClellan, 2016). Table 2 shows the seven self-focused items on the SJBS. Recall, all items on the SJBS utilize a 7-point Likert type scale with 1 = never, 4 = sometimes, and 7 – every time.

**Table 2:** *Self-Focused Items on SJBS*

Item Number	Description
1	I actively work to understand my own biases so I can better counteract inequity within my school.
2	I extend cultural respect to individuals from diverse backgrounds.
3	I engage in self-reflective, critical, and collaborative work relationships.
4	I work to develop a reflective consciousness.
5	I continuously reflect to avoid making unjust decisions.
6	I am transparent about my practices as a school leader.
7	I consciously account for and resist my personal biases.

### *School Specific Social Justice Leadership Behaviors*

The school specific theme involves social justice leadership behaviors by principals that happen exclusively within the school and that are linked to the scope of the principal's role (Flood, 2019). Within this theme, the principal is actively dismantling structures within their schools that perpetuate inequity, and they are creating strategies where all students have an opportunity to succeed (DeMatthews et al., 2021; Theoharis, 2009). To illustrate, social justice leadership behaviors in the school specific theme include: focusing on implementing culturally responsive staff development, bringing teachers together to discuss and plan for meeting the needs of all students, a concentrated focus for supporting equity and addressing the achievement gap, and implementing restorative discipline practices (Flood, 2019; Theoharis, 2009). The school specific component of the SJBS closely aligns with the Texas Principal Standard 1 – Instructional Leadership, Indicator 1d, which states principals must ensure that effective instruction is happening in every classroom to maximize the growth of all students, support equity, and eliminate the achievement gap (Texas Education Agency, 2021). Table 3 shows the nine school specific items on the SJBS.

**Table 3:** *School Specific Items on SJBS*

Item Number	Description
1	I empower marginalized student groups through collaborative strategies.
2	I nurture socially conscientious teacher-leaders.
3	I pose solutions to structural injustices in education.
4	I enact a vision for my school focused on equity.

5	I provide students with greater access to their culture.
6	I dismantle barriers that hinder the practice of social justice in my school.
7	I embed professional development in collaborative structures.
8	I contextualize professional development in a way that tries to make sense of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and disability.
9	I prepare students to confront the challenges that face historically marginalized communities.

### ***Community-minded Social Justice Leadership Behaviors***

Within the community-minded theme, social justice behaviors that principals enact extend beyond the school's wall and into the community (Flood, 2019). In Theoharis's (2009) framework, he highlighted the key features in challenging injustice from the community perspective. He explained that creating a climate of belonging by fostering a welcoming school environment and intentionally engaging with community members and marginalized families were vitally important. Just as important, he added, was incorporating social responsibility into the school curriculum.

Khalifia (2018) and Flood (2019) contended that within the context of a community-minded principal, the principal evolves from just existing in the community to an advocate for community-based causes that benefit students. Khalifia (2018) argued that principals provide better leadership when they have solid connections with the community and their connection with community is apparent in their leadership practices. In examining the alignment of social justice leadership behaviors within this theme, community-minded leadership behaviors are consistent with Texas Principal Standard 4 – Instructional Leadership, Indicator 4c, which states principals engage families and

community members in student learning (Texas Education Agency, 2021). Table 4 shows the seven community-minded items on the SJBS.

**Table 4:** *Community-minded Items on SJBS*

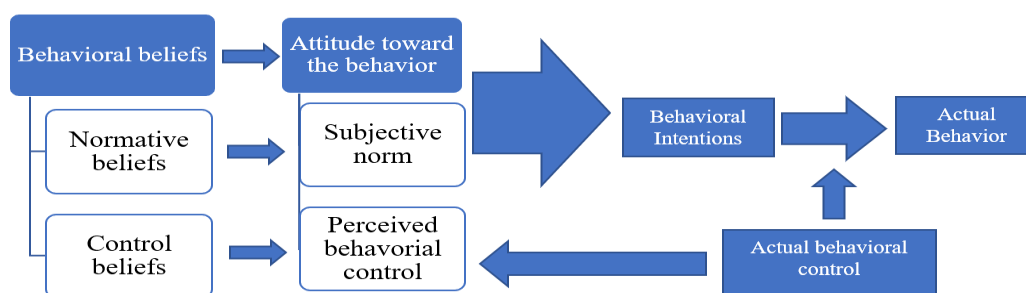
Item Number	Description
1	I participate in political and policy-related advocacy work on behalf of marginalized student groups.
2	I engage in community organizing work.
3	I engage in community advocacy work.
4	I raise awareness to advance the school communities' levels of understanding about social inequities.
5	I utilize parent networks to strategically recruit teachers, parents, and other community leaders with social justice agendas.
6	I act as a catalyst for advocacy work within the community.
7	I access community cultural wealth to benefit my school.

### **Theoretical Framework**

As mentioned in Chapter I, the theoretical framework that was used in this study is Dr. Icek Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). According to TPB, human behavior is influenced by three considerations: behavioral beliefs, which involves the likely consequences of behavior, beliefs about the normative expectations of others, and beliefs about the presence of factors that may impede the performance of the behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Lee et al., 2010). Additionally, behavioral beliefs create a favorable or unfavorable *attitude toward a behavior*; normative beliefs result in the perception of societal pressure or *subjective norm*; and control beliefs give rise to *perceived behavioral control* or self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991). In short, the effects of attitude toward behavior and subjective norm on *intention* are moderated by the perception of behavior control. The more favorable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater perceived control,

the more likely it is for an individual to have a firm intention to perform the behavior in question. Lastly, given the sufficient degree of actual control over the behavior, individuals are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity presents itself. The intention is posited as the immediate antecedent of behavior. Figure 3 represents Dr. Icek Ajzen's TPB.

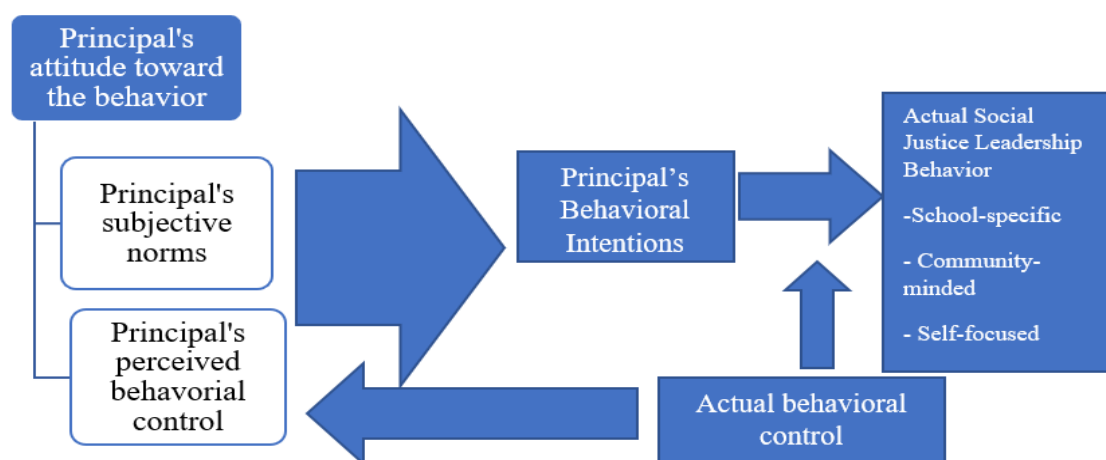
**Figure 3:** *Dr. Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior*



TPB has been used as a theoretical framework for some studies within the field of education (Flood, 2019; Lee et al., 2010; Miller et al., 2018). Lee et al. (2010) used TPB to investigate teacher's decisions regarding the use of education technology, and found that when using TPB as a theoretical framework it was essential to define the target behavior specifically. Miller et al. (2018) used TPB to test the proposition that students would attempt to perform the evaluation task with a high degree of effort. Miller et al. (2018) reinforced in their study that TPB suggested an individual's behavior was influenced by intention, which in turn was influenced by three types of beliefs: behavioral attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Hence, Miller et al. (2018) concluded that TPB provides researchers with a framework to study antecedents of the desired behaviors with the specific behavior in question.

Recall TPB will serve as a natural theoretical framework for this study. In particular, the role of principals' attitudes towards social justice leadership and their beliefs in engaging in social justice leadership behaviors as a predictor of Black male academic achievement will be analyzed with TPB as the lens. As stated previously, according to Ajzen's (1991) TPB, the development of subjective norms that are in favor of social justice, creating positive attitudes towards social justice, and expanding the perceived behavioral control around social justice would lead to a rising intention to engage in social justice behaviors. As discussed in chapter I, Flood's (2019) SJBS will be administered to principals. The instrument is a valid and reliable measure of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intentions related to the three social justice leadership behaviors: school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused (Flood, 2019). Figure 4 illustrates how TPB will act as a theoretical frame to house the SJBS and explore school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused social justice leadership behaviors.

**Figure 4:** *TPB as a Framework to Explore Social Justice Leadership Behaviors*





In sum, when considering the Texas Principal Standards and Theoharis' (2009) framework for social justice leadership, it is evident that a highly effective principal is at the core of an optimal learning environment (Krasnoff et al., 2015; Texas Education Agency, 2021). With this in mind, the principal is an instructional leader who is charged with making data driven decisions, focused on continuous improvement, coaches teachers, and responsible navigating equity issues (Grissom et al., 2021, Texas Education Agency, 2021). Additionally, this study was investigated through the lens of the previously mentioned principal social justice leadership behaviors while considering what's required of Texas principals as written in statute (Texas Education Agency, 2021). Accordingly, effective principals as outlined in the Texas Principal Standards: 1) Ensures every student receives a high-quality education 2) Is strategic in hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and staff in every classroom throughout the school 3) Models a consistent focus and personal responsibility for improving student outcomes 4) Establishes and implements a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all staff and students 5) Outlines and track clear goals, targets, and strategies aligned to a school vision that continuously improves teacher effectiveness and student outcomes (Texas Education Agency, 2021). In short, this study was aimed to examine the intersectionality between leadership behaviors that aide in leading more inclusive schools and the Texas Principal Standards which serve as a guide for improving principal effectiveness.

### **Summary**

This study sought to understand the relationship between the extent principals' engagement in social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. This chapter reviewed literature related to Black males and academic achievement. Since

many researchers have argued that culturally responsive educator practices such as culturally responsive teaching, culturally relevant pedagogy, and culturally relevant teaching positively impacts minority students' academic achievement, an in-depth examination of each practice was presented (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Mette et al., 2016; Warren, 2017).

Additionally, transformational leadership was discussed, followed by an in-depth discussion of social justice leadership. The literature review revealed that leaders who engage in critical consciousness and embed social justice leadership in their practices, incorporate social justice leadership practices in principal pre-service programs, could create positive impacts on school systems where students who have been historically marginalized could experience improved educational outcomes (Ezzani, 2020, Miller and Martin, 2015; Theoharis, 2009). The next chapter presents the research methods used in this study.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the relationship between the level at which principals engage in social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. The present study is an extension of Flood's (2019) research, which developed a methodological tool to reliably measure three components of social justice leadership; school-specific, self-focused, and community-minded. The researcher received written approval from Dr. Lee Flood to use his tool to investigate principal social justice leadership and Black male academic achievement (see Appendices).

This chapter details the selection and justification of an explanatory correlational design. This chapter also explains data sources, the population and sample, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis. The final sections of this chapter address validity, reliability and risks, and ethics.

#### **Research Questions and Null Hypotheses**

##### **Research Questions**

The following research questions and hypotheses guided this study:

**RQ<sub>1a</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**RQ<sub>1b</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**RQ1c:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ2:** Can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, community-minded) predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

### **Research Null Hypothesis**

Consistent with the above-listed research questions are the attendant null hypotheses.

**H<sub>01a</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.  $H_0: \rho = 0$

**H<sub>01b</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.  $H_0: \rho = 0$

**H<sub>01c</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in community social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.  $H_0: \rho = 0$

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Principal social justice leadership behaviors (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) cannot predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

$H_{04}: \beta_1 = 0, \beta_2 = 0, \beta_3 = 0$

### **Type of Quantitative Inquiry**

An explanatory correlational design was used for this study. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that a correlational design is when investigators use

correlational statistics to describe and measure the degree of relationship between two or more sets of scores. Researchers collect data to analyze the extent to which relationships can be quantified. This study's independent variables were school-specific social justice leadership, community-minded social justice leadership, and self-focused social justice leadership.

For the purposes of this study, academic achievement was operationalized as meeting state standards on the state of Texas 'Algebra 1 and English I EOC exams. They were the dependent variables. In correlational research designs, there is no manipulation of variables; only an investigation of the extent to which the variables are related (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Queiros et al., 2017). A description of the independent variable and dependent variables is captured in Table 5.

**Table 5:** *Description of Independent and Dependent Variables*

Independent Variables		Description
	School-specific social justice leadership	Social justice leadership behaviors that occur within the physical space of the school (Ex. developing school staff cultural competence, promoting equitable practices across the school)
	Community-minded social justice leadership	Social justice leadership behaviors that extends to the school's families and community. (Ex. building community partnerships)
	Self-focused social justice leadership	Individuals' predispositions, attitudes towards social justice, perspectives
Dependent Variables		
	Algebra I EOC Exam	One of the five end -of -course exams students must pass to receive a high school diploma in Texas
	English I EOC Exam	One of the five end -of -course exams students must pass to receive a high school diploma in Texas

## Research Design

Research designs can be defined as the structure that holds all elements of a study together, such as data collection methods, analysis, and interpretation, and serves as a proposed research work plan (Akhtar, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As such, the research design serves as a plan of the proposed research work (Akhtar, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The plan involves several decisions, an explanation of the decisions, the philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study, and the procedures for inquiry (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Since the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the degree of principal social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement, the researcher employed a quantitative explanatory correlational research design.

However, the explanation does not imply causation, so no attempt was made to ascribe causation to Black male students' academic performance. As stated previously, correlational research is nonexperimental (Price et al., 2015). The researcher measures two or more variables and assesses the statistical relationship between them with minimal or no effort to control extraneous variables (Price et al., 2015). Correlational studies collect data that represent a particular moment in time (Creswell, 2018). This study utilized Algebra 1 and English 1 EOC existing academic performance data from 2017-2019 to investigate whether or to what degree a relationship existed between the corresponding principals' social justice leadership behaviors.

Recall that one of the defining features of a correlational design is that neither variable is manipulated. The goal was to investigate the relationship between two variables because the researcher thinks one of the variables impacts the other (Creswell,

2018; Price et al., 2015). In these circumstances, the independent variable is considered the cause (often referred to as X for short). The variable that is thought to be the effect is called the dependent variable (often referred to as Y). According to Price et al. (2015), the strength of a correlation between quantitative variables is usually measured using a statistic called the Pearson's r when both variables are interval or ratio. The research design for questions 1a-1c was a Pearson correlation because all variables are interval or ratio. This study explored the relationship between the dependent variable (Black male academic achievement) and the independent variables (school-specific social justice leadership, community-minded, and self-focused).

Research question two sought to determine whether Black male academic achievement could be predicted by three independent principal behaviors (school-specific social justice leadership behaviors, community-minded social justice leadership behaviors, and self-focused social justice leadership behaviors) and required a multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression can be employed to predict a particular variable's values based on knowledge about its association with known values of other variables (Salkind, 2010). Additionally, this type of test can be utilized to test interactions between multiple independent variables and a dependent variable (Salkind, 2010). Therefore the research design was multiple linear regression. The design for the Multiple Regression Model is:

$$Y_1 = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + \alpha + e_i$$

Where:

$\hat{Y}$  = Black male academic achievement

$\alpha$  = (Alpha) is the constant or intercept

$b = b$  is the slope (Beta coefficient) for  $X$

$X_1$  = school-specific social justice leadership behaviors

$X_2$  = community-minded social justice leadership behaviors

$X_3$  = self-focused social justice leadership behaviors

$a$  = the sample intercept of the regression line for  $Y$  as a predictor by the set of  $X_3$ 's

$e_i$  = the residuals or errors of the prediction

Thus, the regression equation: Black male academic achievement =  $\alpha + X_1$  school-specific social justice leadership behaviors +  $X_2$  community-minded social justice leadership behaviors +  $X_3$  self-focused social justice leadership behaviors +  $e_i$

Information in Table 5 represents the predictive variables for the multiple regressions design.

### **Population and Sample**

The population for this study consisted of 143 high school principals from the Texas Education Region IV, located in Houston, Texas. Region IV is one of 20 education service centers mandated by the Texas Legislature (Texas Education Region IV, 2020). The purpose of education service centers is to assist school districts, including charter schools, in three areas: student performance, operations, and implementation of state educational initiatives (Texas Education Region IV, 2020). There are seven counties that represent 48 public school districts and 40 charter schools that serve just over 1 million students, with approximately 100,000 educators at 1,500 campuses (Texas Education Region IV, 2020). Information in Table 6 shows school districts in Region IV.



**Table 6:** *School Districts in Texas Education Region IV*

Alvin ISD	Angleton ISD	Brazosport ISD
Columbia-Brazoria ISD	Damon ISD	Danbury ISD
Pearland ISD	Sweeny ISD	Anahuac ISD
Barbers ISD	Fort Bend ISD	Lamar ISD
Needville ISD	Stafford ISD	Clear Creek ISD
Dickinson ISD	Friendswood ISD	Galveston ISD
Hitchcock ISD	Santa Fe ISD	Texas City ISD
Aldine ISD	Alief ISD	Channelview ISD
Crosby ISD	Cypress-Fairbanks ISD	Deer Park ISD
Galena Park ISD	Goose Creek ISD	Houston ISD
Huffman ISD	Humble ISD	Katy ISD
Klein ISD	La Porte ISD	Pasadena ISD
Sheldon ISD	Spring ISD	Spring Branch ISD
Tomball ISD	Cleveland ISD	Dayton ISD
Devers ISD	Hardin ISD	Tarkington ISD
Hempstead ISD	Royal ISD	Waller ISD

The sample for this study was drawn from the population.

### **Data Collection**

Information for the independent variables of this study, social justice leadership behaviors of school principals (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused), was obtained by administering the Social Justice Behavior Scales (SJBS) developed by Dr. Lee Flood (Flood, 2019). Once the Institutional Review Board (IRB) granted approval for this study, the researcher followed appropriate protocols to obtain the email addresses of the high school principals within Region IV. The instrument was then distributed via email.

This study utilized publicly available data from the Texas Assessment Management System for Administrators to extract information for the dependent variable, Black male academic achievement. Black male achievement is operationalized as meeting state standards on Algebra 1 and English I EOC exams. The Texas Assessment Management system is a comprehensive system designed to provide Texas standardized testing assessment resources and student performance data from every

public school in the state (Texas Education Agency, 2020). The primary portal that was used to retrieve Black Male Algebra 1 and English 1 EOC data from Region IV high schools was the analytic portal. The analytic portal feature allows users to view, analyze, and download assessment summary reports for public schools in the state of Texas (Texas Education Agency, 2020). Therefore, the researcher downloaded the EOC Algebra 1 and English I Black male academic performance data from 2018, 2019, and 2021 for the corresponding principals' campus.

Data related to the three independent variables (social justice leadership behaviors of school principals - school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) was measured utilizing the corresponding principals' scores on the SJBS. The dependent variable, Black male EOC Algebra I and English I academic performance data from the Texas Assessment Management system for the corresponding principals' campus from 2017-2019, was downloaded into an excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was saved onto a password-protected flash drive accessible to the researcher and the dissertation chairperson. The data were assigned numerical codes to facilitate data analysis.

In total, 45 high school Region IV principals completed the SJBS. This number excludes private, charter, and alternative high school principals. Of those 45 responses, 52.5% of the respondents were White, 42.5% were Black, and 5% other. The majority of the principals were male (52.5%), the percentage of females was 45%, and 2.5% preferred not to say. In regard to age, 28.21% of the respondents were between 35-44 years, 51.28% between 45-54 years, and 2.56% between 65-74 years. Next, 78.05% reported their highest degree held was a Master's degree, and 21.95% reported their

highest degree held was a Ph.D/Doctorate. Lastly, 46.34% of principals who completed the survey reported being the principal of their current campus for five or more years.

### **Instruments and Measurements**

As previously discussed, the instrument used was the SJBS (Flood, 2019). Leadership for social justice has received an increasing amount of attention by researchers; however, qualitative inquiries dominate the existing empirical literature base (Ezzani, 2020; Flood, 2019, Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStafano, 2019; Kemp-Graham, 2015). The dearth of social justice leadership specific to quantitative instruments influenced Flood's (2019) study to develop and validate a scale. The SJBS was created through items based on a review of the existing literature on social justice, "informed directly by meta-analysis, and refined through the Delphi Technique" (Flood, 2019, p. 303).

The instrument is comprised of 23 items that are designed to measure the school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused scales and has a total variance of 62.16%. Nine of the items on the instrument measures the school-specific scale and accounts for 42.35% of the total variance. The instrument has seven items that measure the community-minded scale and explains 13.55% of the total variance, and the self-focused scale has seven items and accounts for 6.26% of the total variance.

The SJBS has undergone item development, refinement, principal components analysis, and validity and reliability testing that provides strong initial evidence for its utilization as a purposeful research instrument. Lastly, Flood (2019) administered the Social Justice Scale (SJS) and the Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJWS) in conjunction with the SJBS to his study's participants, comprised of 227 public school

principals representing 27 states within the United States, to provide convergent (SJS) and discriminant (GBJWS) validity which is discussed in detail in the validity and reliability section of this chapter.

### **Validity and Reliability**

According to Heale and Twycross (2015) and Queiros et al. (2017), the assurance that a study meets a standard of validity and reliability is essential for well-conducted quality research. Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure, and validity refers to the degree to which the scores from a measure represent the intended variable (Heale & Twycross, 2015; Price et al., 2015). The assessment of reliability and validity is an ongoing process not established by any single study and is an essential component in the critique of research that influences the decision for implementing the findings into practice (Heale & Twycross, 2015; Price et al., 2015). Accordingly, since this study involves the use of Flood's (2019) SJBS, reliability, external/ internal validity are addressed.

The SJBS went through item development, refinement, principal components analysis, and validity/reliability testing that provided strong initial evidence for its utilization as a purposeful research instrument. The reliability of the three-scale solution is .933, demonstrating excellent internal consistency. Flood (2019) provided further evidence to the reliability of the majority of the factors through Guadagnoli, and Velicer's (1988) perspective, which stated, "four or more loadings above .60 in absolute value are reliable regardless of sample size." (p. 324). Thus, all scales exceeded the criteria by having at least seven items loaded above .60.

Convergent validity is the extent to which measures of the same or similar variables are correlated, and divergent validity refers to the extent to which a measure is novel in the sense of measuring variation provided by other measures (Holton et al., 2007; Price, et al., 2015). To assess for both convergent and divergent validity between the subscales of the SJBS, other measures were analyzed to determine the direction and strength of the relationship and whether a relationship between the variables should (SJS) or should not exist (GBJWS). The SJS is a 24 item four scale instrument utilized to measure an individuals' attitudes towards and, ensuing, intentions to enact social justice. Correlations between the SJBS subscales and each of the SJS scales were calculated to measure for convergent validity. The scores for the items in each scale were averaged first to create a composite score for each scale. The correlations between school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused subscales and all the SJS subscales ranged between .26 -.55 and were statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level. The SJS showed strong internal consistency of each subscale: attitudes  $\alpha=.95$ , subjective norms  $\alpha=.82$ , perceived behavioral control  $\alpha=.84$ , and intention  $\alpha=.88$  (Flood, 2019). Additionally, correlations between the SJBS three scales and the GBJWS were analyzed to assess divergent validity. The results were: school-specific ( $\gamma=.23$ ,  $\gamma^2=.053$ ), self-focused ( $\gamma=.19$ ,  $\gamma^2=.036$ ), and community-minded ( $\gamma=.05$ ,  $\gamma^2=.003$ ). The self-focused and school-specific scales were statistically significant at  $p < .05$  level. The community-minded component was not statistically significant; however, the statistically significant values indicated weak to very weak negative relationships between the SJBS scales and the GBJWS (Flood, 2019).

Recall that Black male EOC Algebra I and English I academic performance data was obtained from the Texas Assessment Management system for the corresponding

principals' campus. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides a description of technical processes followed to promote "fairness, accuracy, validity, and reliability" in the Texas assessment program and follows a set of standards to ensure Texas assessments are technically defensible and appropriate for the purposes for which they are used (Texas Education Agency, 2019, pp. 1-3). The standards used are The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education. TEA uses these standards as guidelines for evaluating the quality of testing practices. The publication of TEA's student assessment program technical details and procedures tremendously aided the researcher in ensuring the validity and reliability standards were met in this study.

### **Data Analysis**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommended the researcher present the data analysis process in sequential order so that readers can see the connection for how one step leads to another. The researcher utilized the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) to provide the statistical analysis of the data for this study (Greasley, 2008; Landau & Everitt, 2004). This study utilized both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were utilized for all independent and dependent variables in the study, while inferential statistics were used to answer the research questions.

Research question one sought to determine the relationship between social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. This question had three hypotheses because social justice leadership behavior is measured by three independent

variables. Hypotheses 1a sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engaged in school-specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ).

Hypotheses 1b sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engaged in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ).

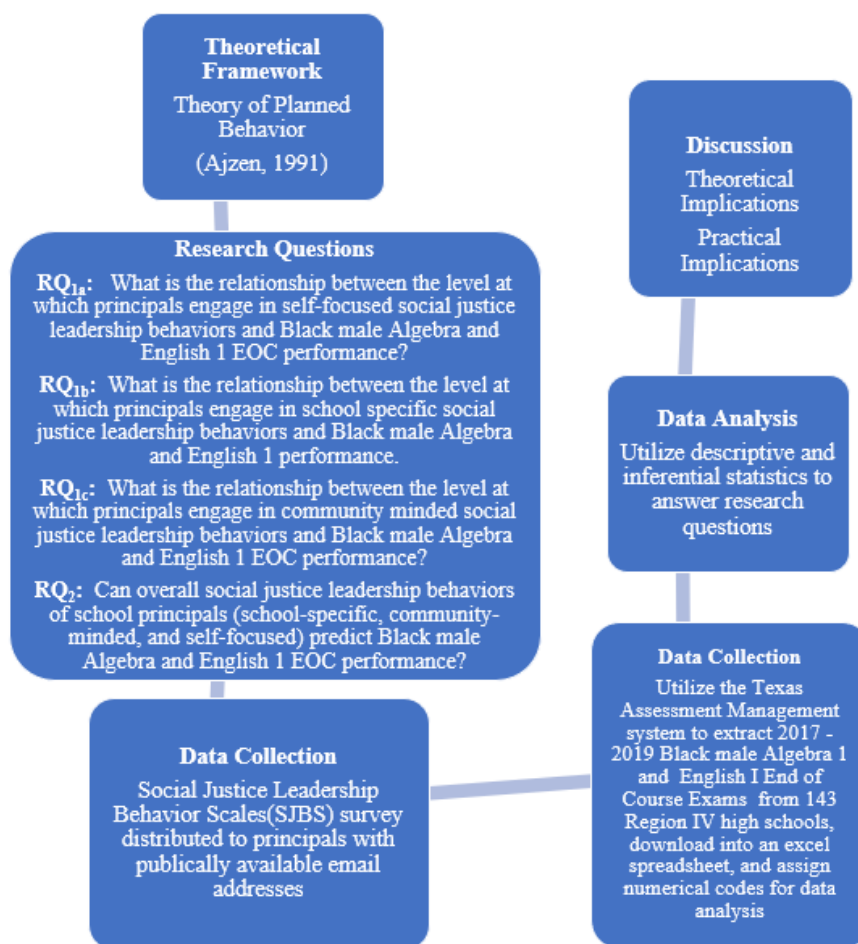
Hypotheses 1c sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engaged in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ). Thus, because the dependent variable and all the independent variables are interval or ratio variables, the most appropriate analysis was a Pearson Correlation.

Research question two sought to investigate whether principals' social justice leadership behaviors (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) could predict Black male academic achievement. The dependent variable was Black male academic achievement, and the predictive variables were principal social justice leadership behaviors (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused). Therefore, since the question sought to predict, the most appropriate analysis method was a simple multiple regression.

Once the data was imported into Excel, the data points were reviewed and screened to illuminate any unwanted variables and excessive missing data. The researcher then coded the data and imported it into SPSS to prepare it for analysis. Both descriptive and internal analyses were conducted. Next, the researcher interpreted the results. The final activity in the research process is to report the findings in the following chapter.

Figure 5 illustrates the graphical presentation of the procedures the researcher used to conduct this research study.

**Figure 5: Research Procedures**



## Ethics

In addition to selecting the appropriate research methodology, the researcher must prioritize ethical considerations for their study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The researcher obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research before engaging in any data collection (Creswell &



Creswell, 2018; Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018; Price et al., 2015). The IRB approval letter is included in the Appendix. Next, the ethical consideration addressed was to participants' privacy and confidentiality. To address this issue, participants were required to complete an Informed Consent that explained the purpose of the study, the expectations the researcher had of them as well as the expectations they should have of the researcher and the research process. Moreover, the Informed Consent addressed how their privacy and confidentiality would be maintained, explained the intended use of the results, and who would have access to the data (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The voluntary nature of participating in the study was not only be explained in writing on the Informed Consent. All email communication also contained the reminder. Most importantly, participants were required to return the Informed Consent before receiving the survey instrument.

### **Risks**

Like ethics, risks involve the expectation for researchers to conduct a study where consideration of the potential harm to the participants is addressed (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Drew et al., 2008). The researcher ensured participants' confidentiality, which is where the participant's identity is known to the researcher, but the researcher de-identifies the data so that the identity is kept confidential (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher did not disclose any identifiable information about the participants. Finally, the researcher used data from the Texas Assessment Management system for the purposes outlined in the study and to address the research questions posed for this study. The data from the Texas Assessment Management System does not include any student identifiers.

**Summary**

The goal of this chapter was to explain the necessary components detailing how this study was conducted. It presented the justification of an explanatory correlational design. The chapter also discussed the population, data sources, participants, and methods for data collection and data analysis. Next, the researcher discussed validity and reliability, and the chapter concluded with a discussion of ethics and risks. The following chapter presents the results.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this quantitative explanatory study was to investigate the relationship between the level at which principals engage in social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. Black male academic achievement was operationalized as the rate at which Black males are meeting Texas state standards on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams. Historically, the academic achievement of Black males has been negatively impacted by formidable challenges such as high out of school suspension rates, overrepresentation in special education programs, higher school drop-out rates, and underperformance in the classroom (Bryan, 2020; Grace & Nelson, 2020; Johnson & Bryan 2017; Powell, 2018). Nearly all of those challenges are present today (Addis & Withington, 2016; Brisport, 2013; Carter, 2019; McFarland, et al., 2019; The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018).

Consequently, educational researchers continue the call for ways in which school principals and K-12 educational system district-level leaders can go about changing an education system that continues to fail Black males (Basile, 2017; Casey, 2020; Grogan, 2017; Johnson & Bryan, 2017; Warren et al., 2016). Accordingly, the purpose of this investigation was to determine to what level and whether principal social justice leadership behaviors can positively impact the educational achievement of Black males. In this context, principals' social justice leadership behavior was further subdivided into self-focused, school specific, and community-minded behaviors as specified by the SJBS. Recall this was conducted through the lens of Dr. Icek Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). As stated previously, according to Ajzen 's (1991) TPB, the

development of subjective norms that are in favor of social justice, creating positive attitudes towards social justice, and expanding the perceived behavioral control around social justice would lead to a rising intention to engage in social justice the three social justice leadership behaviors. By investigating the relationship between principal social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement, educational leaders and policymakers may have a lens through which strategies could be created to break the cycle of educational racism faced by Black males and students of color. To answer each of the research questions, the researcher tested the following hypotheses:

### **Research Questions and Null Hypotheses**

**RQ<sub>1a</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**H<sub>01a</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>1b</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**H<sub>01b</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>1c</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**H<sub>01c</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>2</sub>:** Can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, community-minded) predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Principal social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded) cannot predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

### **Descriptive Statistical Techniques**

Before addressing each research question, the researcher first described the population along several dimensions, which included: Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC met standard rates for 2018, 2019, and 2021 for each corresponding principal participant's campus and data collected from the SJBS, which is designed to measure the school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused scales.

Since Black male academic achievement was the dependent variable for the study, displayed in Table 7 are the descriptive statistics of the overall meeting standards percentage rates for the three years Algebra and Eng 1 EOC exams for each corresponding principal's campus.

**Table 7:** *Descriptive Statistics for Black Male Algebra and English 1 EOC Met Standard**Rate*

		Algebra EOC Avg. (Percent)	English 1 EOC Avg. (Percent)
N	Valid	42	42
	Missing	3	3
Mean		31.26	36.76
Median		29.00	35.50
Mode		46	12 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation		14.836	19.738
Minimum		1	6
Maximum		60	98

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The data shows that M for Algebra is 31.26% (SD = 14.836), with an overall minimum percentage met the standard rate of 1% and a maximum of 60%, N=42. For English 1, the M is 36.76% (SD=19.738), with an overall minimum met standard rate of 6% and a maximum of 98%. Also, it's important to the overall met standard rate for Black males in the state of Texas on the Algebra EOC for the years 2018, 2019, 2021 was 34%, and for English 1, it was 29%.

Recall, students must pass five EOC STAAR assessments: Algebra 1, English 1, English II, Biology, and United States History to receive a high school diploma from a Texas public or charter school (Texas Education Agency, 2021). Additionally, there are three cut scores on STAAR assessments, which organize student performance into four categories: masters, meets, approaches, which are considered passing, and did not meet grade-level indicates not passing (Texas Education Agency, 2021). It is important to note that performance in the approaches category is the minimum passing standard on STAAR exams and indicates that students are likely to succeed in the next grade level or course

with specific interventions (Texas Education Agency, 2021). The master's performance category is the highest level of performance a student can achieve on STAAR assessments. The meets grade-level performance category indicates students have a high probability of success in the next course and generally exhibit the ability to think critically and apply assessed knowledge and skills in familiar contexts (Texas Education Agency, 2021). For the purpose of this study, the researcher only pulled Black male's Algebra and English 1 EOC scores from the corresponding participants' score reports who performed in the meets category.

Figure 6 is a graphical representation of the Black male Algebra, and English 1 EOC average met standard rate for the years 2018, 2019, and 2021 from the sample. The information illustrates for the 2018 school year, the rate of Black males meeting standard on the Algebra EOC exam was 34%, for 2019, the rate was 38%, and for 2021 the rate was 23%. The English 1 rate of Black males meeting standard in 2018 was 30%, for 2019, the rate was 38%, and for 2021 the rate was 40%.

**Figure 6:** *Algebra and English 1 Black Male EOC Met Standard Average (Percentages) for the years 2018, 2019, 2021*

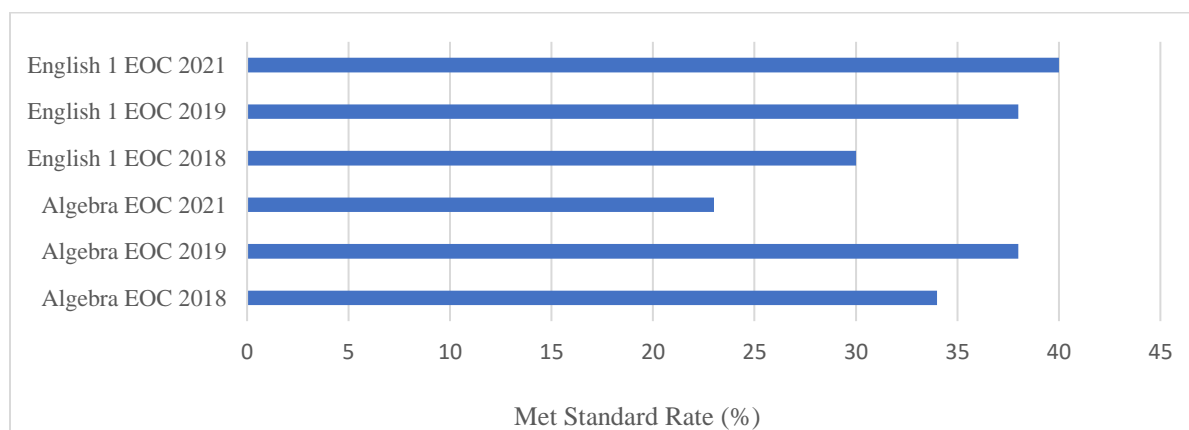


Table 8 displays the descriptive statistics for Black male Algebra and English 1 met standard average for the years 2018, 2019, and 2021.

**Table 8:** *Descriptive Statistics for Black Male Algebra and English 1 Met Standard Rate for the years 2018, 2019, and 2021*

	Algebra 2018	Algebra 2019	Algebra 2021	English 1 2018	English 1 2019	English 1 2021
<i>N</i> Valid	39	40	41	40	41	41
Missing	6	5	4	5	4	4
<i>M</i> (%)	35.8025	37.8500	22.7805	29.9000	39.8293	39.5122
Median	34.0000	39.00	17.0000	29.0000	40.0000	34.0000
Mode	17.00 <sup>a</sup>	.00 <sup>a</sup>	7.00	28.00	31.00	13.00 <sup>a</sup>
Std. Deviation	17.69905	19.81265	16.79064	17.47643	20.98202	21.44542
Minimum	00.00	00.00	2.00	3.00	00.00	9.00
Maximum	77.00	74.00	65.00	80.00	95.00	100.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The mean met standard rate for Algebra in 2018 was 35.80% (SD = 17.69), with a minimum of 0% and a maximum of 77%. For the 2019 school year, the mean met standard rate for Algebra was 37.85% (SD = 19.81), with a minimum of 0% and a maximum of 74%. The Algebra 2021 mean met standard rate was 22.78% (SD = 16.79), with a minimum of 2% and a maximum of 65%. The mean met standard rate for English 1 in 2018 was 29.90.% (SD = 17.47), with a minimum of 3 % and a maximum of 80 %. For the 2019 school year, the mean met standard rate for English 1 was 39.82% (SD = 20.98), with a minimum of 0% and a maximum of 95%. The English 1 2021 mean met standard rate was 39.51% (SD = 21.44), with a minimum of 9% and a maximum of 100%.



Next, the researcher described the scores garnered from Dr. Flood's (2019) Social Justice Behavior Scale Survey (SJBS). The information in Table 9 represents the descriptive statistics for the overall average of all variables.

**Table 9:** *Descriptive Statistics for the Overall Average SJBS Scores*

		Self-Focused	School Specific	Community-minded
N	Valid	45	45	43
	Missing	0	0	2
Mean		6.0921	5.4321	3.6755
Median		6.1429	5.4444	3.4286
Mode		6.43	4.56 <sup>a</sup>	3.00
Std. Deviation		.61002	.79569	1.25465
Minimum		4.57	3.89	1.00
Maximum		7.00	6.78	6.57

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The results show a mean of 6.09 (SD = .61) with a minimum of 4.57 and a maximum of 7.00 for the Self-Focused scores on the SJBS. For the School-Specific scores, the mean was 5.43 (SD = .79) with a minimum of 3.89 and a maximum of 6.78. Lastly, the results showed a mean of 3.67 (SD = 1.25) with a minimum of 1.00 and a maximum of 6.57 for the Community-minded scores on the SJBS.

### **Inferential Statistical Techniques**

Research question one sought to determine the relationship between social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement operationalized as meeting standard on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams. This question has three hypotheses because the level at which a principal exhibits social justice leadership behavior encapsulated in the three components on the SJBS: self-focused, school specific, and community-minded are measured. The dependent variable for all three hypotheses is

Black male performance on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams, and all the independent variables are scale variables. Therefore, the Pearson Correlation was used to analyze each hypothesis. The dependent variable was made up of the overall average of 2018, 2019, 2021 Black Male Algebra and English 1 from each participant's campus.

Hypotheses 1a sought to determine if there was any statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male performance on the Algebra and English 1 EOC. ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ). A Pearson's Correlation was computed to determine the relationship between self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. The results indicated that there was an extremely weak negative correlation between Black male Algebra EOC scores and the degree of principal self-focused social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(44) = -.082, p = .606, N = 45$

The results also indicated there was an extremely weak negative correlation between Black male English 1 EOC scores and the degree of principal self-focused social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(44), = -.087, p = .583, N = 45$ ). The researcher retained the null hypothesis and concluded there was no statistically significant relationship between principal self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC scores.

Hypotheses 1b sought to determine if there was any statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ). A Pearson's Correlation was computed to determine the relationship between school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. The results indicated

that there was a very weak negative correlation between Black male Algebra EOC met standard rates and the degree of principal school specific social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(44) = -.167, p = .292, N = 45$ )

The results also indicated there was a very weak negative correlation between Black male English 1 EOC met standard rates and the degree of principal school specific social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(44) = -.177, p = .263, N = 45$ ). The researcher retained the null hypothesis and concluded there was no statistically significant relationship between principal school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC scores.

Hypotheses 1c sought to determine if there was any statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. ( $H_0: \rho = 0$ ). A Pearson's Correlation was computed to determine the relationship between community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. The results indicated that there was an extremely weak negative correlation between Black male Algebra EOC met standard rates and the degree of principal community-minded social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(42) = -.072, p = .657, N = 43$ )

The results also indicated there was an extremely weak negative correlation between Black male English 1 EOC met standard rates and the degree of principal community-minded social justice leadership behaviors that were not significant ( $r(42) = -.049, p = .765, N = 43$ ). The researcher retained the null hypothesis and concluded there was no statistically significant relationship between principal community-minded social

justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC scores. The information displayed in Tables 10 and 11 shows the results of the analysis of hypotheses 1 a – c.

**Table 10:** *Correlations Between the Dependent (Black Male Algebra EOC) and Independent Variables*

		Algebra EOC Avg. (Percent)
Self-Focused	<i>r</i>	-.082
	<i>p</i>	.606
School Specific	<i>r</i>	-.167
	<i>p</i>	.292
Community-minded	<i>r</i>	-.072
	<i>p</i>	.657

**Table 11:** *Correlations Between the Dependent (Black Male English 1 EOC) and Independent Variables*

		English 1 EOC Avg. (Percent)
Self-Focused	<i>r</i>	-.087
	<i>p</i>	.583
School Specific	<i>r</i>	-.177
	<i>p</i>	.263
Community-minded	<i>r</i>	-.049
	<i>p</i>	.765

Research question two sought to investigate can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals (school-specific, community-minded, and self-focused) predict Black male students' academic achievement. The researcher performed a multiple regression analysis to determine if the three independent variables could predict Black male academic achievement on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams. Additionally, this

type of test can be utilized to test interactions between multiple independent variables and a dependent variable (Salkind, 2010). Therefore the design was simple linear multiple regression. The design for the Multiple Regression Model is:

$$Y_1 = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + \alpha + e_i$$

Where:

$\hat{Y}$  = Black male academic achievement

$a$  = (Alpha) is the constant or intercept

$b$  =  $b$  is the slope (Beta coefficient) for  $X$

$X_1$  = school-specific social justice leadership behaviors

$X_2$  = community-minded social justice leadership behaviors

$X_3$  = self-focused social justice leadership behaviors

$a$  = the sample intercept of the regression line for  $Y$  as a predictor by the set of  $X_3$ 's

$e_i$  = the residuals or errors of the prediction

Thus, the regression equation: Black male academic achievement =  $\alpha + X_1$  school-specific social justice leadership behaviors +  $X_2$  community-minded social justice leadership behaviors +  $X_3$  self-focused social justice leadership behaviors +  $e_i$

Tables 12 shows the model summary for Black male academic achievement met standard rate for Algebra (dependent variable).

**Table 12:** *Model Summary for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate*

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.131 <sup>a</sup>	.017	-.065	15.496

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Focused, School Specific, Community-minded

b. Dependent variable: Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate

The results show the coefficient determination of  $R$  or square .131, which illustrated a variance of the dependent variable that explains the variation of the predictive (independent) variables. Thus, .01% of the predictive (independent) variables (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors) could explain the Black male met standard rate on the Algebra EOC exam.

As well, Table 13 shows the determination of  $R$  or square .025, which illustrated a variance of the dependent variable that explains the variation of the predictive (independent) variables. Thus, .02% of the predictive (independent) variables (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors) could explain the Black male met standard rate on the English 1 EOC exam.

**Table 13:** *Model Summary for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate*

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.157 <sup>a</sup>	.025	-.057	20.513

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Focused, School Specific, Community-minded

b. Dependent Variable: English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate

Table 14 illustrates the Analysis of Variance for the dependent variable (Black male met standard rate on the Algebra EOC). The statistics revealed there was no significant regression with Algebra EOC  $F(3, 36) = .208, p = .890$  was found.

**Table 14:** *Analysis of Variance for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	149.847	3	49.949	.208	.890 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	5888.379	36	240.115		
Total	6121.355	39			

a. Dependent Variable: Algebra EOC Met Standard Rate

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-focused, School Specific, Community-minded

Table 15 illustrates the Analysis of Variance for the dependent variable (Black male met standard rate on the English 1 EOC). The statistics revealed there was no significant regression with English 1 EOC  $F(3, 36) = .304$   $p = .822$  was found.

**Table 15:** *Analysis of Variance for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rate*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	383.673	3	127.891	.304	.822 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	15147.827	36	420.773		
Total	15531.500	39			

a. Dependent Variable: Eng.1 EOC Avg. (Percent)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Focused, School Specific, Community-minded

Tables 16 represents the coefficients for the Black Male Algebra EOC met standard rates (dependent variable). The results suggested that none of the predictor variables (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors) could predict Black male met standard performance on the Algebra EOC exam. Therefore, considering the regression equation model, the researcher rejected the hypothesis and concluded that principal social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded) could not predict Black male Algebra EOC performance.  $H_{04}: \beta_1 = 0, \beta_2 = 0, \beta_3 = 0$

**Table 16:** *Coefficients for Algebra EOC Met Standard Rates*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	43.989	24.782		1.775	.084
Self-Focused	.374	5.508	.015	.068	.946
School Specific	-2.778	5.282	-.144	-.526	.602
Community-minded	.084	2.502	.007	.034	.973

a. Dependent Variable: Algebra EOC Avg. (Percent)

Table 17 represents the coefficients for the Black Male English 1 EOC met standard rates (dependent variable). The results suggested that none of the predictor variables (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors) could predict Black male met standard performance on the Algebra EOC exam. Therefore, considering the regression equation model, the researcher rejected the hypothesis and concluded that principal social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded) could not predict Black male English 1 EOC performance.  $H_{04}: \beta_1 = 0, \beta_2 = 0, \beta_3 = 0$



**Table 17:** *Coefficients for English 1 EOC Met Standard Rates*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	53.769	32.806		1.639	.110
Self-Focused	1.509	7.292	.047	.207	.837
School Specific	-5.519	6.992	-.215	-.789	.435
Community-minded	1.042	3.313	.067	.315	.755

a. Dependent Variable: English 1 EOC Avg. (Percent)

### Summary

This study utilized descriptive statistics to describe the population. Pearson Correlation was used for all three hypotheses for research question one and multiple regression to answer research question two. For hypothesis 1a, the researcher found an extremely weak negative correlation that was not significant between the level of principal self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black Male Algebra and English 1 EOC met standard rates. For hypothesis 1b, the researcher found there was a very weak negative correlation that was not significant between the level of principal school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC met standard rates. For hypothesis 1c, the researcher found an extremely weak negative correlation that was not significant between the level of principal community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC met standard rates. Finally, the regression analysis indicated that none of the predictor variables (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors) could predict Black male met standard performance on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams. In sum, the findings from this study did not affirm the usefulness

of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TRB) as a framework to study the role of principals' attitudes towards social justice leadership behaviors and their beliefs in engaging in these behaviors to predict Black male academic achievement.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### **Overview of Study**

The primary aim of this study was twofold; first, the researcher attempted to establish a correlation between Black male Algebra 1 and English 1 EOC performance with the level at which principals engage in self-focused, school specific, and community-minded social justice leadership behaviors. Secondly, the research attempted to present an empirically based case for principal social justice leadership behaviors being a significant predictor of Black male academic achievement. As stated previously, Black males continue to face formidable challenges in the K-12 education system such as disproportionate academic achievement, high disciplinary referrals, increased risk for being victims of the school-to-prison pipeline, and are perpetually at risk for having an overall lower quality of life (Bryan, 2020; Kafele, 2021; National School Boards Association, 2020).

Furthermore, research suggests school principals are in a pivotal position to create equitable learning environments and have a critical influence on teachers to directly impact student achievement (DeMatthews, 2018; Ezzani, 2020; Grogan, 2017; Khalifia et al., 2016). The findings of this study indicated there was no statistically significant relationship between principal social justice leadership behaviors and the academic achievement of Black males. However, Black males perpetually have lower academic performance than their counterparts (Ezzani, 2020, Hussar et al., 2020; National School Boards Association, 2020; The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, 2018).

There is a robust amount of literature regarding the plight of Black males in K-12 school systems across the United States (Bryan, 2020; Kunjufu, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lee, 1992). Historically subpar academic performance was recently validated by the Condition of Education 2020, which portrayed a grim picture of the state of academic achievement for Black males across the nation (Hussar et al., 2020; National Boards of Association, 2020). As mentioned previously, in Region IV, where the study was conducted, Black males performed significantly lower than other male sub-populations in 2018, 2019, and 2021 on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams (Texas Education Agency, 2020). While the promise of the nation is a high-quality education for every student, the stark variance in the academic performance of Black males contradicts the goal for public schools (Hussar et al., 2020, National Boards of Association, 2020; Texas Education Agency, 2020).

In tandem, although research supports culturally responsive educator practices and teacher critical consciousness have significant effects on the academic achievement of Black and Brown students, few researchers have sought to investigate how principal social justice leadership behaviors could have an indirect impact on Black male academic achievement. The extant literature supports the notion that teacher culturally responsive practices positively impact linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse student populations (Borrero et al., 2018; Brown, 2007; Davis & Allen, 2020; Gay, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Additionally, education researchers contend principal social justice orientations can work to decrease implicit bias's harmful effects on minority students (Beachum & Gallo, 2020; DeMatthews, 2018; Theoharis, 2009). Beachum and Gallo (2020) explained:

Implicit bias can lead to detriments to academics through teacher expectations, teacher traits, curricular bias, and student access, inequitable discipline through the determination of misbehaviors, reactions to behaviors, and behavioral outcomes; long-term deficits as evidenced by the school-to-prison pipeline. (p. 43)

Until the development of Flood's (2019) instrument, there were limited paths to conduct a study investigating student achievement to social justice principles and practices at the school leadership level.

To add to the body of literature on how principals' approach to social justice leadership positively impacts the academic achievement of Black males, Ezzani (2020) conducted a study on how school principals could influence reflective and anti-oppressive practices to help change teachers' beliefs toward their Black male students. Her findings suggested that school leaders must create professional development focused on student race within the school and extend to the community to develop a more inclusive school environment. Additionally, her findings suggested that practices that humanize and show respect for Black males should be developed through professional learning, which could indirectly impact the academic achievement of Black males. To this end, her study served as an impetus for investigating principal social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study.

### **Research Question and Null Hypothesis**

**RQ<sub>1a</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**H<sub>01a</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage self-focused social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>1b</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**H<sub>01b</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in school specific social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>1c</sub>:** What is the relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**H<sub>01c</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the level at which principals engage in community-minded social justice leadership behaviors and Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

**RQ<sub>2</sub>:** Can overall social justice leadership behaviors of school principals' social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, community-minded) predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance?

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Principal social justice leadership behaviors (self-focused, school specific, and community-minded) cannot predict Black male Algebra and English 1 EOC performance.

### **Discussion**

According to Fullan (2017), Dufour and Marzano (2011), and Krasnoff et al. (2015), a school principal's influence and effectiveness are linked to overall campus effectiveness and student achievement. Additionally, the demands and complexities of the principal role have become even more challenging in the face of a global pandemic, chronic teacher shortages, and the pressure of stakeholder accountability for test score growth (DeMatthews et al., 2021; Dover et al., 2019; Grissom et al., 2021). Despite the many responsibilities principals may have, educational researchers contend principals must be effective instructional leaders that recruit, select, and retain highly qualified teachers to deliver high-quality instruction to ethnically, linguistically, racially diverse student populations (Krasnoff et al., 2015; Leithwood, 2019). Furthermore, Chapter 149 of the Texas Administrative Code under Principal Standard 1, indicator 1d states that principals are responsible for ensuring effective instruction that maximizes the growth of all students, supports equity and eliminates the achievement gap (Texas Education Agency, 2014). Accordingly, principals are a critical part of school improvement efforts and enhancing organizational conditions that support high-quality instruction and other equitable outcomes (DeMatthews et al., 2021).

DeMatthews et al. (2021) asserted that principals' influential power in school communities could work to the advantage of supporting efforts in building teacher capacity, cohesively working with families, and implementing culturally responsive teaching practices. Gullo and Beachum's (2020) informed grounded theory study

explored how principals and assistant principals describe the school discipline decision-making process and how implicit bias interferes with discipline decisions. Consequently, Gullo and Beachum (2020) reported that the discipline gap continues nationally, with Black students overrepresented by 25%.

In this context, the significant loss of instruction time, declining academic performance, and high school dropout rates are connected to exclusionary discipline that influences the disproportionality of educational outcomes between Black and White students (Gullo & Beachum, 2020). Furthermore, they reported that teachers' contribution to this gap encompassed differences in student expectations, inordinate office referrals for students of color, and an absence of culturally responsive practices. They concluded that "research around strategy and solution-focused efforts for implicit bias impact reduction remains important and must continue to work towards social justice and racial equality in schools" (p.10). In sum, one of the critical implications of the study was school systems should involve principals in professional learning that focuses on reducing the detrimental impacts of implicit bias in schools.

Another important tenet to consider when examining the relationship between a principal's influence and effectiveness in impacting equitable academic achievement outcomes is principal diversity. (Bailes & Guthery, 2020; Grissom et al., 2021). Recall, the percentage distribution of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary students enrolled is 47% White, 15% Black, 27 % Hispanic, five percent were Asian, one percent were American Indian, and four percent were two or more races. (Hussar, et al., 2020). The principal workforce remains overwhelmingly White (77.7%) while 10.5% are Black, 8.9% are Hispanic, 0.9% Asian, 0.2 % Pacific Islander, 0.7% American



Indian/Alaska Native, and two or more races at one percent (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Accordingly, the racial demographic of principals does not align with a growing diverse study body, which educational researchers argue precludes maximizing educational attainment for minority students (Bartenen & Grissom, 2019; Gullo & Beachum, 2019; Grissom et al., 2021).

Grissom et al. (2021) conducted a systematic synthesis of two decades of research on how principals affect students and schools. More specifically, a portion of the research they examined was: (1) principal race or ethnicity and teacher outcomes, and (2) principal race or ethnicity and student outcomes. Grissom et al. (2021) concluded that principal race and ethnic diversity had a critical impact on teacher outcomes such as hiring, retention, and job attitudes. Additionally, they found that principal racial and ethnic diversity was a predictor of teacher racial and ethnic diversity, and they also found that Black principals were more likely to hire teachers of color than White principals. More important, their findings likewise indicated that the presence of minority principals led to better retention of teachers of color, which in turn led to better educational outcomes for Brown and Black students. The examples of achievement in their study included higher math scores and the increased likelihood of participation in gifted programs. This research further justifies the need for diversity in the principal workforce.

In another study illustrating the importance of diversity within the principal workforce, Bailes and Guthery (2020) examined principal diversity and how race and gender were associated with assistant principals being promoted to the principalship. Specifically, they investigated the probability of women and minorities being promoted to the principal compared to their White male counterparts. Bailes and Guthery (2021)

concluded that race and gender were associated with the probability of promotion to school leadership. Their findings indicated that Black assistant principals were both less likely to be promoted to principal positions and the probability of them waiting longer for those promotions (Bailey & Guthrey, 2021). Like Grissom et al. (2021), Bailes and Guthrey (2021) agreed that hiring Black principals was vital to closing the achievement gap, as well as the fact that many Black students experience better educational outcomes from having Black principals and teachers.

In sum, research confirms that schools must have a skilled and committed principal at the center to create a high-quality, equitable learning environment to influence effective teaching and learning (Grissom et al., 2021; Krasnoff, 2015; Leithwood et al., 2019). Considering the discussion on how implicit bias can be detrimental to minority student achievement and the racial or ethnic incongruence between principal demographics and a diverse student population, the call for principal social justice leadership does not go unsupported by empirical research (Beachum and Gullo, 2020; DeMatthews, 2018; Grissom et al., 2021; Theoharis, 2009). As mentioned previously, the findings of this quantitative study did not establish a correlation between principal social justice leadership and Black male academic achievement. However, examining the multifaceted nature of social justice leadership and the complicated work of principals by combining multiple forms of data such as administrator interviews and school community climate surveys could provide another lens for working to develop schools that dismantle inequitable practices for historically marginalized students (DeMatthews, 2016; Grissom et al., 2021).

## **Discussion of Theory of Planned Behavior**

As mentioned in Chapter IV, the results of this study did not affirm the usefulness of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a framework to study the role of principals' attitudes towards social justice leadership behaviors and their beliefs and intentions in engaging in these behaviors to predict Black male academic achievement. Furthermore, the results of how principals self-reported on the SJBS did not correlate with Black male performance on the Algebra and English 1 EOC exams. With this in mind, the need to find the variables that affect this outcome is important.

A principal's perception of how they are engaging in social justice behaviors may not be the perception of the community in which they serve. Recall, Ajzen's (1991) TPB, the development of subjective norms that are in favor of social justice, creating positive attitudes towards social justice, and expanding the perceived behavioral control around social justice would lead to a rising intention to engage in social justice behaviors. However, this study did not show the relationship between behavioral intentions and actual behavior.

In conclusion, the Theory of Planned Behavior framework in this study revealed the complex nature of the reliance on a principal intention to enact social justice leadership behaviors. TPB indicates that an individual's beliefs serve as the foundation that ultimately determines the behavior in question (Ajzen et al., 2011). As well, the beliefs individual has are assumed to serve as a compass to guide intentions and behavior (Ajzen et al., 2011). While a majority of studies demonstrate behavioral intention "is a strong proxy variable for behavior," this area should be researched further (Miller et al., 2018, p. 10). In short, the results of how principals reported on the SJBS could provide

specific targets for evaluating attitude/behavior compared to how to stakeholders perceive the areas principals are rating themselves high in.

### **Implications for Teachers, Educational Leaders, and Policymakers**

There is no doubt that principals are instrumental in impacting meaningful change in school systems today. As a result of Grissom et al.'s (2021) systematic synthesis of how principals affect students and schools, one of the limitations they reported was components linking principal diversity to outcomes not being explored directly in the studies they synthesized. In this context, if Black principals have a positive effect on Black student academic achievement or positive outcomes on teacher presence and motivation through leadership practices, educational leaders could work to make these practices widespread and increase principal diversity in the process (Bailes & Guthrey, 2020, Grissom et al., 2021).

Another implication to consider is that principals working to develop just and equitable schools need local and governmental support from all stakeholders. Recently, there has been much debate about the teaching of Critical Race Theory in schools. Critical race theory is an academic term used to study how race and racism have infiltrated social and local structures in the United States (Adedoyin et al., 2019; McGee, 2021; Webster & Knaus, 2020). Recently, a bill was signed that outlines how Texas teachers can speak about current events and past history on racism in the classroom (McGee, 2021). With this in mind, in another recent event, the first Black principal at a high school in the Dallas area is facing the potential of having his contract non-renewed for being accused of promoting and teaching Critical Race Theory in his community (Campbell, 2021). The bigger question for lawmakers and educational leaders is, if

educators cannot fully teach students about the lived experiences of their ancestors and how their culture was formed, how can principals adequately develop and promote an equitable learning environment for all? The current climate regarding the uproar over Critical Race Theory contravenes the data that purports when students feel, see, and hear their experiences in the curriculum; they are more successful in school (Gay, 2002; Kafele, 2021; Khalifa, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Bishop and McClellan (2016) argued it was critical for school leaders to be able to interrogate and resist their personal bias “despite contextual parameters” (p. 147). Additionally, they contended until school leaders can do this, creating an equitable learning environment for all students is unlikely. Accordingly, local and governmental entities should fully stand behind principals in their quest to dismantle unjust practices and adopt innovative strategies for creating equitable, high-quality educational environments for all students.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Given the results and implications of this study, future research suggestions include using a qualitative research design to further explore the relationship between Black male academic achievement and principal social justice leadership. In addition to administering a survey instrument like the SJBS to measure social justice leadership behaviors specific to school leadership, it is recommended that future researchers capture the lived experiences of principals who believe they are enacting social justice practices and principals who may not consider their practices to align with social justice but are leading schools with higher than average Black male achievement. Capturing the experiences of principals could provide a prism in which researchers could explore how

principals self-reflect on their leadership behaviors and how they align with creating a fair, equitable, and just learning environment.

Another recommendation for future research would be to do a longitudinal convergent mixed methods study where a cohort of Black males could be studied under the leadership of a principal who self-reports as a social justice leader. Multiple data sources such as stakeholder surveys, student interviews, disaggregating survey data to see if gender of principal makes a difference, observations, and interviews with the participating principal could be examined. Additionally, survey data could be collected from teachers of Algebra and English 1 teachers working under a principal who self-reports enacting social justice leadership behaviors. Examination of principal social justice leadership behaviors, investigating the Black male school experience and academic achievement, the complexities of the principalship, and stakeholder perceptions over a span of time could prove to be beneficial for impacting other historically marginalized student populations.

Lastly, an additional recommendation for future studies could include expanding the sample population to include elementary principals across the United States. Recall, researchers and scholars contend the public-school system directly contributes to the destruction of Black males, which becomes evident as early as 4<sup>th</sup> grade (Bryan, 2020, Kunjufu, 1982; Powell, 2018). Examining principal social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic performance at the elementary level with a larger sample size could help link principal intentions and behaviors to Black male educational attainment early on.

To that end, these research recommendations could change the educational landscape for principals, teachers, and, most importantly, students. With racial tensions on the rise in society, it is critical for lawmakers and educational leaders to respond in viable, practical, and, when possible, innovative ways to address racial achievement gaps. Educational researchers must persist with exploring barriers and policies, and organizational structures that impact the principal's ability to create more inclusive schools.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the relationship between the level at which principals engage in social justice leadership behaviors and Black male academic achievement. In reviewing all the literature on the academic achievement of Black males, it was viewed through the lens of examining societal, institutional systems and the power principals have to make meaningful change in leading more inclusive schools. The limitations of this study did not allow for any conclusive link between social justice leadership with Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior as the prism to investigate Black male academic achievement. However, this addition to the body of research gives educational leaders and policymakers an initial point of inquiry to probe for how to support principals in creating an equitable K-12 education system for all students to thrive in. Changing the academic outcomes for historically marginalized groups like Black males could not only affect positive change for them but for all Black and Brown students.

## REFERENCES

- Addis, S., & Withington, C. (2016). *Improving high school graduation rates among males of color*. Robert Woodson Johnson Foundation. Retrieved from <https://dropoutprevention.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/rwjf-ndpscscn-moriah-ImprovingGradRatesMalesofColor-2016.pdf>
- Adedoyin, A., Moore, S., Robinson, M., Clayton, D., Boamah, D., & Harmon, D. (2019). The dehumanization of Black males by police: Teaching social justice- Black life really does matter. *Journal of Teaching Social Work, 39*(2), 111-131.
- Agosto, V., & Roland, E. (2018). Intersectionality and educational leadership: Critical review. *Review of Research in Education Administration, 42*, 255-285.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organization Behavior and Human Decision Process, 179*-211.
- Akhtar, A. (2016). Research in social science: Interdisciplinary perspectives. *Research design*. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308915548\\_Research\\_Design](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308915548_Research_Design)
- Allen, A., & White-Smith, K. (2017). "That's why I say stay in school:" Black mothers' parental involvement, cultural wealth, and exclusion in their son's schooling. *Urban Education, 53*(3), 409-435.
- Allen, Q. (2015). Race, culture, and agency: Examining the ideologies and practices of United States teachers of Black male students. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 47*, 71-81.
- Amanchukwu, R., Stanley, G., & Ololube, N. (2015). A review of leadership theories, principles and styles and their relevance to educational management. *Management, 5*(1), 6-14.



- Ambrosio, J. (2017). *Educational leadership for transformation and social justice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- American Public Health Association. (2018). *Chronic stress and the risk of high school dropout*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from [www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/sbhc/chronic\\_stress.ashx?la=en&hash=F5FB7AF535D2CDA4CBC81236DBCE6580B53607E4](http://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/sbhc/chronic_stress.ashx?la=en&hash=F5FB7AF535D2CDA4CBC81236DBCE6580B53607E4)
- Anumba, E. (2015). Successfully navigating through college: Voices of African American males. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, 6(1), 35-55.
- Azjen, I., Joyce, N., Sheikh, S., & Cote, N. (2011). Knowledge and the prediction of behavior: The role of information accuracy in the theory of planned behavior. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 33, 101-117.
- Bailes, L., & Guthery, S. (2020). Held down and held back: Systematically delayed principal promotions by race and gender. *AERA Open*, 6(2), 1-17.
- Basile, V. (2020). Standin' tall: criminalization and acts of resistance among elementary school boys of color. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 23(1), 94-112.
- Beachum, F., & Gullo, G. (2020). School leadership: Implicit bias and social justice. *Handbook on Promoting Social Justice in Education*, 429-454.
- Bishop, H., & McClellan, R. (2016). Resisting social justice. *Resisting social justice: Rural school principals' perceptions of LGBTQ*, 26, 124-153.
- Black, D. (2019). The fundamental right to education. *Notre Dame Law Review*, 94(3), 2059-1114.

- Booker, B. (2020). George Floyd, whose death ignited a social justice movement, to be buried in Houston. National Public Radio. Retrieved from [www.will.illinois.edu/news/npr/george-floyd-whose-death-ignited-a-social-justice-movement-to-be-buried-in-houston](http://www.will.illinois.edu/news/npr/george-floyd-whose-death-ignited-a-social-justice-movement-to-be-buried-in-houston)
- Borrero, N., Ziauddin, A., & Ahn, A. (2018). Teaching for change: New teachers' experiences with and visions for culturally relevant pedagogy. *Critical Questions in Education*, 9(1), 22-39.
- Brenneman, R. (2018). Black athletes' graduation rates lag at U.S. universities with top sports teams. Los Angeles, CA: USC News. Retrieved from [www.news.usc.edu/138228/leading-sports-schools-black-athletes-graduation-rates-lower/](http://www.news.usc.edu/138228/leading-sports-schools-black-athletes-graduation-rates-lower/)
- Brisport, N. (2013). Racism & power: The inaccessibility of opportunity in the educational system in the United States. *National Lawyers Guild Review*, 70(1), 17-29.
- Brown, B., Boda, P., Lemmi, C., & Monroe, X. (2019). Moving culturally relevant pedagogy from theory to practice: Exploring teachers' application of culturally relevant education in science and mathematics. *Urban Education*, 54(6), 775-803.
- Brown, M. (2007). Educating all students: Creating culturally responsive teachers, classrooms, and schools. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 43(1), 57-62.
- Bruce, J., McKee, K., Morgan-Fleming, J., & Warner, W. (2019). The oaks leadership scholars program: Transformative leadership in action. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 31(3), 536-546.
- Bryan, N. (2020). Shaking the bad boys: Troubling the criminalization of Black boys' childhood play, hegemonic White masculinity and femininity, and the school playground-to prison pipeline. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 23(5), 673-692.

- Bugden, T. (2017). Addressing Utah's school to prison pipeline. *Utah Law Review*(5), 1061-1093.
- Campbell, E. (2021). Colleyville Heritage principal requests hearing before school board to discuss contract. Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Star Telegram. Retrieved from <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/education/article254330463.html>
- Capper, C., Theoharis, G., & Sebastian, J. (2006). Toward a framework for preparing leaders for social justice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44(3), 209-224.
- Carson, E. (2020). *Prisoners in 2018*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved 2020, from <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p18.pdf>
- Carter, A. (2019). Look how far we haven't come: The possible implications of current educational context and practices for young Black males. *Educational Sciences*, 142-154.
- Casey, L. (2020). Academic resiliency among African-American males in secondary schools. *Journal of Applied Educational and Policy Research*, 5(1), 34-50.
- Cazden, C., & Legget, E. (1981). Culturally responsive education: A response to remedies. *Culture and the Bilingual Classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography*, 69-86.
- Chemers, M. (2000). Leadership research and theory; A functional integration. *Group dynamics: Theory, research, and practice.*, 4(1), 27-43.
- Cherng, H. (2017). If they think I can: Teacher bias and youth of color expectations and achievement. *Social Science Research*, 66, 170-186.
- Chetty, R., Hendren, N., Jones, M., & Porter, S. (2018). *Race and economic opportunity in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Opportunity Insights. Retrieved from [http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/assets/documents/race\\_summary.pdf](http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/assets/documents/race_summary.pdf)

- CNN Money. (2018). Education vs. prison costs. Retrieved from <https://money.cnn.com/infographic/economy/education-vs-prison-costs/>
- Coffey, H., & Fariande-Wu, A. (2016). Navigating the journey to culturally responsive teaching: Lessons from the success and struggles of one first-year, Black female teacher of Black students in an urban school. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 60*, 24-33.
- Corsi-Bunker, A. (2020). A guide to the United States education system. University of Minnesota ISSS International Student and Scholar Services. Retrieved from <https://iss.umn.edu/publications/USEducation/>
- Courtland, L. (1992). *Empowering young Black males*. Ann Arbor, MI: Eric Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse.
- Creswell, J. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Cruz, R., Manchanda, S., Firestone., A., & Rodi, J. (2019). An examination of teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 00(0)*, 1-18.
- Dastagir, A. (2021). Breonna Taylor has been gone a year. Why we need to talk more about the racial trauma of Black death. USA Today. Retrieved from [www.usatoday.com/story/life/health-wellness/2021/03/11/breonna-taylor-george-floyd-and-racial-trauma-black-death/4630148001/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/life/health-wellness/2021/03/11/breonna-taylor-george-floyd-and-racial-trauma-black-death/4630148001/)
- Davis, J., & Allen, K. (2020). Culturally responsive mentoring and instruction for middle school Black boys in STEM programs. *Journal of African American Males, 11(2)*, 43-58.
- de Brey, C., Musu, L., McFarland, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Diliberti, M., Zhang, A., . . . Wang, X. (2019 ). *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2018*.

- Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019038.pdf>
- De Leeuw, A., Valois, P., & Ajzen, I. &. (2015). Using the theory of planned behavior to identify key beliefs underlying pro-environmental behavior in high school students: Implications of educational interventions. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 42*, 128-138.
- Dee, T., & Penner, E. (2019). My brother's keeper? The impact of targeted educational supports. *EdWorking Paper No. 19-145*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute at Brown University. Retrieved from <http://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai19-145>
- DeMatthews, D. (2018). Social justice dilemmas: Evidence on the successes and shortcomings of three principals trying to make a difference. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 21*(5), 545-559.
- DeMatthews, D. E., Mungal, A. S., & Carrola, P. A. (2015). Despite best intentions: A critical analysis of social justice leadership and decision making. *Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, 5*(2), 17-37.
- DeMatthews, D., Serafini, A., & Watson, T. (2021). Leading inclusive schools: Principal perceptions, practices, and challenges to meaningful change. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 57*(1), 3-48.
- Desilver, D., Lipka, M., & Fahmy, D. (2020). *10 things we know about race and policing in the U.S.* Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/03/10-things-we-know-about-race-and-policing-in-the-u-s/>

- Dover, A., Kressler, B., & Lozano, M. (2019). Learning our way through: Critical professional development for social justice in teacher education. *The New Educator, 16*(1), 45-69.
- Drago-Severson, E., & Blum-DeStafano, J. (2019). A developmental lens in social justice leadership: Exploring the connection between meaning making and practice. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, 3*(1).
- Drew, C., Hardman, M., & Hosp, J. (2008). *Designing and conducting research in education*. Thousand Oak, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Dufour, R. M. (2011). *Leaders of learning: How district, school, and classroom leaders improve student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
- Duncan, G. (2002). Beyond love: A critical race ethnography of the schooling of adolescent Black males. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 35*(2), 131-143.
- Dutta, S. (2017). Rawl's theory of justice: An analysis. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 4*(1), 40-43.
- Emproto, R. (2020). Taking on social justice in the killing wake of the George Floyd killing. *Stony Brook University News*. Retrieved from [www.news.stonybrook.edu/featuredpost/taking-on-social-justice-in-the-wake-of-the-george-floyd-killing/](http://www.news.stonybrook.edu/featuredpost/taking-on-social-justice-in-the-wake-of-the-george-floyd-killing/)
- Engle, L., & Black, M. (2008). The effect of poverty on child development and educational outcomes. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1136*, 243.
- Ezzani, M. (2020). A principal's approach to leadership for social justice: Advancing reflective and anti-oppressive practices. *Journal of School Leadership, XX*(X), 1-21.  
doi:10.1177/1052684620908347

- Feagin, J., & Barnett, B. (2004). Success and failure: How systemic racism trumped the Brown v. Board of Education decision. *University of Illinois Review*, 2004(5), 1099-1130.
- Fleming, J., & Zegwaard, K. (2018). Methodologies, methods, and ethical considerations for conducting research in work-integrated learning. *International Journal of Work - Integrated Learning*, 19(3), 205-213.
- Flood, L. (2019). A new way forward for social justice researchers: Development and validation of the social justice behavior scale. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 4(2), 303-346.
- Ford, D. (2014). Why education must be multicultural. *Gifted Child Today*, 37(1), 59-62.
- Fraenkel, J., Wallen, N., & Huyn, H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Fullan, M. (2017). *Indelible leadership: Always leave them learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Garibaldi, A. (1992). Educating and motivating African American males to succeed. *Journal of Negro Education*, 61(1), 4-11.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106-115.
- Gay, G. (2003). Developing cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection in pre-service teacher education. *Theory into Practice*, 42(3), 181-187.
- Gay, G. (2013). Teaching to and through cultural diversity. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 43(1), 48-70.
- Gay, G., & Kirkland, K. (2003). Developing cultural critical consciousness and self reflection in preservice teacher education. *Theory Into Practice*, 42(3), 181-187.

- Gist, C., Jackson, I., Nightengale-Lee, B., & Allen, K. (2019). *Culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher education*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from [https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/60441873/CRP\\_in\\_Teacher\\_Ed20190830-77463-1o8u4vw.pdf?1567190663=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DCulturally\\_Responsive\\_Pedagogy\\_in\\_Teache.pdf&Expires=1609202718&Signature=GeGqOXYhWjrKEYW0LdOjxaSE6HeM](https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/60441873/CRP_in_Teacher_Ed20190830-77463-1o8u4vw.pdf?1567190663=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DCulturally_Responsive_Pedagogy_in_Teache.pdf&Expires=1609202718&Signature=GeGqOXYhWjrKEYW0LdOjxaSE6HeM)
- Givens, J., Nasir, N., & McKinney De Royston, M. (2016). Modeling manhood: Reimagining Black male identities. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 47(2), 167-185.
- Godin, G., & Kok, G. (1996). The theory of planned behavior: A review of its applications to health-related behaviors. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 11(2), 87-98.
- Gorski, P., & Pothini, S. (2018). *Case studies on diversity and social justice education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Government Accountability Office. (2018). K-12 education: Discipline disparities for Black students, boys, and students with disabilities. Washington, DC: United States Government Accountability Office. Retrieved from [www.gao.gov/products/gao-18-258](http://www.gao.gov/products/gao-18-258)
- Grace, J., & Nelson, S. (2019). "Tryin to survive:" Black male students' understandings of the role of race and racism in the school-to-prison pipeline. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 18(4), 664-680.
- Graham, S., & Nevarez, C. (2017). Transformative leadership: A multicultural platform for advancing African American male student success. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 8(2), 69-81.
- Granger, N. (2013). Marginalization: The pendulum swings both ways. Saybrook University Forum. Retrieved from <https://www.saybrook.edu/unbound/>



- Greasley, P. (2008). Quantitative data analysis using SPSS: An introduction for health and social sciences. *Primary Health Care Research & Development*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/primary-health-care-research-and-development/article/p-greasley-2008-quantitative-data-analysis-using-spss-an-introduction-for-health-and-social-science-berkshire-england-open-university-press-illustrated-144-pp-169>
- Grissom, J., Egalite, A., & Lindsay, C. (2021). *How principals affect students and schools: A systematic synthesis of two decades of research*. New York: The Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/how-principals-affect-students-and-schools-a-systematic-synthesis-of-two-decades-of-research.aspx>
- Grogan, M. (2017). Educational leadership and social justice in the United States. *Bildung and Erziehung*, 67(3), 299-312.
- Gullo, G., & Beachum, F. (2019). Framing implicit bias impact reduction in social justice leadership. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies*, 3(3).
- Heale, R., & Twycross, A. (2015). Validity and reliability in quantitative studies. *Evid Based Nurs*, 18(3), 66-67.
- Hill-Berry, N. (2019). Expanding leadership capacity toward social justice. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 4(3), 720-742.
- Holland, S. (1996). An educational mentoring and academic support model for inner city African American boys. *Journal of Negro Education*, 65, 315-321.

- Holton, E., Bates, R., Bookter, A., & Yamkovenko, V. (2007). Convergent and divergent validity of the learning transfer system inventory. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 18(3), 385-419.
- Hotchkins, B. (2016). African American males navigate racial microaggressions. *Teachers College Record*, 118(6), 1-36.
- Howard, T., & Terry, C. (2011). Culturally responsive pedagogy for African American students: Promising programs and practices for enhanced academic performance. *Teaching Education*, 22(4), 345-362.
- Huber, S. (2004). School leadership and leadership development: Adjusting leadership theories and development to values and the core purpose of school. *Journal of Education Administration*, 42(6), 669-684.
- Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Hein, S., Wang, K., Roberts, A., Cui, J., & Dilig, R. (2020). *The condition of education*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020144.pdf>
- Irving, M., & Hudley, C. (2008). Cultural identification and academic achievement among African American males. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 19(4), 676-698.
- Johnson, L., & Bryan, N. (2017). Using our voices, losing our bodies: Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, and the spirit murders of Black male professors in the academy. *Race and Ethnicity Education*, 20(2), 163-177.
- Jolly, S., Cooper, J., & Chepyator - Thomson, J. (2020). An examination of culturally responsive programming of Black student-athletes' holistic development at division I historically White institutions (HWIs). *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 73-90.

- Kafele, B. (2021). *The equity & social justice education: Critical questions for improving opportunities and outcomes for Black students*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Kemp-Graham, K. Y. (2015). Missed opportunities: Preparing, aspiring, school leaders for bold social justice school leadership needed for 21st century schools. *NCPEA International Journal of Education Leadership Preparation*, 10(21), 99-125.
- Khalifia, M. (2018). *Culturally responsive school leadership*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Khalifia, M., Gooden, M., & Davis, J. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 1272-1311.
- Kieran, L., & Anderson, C. (2019). Connecting universal design for learning with culturally responsive teaching. *Education and Urban Society*, 51(9), 1202-1216.
- Knight-Manuel, M., Marciano, J., Wilson, M., Jackson, I., Vernikoff, L., Zuckerman, K., & Watson, V. (2019). "It's all possible": Urban educator's perspectives on creating a culturally relevant, schoolwide, college-going culture for Black and Latino male students. *Urban Education*, 54(1), 35-64.
- Kotter, J. (2012). *Leading change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.
- Krasnoff, B. L. (2015). Leadership qualities of effective principals. *Education Northwest*, 1-10.
- Kulkarni, S., Stacy, J., & Kertyzia. (2020). A collaborative self-study: Advocating for democratic principles and culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher education. *The Educational Forum*, 84(1), 4-17.
- Kunjufu, J. (1982). *Countering the conspiracy to destroy black boys*. (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL :  
Jawanza Kunjufu.

- Kwan, P. (2020). Is transformational leadership theory passe? Revisiting the integrative effect of instructional leadership and transformational leadership on student outcomes. *Educational Administrators Quarterly*, 56(2), 321-349.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children* (Second ed.). San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass.
- Landau, S., & Everitt, B. (2004). *A handbook of statistical analyses using SPSS*. United States of America : Chapman & Hall/CRC Press.
- Lane-Steele, L. (2020). My brother's keeper, my sister's neglect: A critique and explanation of single-sex initiatives for Black boys. *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law*, 39(1), 60-109.
- Lee, C. (1992). *Empowering young Black males*. Ann Arbor, MI: ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse .
- Lee, J., Cerreto, F., & Lee, J. (2010). Theory of planned behavior and teachers' decisions regarding use of educational technology. *13(1)*, 152-164.
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2019). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership and Management*, 1-15.
- Leonard, J., Mitchell, M., Barnes-Johnson, J., Unertl, A., Outka-Hill, J., Robinson, R., & Hester-Croff, C. (2018). Preparing teachers to engage rural students in computational thinking through robotics, game design, and culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 69(4), 386-407.

- Lewis, C., Butler, B., Bonner, F., & Joubert, M. (2010). African American male discipline patterns and school district responses resulting impact on academic achievement: Implications for urban educators and policy makers. *Journal of African American Males in Education, 1*(1), 7-25.
- Liberman, M., & Fontaine, J. (2015). *Reducing harms to boys and young men of color from criminal justice system involvement*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/39551/2000095-Reducing-Harms-to-Boys-and-Young-Men-of-Color-from-Criminal-Justice-System-Involvement.pdf>
- Lynch, M. (2016). Black boys in crisis: Why are so many of them in special education? *The Advocate*. Retrieved 2020 , from <https://www.theedadvocate.org/black-boys-crisis-many-special-education/>
- Madden, J., Ellen, P., & Ajzen, I. (1992). A comparison of theory of planned behavior and the theory of reasoned action. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 18*(1 ), 3-9.
- Mayfield, V., & Garrison-Wade, D. (2015). Culturally responsive practices as whole school reform. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 16* , 1-15.
- McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Wang, X., Hein, S., Diliberti, M., . . . Barmer, A. (2019). *The condition of education 2019*. Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education. Retrieved from [www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019144.pdf](http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019144.pdf)
- McGee, K. (2021). Texas critical race theory bill limiting teaching of current events signed into law. Austin, TX: The Texas Tribune. Retrieved from <https://www.texastribune.org/2021/06/15/abbott-critical-race-theory-law/>

- Mette, I., Nieuwenhuizen, L., & Hvidston, D. (2016). Teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy and the impact on leadership preparation: Lessons for future reform efforts. *NCPEA Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 11*(1), 2-20.
- Miller, C., & Martin, B. (2015). Principal preparedness for leading in demographically changing schools: Where is the social justice training? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 43*(1), 129-151.
- Miller, M., Furman, M., & Jackson, L. (2018). Behavioral intentions of performance on student evaluation of course quality: An application of the theory of planned behavior. *Academy of Educational Leadership, 22*(2), 1-12.
- Miller, P. (2019). The political dichotomy of school leadership: Policy, practice, social justice-evidence from sixteen countries. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership, 4*(3), 469-492.
- Moore, J., Heinfield, M., & Owens, D. (2008). African American males in special education; Their attitudes and perceptions toward high school counselors and school counseling services. *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(7), 907-927.
- Morris, E., & Perry, B. (2016). The punishment gap: School suspension and racial disparities in achievement. *Society for the Study of Social Problems*. Oxford University Press.  
Retrieved from <http://socpro.oxfordjournals.org/>
- My Brother's Keeper. (2016). *My brother's keeper 2016 progress report. Two years of expanding opportunity*. Washington, DC: The White House. Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/images/MBK-2016-Progress-Report.pdf>

- Nabizadeh, S., Haijian, S., Sheikhan, Z., & Rafiei, F. (2019). Prediction of academic achievement based on learning strategies and outcome expectations among medical students. *BMC Medical Education, 19*(99), 1-11.
- Nance, J. (2016). Over-disciplining of students, racial bias, and the school-to-prison pipeline. *University of Richmond Law Review, 50*(1), 1063-1074.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). Percentage distribution of public school principals, by race/ethnicity and state: 2017–18. Washington, DC: United States Department of Education. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/tables/ntps1718\\_19110501\\_a1s.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/tables/ntps1718_19110501_a1s.asp)
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). Characteristics of public school principals. *The condition of education*. Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from [www.nces.ed.gov](http://www.nces.ed.gov)
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). Characteristics of public school teachers. Washington, DC: National Center of Education for Education Statistics, United States Department of Education. Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_clr.asp?referer=raceindicators](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_clr.asp?referer=raceindicators)
- National School Boards Association. (2020). Black students in the condition of education 2020. Alexandria, VA: NSBA. Retrieved from <https://www.nsba.org/Perspectives/2020/black-students-condition-education>
- Noguera, P., & Alicea, J. (2020). Structural racism and the urban geography of education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 102*(3), 51-56.
- Northhouse, P. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (Eighth ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Obama, B. (2020). Barack Obama: The 2020 60 minutes interview. *60 Minutes*. CBS News.
- Ogden, S. (2017). Becoming an educational leader for social justice: A micro/meso/macro examination of a southern U.S. principal. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership*, 2(1), 54-76.
- Ozudogru, F. (2018). The readiness of prospective teachers for culturally responsive teaching. *Acta Didactica Napocensia*, 11, 1-12.
- Peltzer, H. (2020). Black boys fail in school because educators fail them. The Philadelphia Citizen. Retrieved from [www.thephiladelphiacitizen.org/failing-black-boys/](http://www.thephiladelphiacitizen.org/failing-black-boys/)
- Petrilli, M. (2017). Education is still a sturdy path to upward mobility. Washington, DC: Fordham Institute. Retrieved from [www.fordhaminstitute.org/national/commentary/education-still-sturdy-path-upward-mobility](http://www.fordhaminstitute.org/national/commentary/education-still-sturdy-path-upward-mobility)
- Powell, H. (2018). The influence of selected noncognitive variables on the academic success of African American high school males. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 9(1), 40-70.
- Price, P., Jhangiani, R., & Chiang, I. (2015). *Research methods in psychology*. (2nd Canadian Edition ed.). Pressbooks.
- Queiros, A., Daniel, F., & Almeida, F. (2017). Strengths and limitations of qualitative research methods. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 3(9), 369-385.
- Quigley, M., & Mitchell, A. (2018). "What works": Applying critical race praxis to the design of educational and mentoring interventions for African American males. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 9(2), 74-102.



- Rasheed, D., Brown, J., Doyle, S., & Jennings, P. (2020). The effect of teacher-child race/ethnicity matching and classroom diversity on children's socioemotional and academic skills. *Child Development, 91*(3), 597-618.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Roegman, R., & Woulfin, S. (2019). Got theory: Reconceptualizing the nature of the theory-practice gap in K-12 educational leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration, 57*(1), 2-20.
- Salkind, N. (2010). *Encyclopedia of research design, 1-0*. Thousand Oaks , CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. .
- Santamaria, L., & Santamaria, A. (2015). Counteracting educational injustices with applied critical leadership: Culturally responsive practices promoting sustainable change. *International Journal of Multicultural Education, 17*(1), 22-42.
- Schlechty, P. (1997). *Inventing better schools: An action plan for educational reform*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Schott Foundation. (2020). Loving cities index. *Creating loving systems across communities to provide all students an opportunity to thrive*. Retrieved from <http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/loving-cities-2020.pdf>
- Shaked, H. (2019). Social justice leadership, instructional leadership, and the goals of schooling. *International Journal of Educational Managment, 1-15*.
- Shatzer, R., Caldarella, P., Hallam, P., & Brown, B. (2014). Comparing the effects of instructional and transformational leadership on student achievement: Implications for practice. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(4), 445-459.

- Shields, C., & Hesbol, K. (2020). Transformative leadership approaches to inclusion, equity, and social justice. *Journal of School Leadership, 30*(1), 3-22.
- Smith, C. (2009). Deconstructing the pipeline: Evaluating school-to-prison equal protection cases through a structural racism framework. *Fordham Urban Law Journal, 36*(5), 1009-1049.
- Stullich, S., Morgan, I., & Schak, O. (2016). State and local expenditures on corrections and education. *United States Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Services*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/other/expenditures-corrections-education/brief.pdf>
- Taylor, P., Kochlar, R., Fry, R., & Motel, S. (2011). *Wealth gaps rise to record highs between Whites, Blacks and Hispanics*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from [www.pewsocialtrends.org](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org)
- Texas Education Agency. (2014). Chapter 149 commissioner's rule concerning educator standards. *Principal Standards*. Austin, TX: TEA.
- Texas Education Agency. (2019). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2017-2018*. . Austin: TEA . Retrieved from [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/dropcomp\\_2017-18\\_v3.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/dropcomp_2017-18_v3.pdf)
- Texas Education Agency. (2019). *Standard technical processes*. Austin, TX: TEA. Retrieved from <https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/student-assessment-overview/technical-digest-2018-2019>
- Texas Education Agency. (2020). *Enrollment in Texas public schools 2019-2020*. Austin, TX. Retrieved from [www.tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll\\_2019-20.pdf](http://www.tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll_2019-20.pdf)

Texas Education Agency. (2020). Texas assessment. *Texas assessment management system*.

TEA. Retrieved from <https://www.texasassessment.com/staar/administrators/>

Texas Education Agency. (2021). STAAR resources. Austin, TX: TEA. Retrieved from

<https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/staar/staar-resources>

Texas Education Agency. (2021). Texas principal standards. *Texas Principal Evaluation &*

*Support System*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency. Retrieved from

[www.tpress.org/principal/standards/](http://www.tpress.org/principal/standards/)

Texas Education Region IV. (2020). About region IV. Houston, TX: Texas Education Agency.

Retrieved from [www.esc4.net/about/about-region-4](http://www.esc4.net/about/about-region-4)

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools. (2018). *Confronting The Education Debt: We Owe*

*Billions to Black, Brown and Low-income Students and Their Schools*. Retrieved 2020 ,

from <http://educationdebt.reclaimourschools.org/>

Theoharis, G. (2009). *The school leaders our children deserve: Seven keys to equity, social*

*justice, and school reform*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Truscott, D., & Stenhouse, V. (2018). A mixed-methods study of teacher dispositions and

culturally relevant teaching. *Urban Education*, 00(0), 1-32.

United States Government Accountability Office. (2018). *Discipline disparities for Black*

*students, boys, and students with disabilities*. Retrieved from

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/690828.pdf>

Warner, T. (2020). Leading for social justice: A call to action to improve society. *Journal of*

*Organizational & Educational Leadership*, 5(1), 2-29.

Warren, C. (2017). Empathy, teacher dispositions, and preparation for cultural responsive

pedagogy. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 00(0), 1-15.

- Warren, C., Douglas, T., & Howard, T. (2016). In their own words: Erasing deficits and exploring what works to improve K-12 and postsecondary Black male school achievement. *Teachers College Record*, 118(6), 1-4.
- Webster, C., & Knaus, C. (2020). I don't think they like us: School suspensions as anti-Black male practice. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 12(1), 66-88.
- Welsh, R., & Little, S. (2018). The school discipline dilemma: A comprehensive review of disparities and alternative approaches. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(5), 752-794.
- Whitaker, M., & Valtierra, M. (2018). The dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy scale. *Journal of MultiCultural Education*, 1, 10-24.
- Williams, J. (2017). Introduction. In A. Esmail, A. Pitre, & A. Aragon (Eds.), *Perspectives on diversity, equity, and social justice in educational leadership*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Wolf, K. (2014). Arrest decision making by school resource officers. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 12, 137-151.
- Wolf, L. (2017). Hear my voice: Strengthening the college pipeline for young men of color in California. *Education Trust-West*. Retrieved from <https://west.edtrust.org/resource/hear-my-voice/>
- Zemblayas, M. (2010). The emotional aspects of leadership for social justice: Implications for leadership programs. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 48(5), 611-625.
- Zemblayas, M. (2020). The affective atmospheres of democratic education: Pedagogical and political implications for challenging right-wing populism. *Discourse: Studies in Cultural Politics of Education*, 1-15.

**APPENDICES**

## **CURRICULUM VITA**

Brian Gibson  
[bgibson@lcisd.org](mailto:bgibson@lcisd.org)

### **EDUCATION**

2021: Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas  
Doctor of Philosophy – Department of Education Leadership, ABD  
Dissertation: An Investigation of Principals’ Social Justice Leadership and Black Male Academic Achievement

2007: Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas  
Master’s in Educational Leadership

2001: Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas  
Bachelor of Science in Health Education

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Elementary Principal, Lamar Consolidated ISD	2014 - present
Elementary Asst. Principal, Fort Bend ISD	2008 - 2012
Math Instructional Specialist, Fort Bend ISD	2006-2007
2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, Fort Bend ISD	2003 - 2006

**HONORS AND AWARDS**

2021 National Distinguished Principal Finalist

**MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL/PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated  
Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association  
Texas Area Alliance of Black School Educators