

About the Editors

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Dr. Ballenger's research agenda consists of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Leadership for Social Justice, Evaluating the Efficacy of Principal Preparation Programs, Global Competence, and Mentoring Women Leaders in Higher Education. She has presented her research at regional, state, national, and international conferences totaling over 100 presentations. She presented her research on *Leadership for Social Justice* at the Oxford Roundtable in London. Additionally, she presented her research on *Mentoring Female Leaders in Higher Education* at the International Conference in Athens, Greece.

Dr. Ballenger has published over 50 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She is the co-author of six books. Her new co-edited book with Dr. Harris (lead author) and Dr. Cummings (third author), *Standards-based Leadership: A Case Study Book for the Principals*, offers a bridge from the traditional higher education classroom to authentic leadership practices. Dr. Ballenger's professional career spans over 40 years. Before entering the University, she served as Regional Director of the Accountability and Accreditation Division at the Texas Education Agency. Additionally, she has served as Central Office Administrator, teacher, consultant, counselor, and principal in several public school districts.



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*The Fiery Melting Pot:
Immigrant Women and Girls
in Pursuit of Social Justice*

Darlene Russell and Julia Ballenger

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Special Issue Editors

Darlene Russell and Julia Ballenger



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Editors' Introduction

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Darlene's Prologue

My paternal grandfather, whom I was told, had a molasses-thick Bajan tongue. It was this very accent that he tried to camouflage by saying little. My grandfather, James Ferguson, was an undocumented bricklayer and father of four who lived in Brooklyn, New York entering the United States through Florida. I never learned about the details of his traverse to Brooklyn nor to the USA. It has remained a hermetically sealed story leaving many questions about what he left behind in Barbados, what he brought to the States and the cultural labyrinth that he had to negotiate as a black man in New York in the 1940s with an uncommon "whitestream" foreign accent and little formal education. My grandfather was an immigrant, whom I ascertained from stories, tried to live his life undetected and a quiet part of the scenery like the bricks he laid.

As I prepared for this special issue on immigration, I reflected on my family's lineage and our collective U.S. destination narrative. I thought about my maternal grandparents and their decision to ride the wave of the Great Migration from the foothills of North and South Carolina to tenements in New York City (Great Migration, 2010). However, as I pondered deeper I remembered the grandfather whose knee I never sat on or the voice I never heard. He was a foreigner on U.S. soil. His story was an almost forgotten immigration story. And not because granddaddy Ferguson did not matter but because how he, like many documented and undocumented immigrants today, was quarantined by the social constructs of U.S. society into the asphyxiating chamber rooms of racism, classism, and linguicism.

It was after my paternal grandfather's death and one of my uncle's inquisitive compulsions to investigate our family tree that my grandfather's Caribbean roots were unearthed. Through some verbal ancestry mining here and there from family friends and some feeble documentation, my uncle was able to cobble my grandfather's background. Even though it was inferred that my grandfather was from Barbados, it could not be completely substantiated. So, it is because of a pure guess and deep yearn to have a place on the genealogy map and to reverence a man with a twang I never knew that I claim Barbados.

Julia's Prologue

African American life in the United States has been framed by migrations, forced and free. A forced migration from Africa, the transatlantic slave trade, carried Black people to the Americas. A second forced migration, the internal slave trade, transported them from the Atlantic coast to the interior of the American South. A third migration, this time initiated largely, but not always,

by Black Americans, carried Black people from the rural South to the urban North (Great Migration, 2010).

We now see African American life again being transformed by another migration, this time, a global one, as people of African descent from all parts of the world enter the United States. Whether persons of African descent came from Saint Dominque in 1791 and settled in Louisiana, left the Bahamas in the nineteenth century to develop Miami and Key West, Florida, or recently moved from Nigeria to Texas, the African Diaspora has contributed immensely to the fabric of African America and the nation. They too, with their specificities, are part of the African American experience in the United States (Frazier, 2005).

My oral and written history reveals that my maternal and paternal great-great-grandparents were involuntary immigrants to the United States by way of the transatlantic slave trade. After Slavery had ended, my ancestors gained their freedom. According to the U.S. Census, these family members were classified as Mulattos as many of my forefathers. Normally the designation of Mulatto means a person born of one Black parent and one White parent or the child of two Mulatto parents. While I do not have a written history of the maternal side of the family, I have a written and digital history of the paternal side of the family thanks to ancestry.com.

Upon gaining his freedom, Moses Warren, my paternal great-great-grandfather settled in the southern states of Alabama and Georgia. Later, members of the family moved to Texas. Not all of the Warren family remained in the South. After the Civil War, many of my relatives moved to the North and West seeking better educational opportunities and working conditions.

Probably more than any other country, the United States of America is “a nation of immigrants.” African Americans, the Americans most affected by and shaped by migration, have largely been obscured by America’s great migration and immigration tradition. Of the 6.5 million people who migrated to the Americas between 1492 and 1776, five of six were Africans (Frazier, 2005).

In October 2012 at the 38th Annual Research on Women and Education (RWE) Conference, the organization’s Diversity Task Force focused on immigration – women, families and the law. Nationally, during this time, the immigration topic garnered a different kind of attention given President Obama signed The DREAM Act into law in June 2012. The DREAM Act would aim to stop the deportment of undocumented youth who arrived at the country as children. The American Educational Research Association (AERA) Special Interest Group (sig), Research on Women and Education (RWE) is a pro-justice organization that advocates for the advancement of females in educational spaces, communities, careers, and research. Hence, RWE’s Diversity Task Force, under the leadership of Darlene Russell, was interested in how policy orbiting around immigration would impact the lives of women, girls, and families. So much more was needed for immigration justice, policy, and reform beyond the executive order of The Dream Act.

The goals of the Diversity Task Force plenary meeting was to discuss the issues surrounding immigration, women and the law, and to write a policy statement on our position and submit to state and federal government to challenge and transform America’s immigration laws. After we, educators, community activists, graduate students, higher education administrators, and researchers, participated in an extensive critical discourse on immigration and volleying policy statement ideas across the room, Julia Ballenger introduced the idea of writing manuscripts on the topic for a book or journal and disseminating to legislators, policy makers, and educators.

The purpose of this special journal issue is to interrogate, agitate, and unpack the discourse surrounding women and immigration in the United States. This special issue includes

discourse that challenge and counter media, legislative policy, and access issues for immigrant women and girls. Moreover, in this journal, the authors aim to explore social justice issues at the intersectionality of race, class, language, and national identity as it pertains to the narratives of immigrant women, girls, and their families, particularly vulnerable populations while pushing forward toward change. The articles in this issue include the voices of indigenous and historically marginalized immigrant groups as well as these voices as authors through autoethnography, personal narratives, and mixed methods.

Each author acknowledges the xenophobic chorus in the United States with politicians, educators, policymakers, and everyday people as singers. More than often, it is the immigrant of color who is the targeted audience of the xenophobic chorus. One of the singers in this chorus currently receiving national attention is Republican Presidential candidate, Donald Trump. However, he is not the lone xenophobe in a campaign against immigrants of color. It is a stance that is covertly and overtly embraced by many. The identity and selfhood of the immigrant of color are constantly bombarded with a master-narrative replete with racial, sociopolitical, cultural, economic, and linguistic context (Orelus, 2011). The all-female authors who are featured in this special issue, and the participants in their studies refuse to be relegated to the margins of obscurity in the United States or beyond. Through their research, they have assumed the stance of social justice agent, advocate, and activist. This issue aims to add to the tapestry of the immigrant narrative, which is unequivocally and indelibly the American narrative.

The first study in this special issue, *Immigration Across Cultures Throughout History: Deconstructing the Myths and Misconception in Teacher Education*, a participatory action research (PAR), reimagined the 21st-century curriculum by calling for a “culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy.” Author Melda N. Yildiz examined the experiences and perspectives of teacher candidates, who were all first or second-generation immigrants, in social justice transdisciplinary curriculum planning as it relates to global literacy and “the power of immigration and diversity in developing economies.” The three-prong participatory action research includes: “self-reflection, standards and theoretical framework, and curriculum development.”

The Kean University scholar also captured the role of media and lasting potency of semiotics on “global competency skills in teacher education” to deconstruct, interrogate, and dismantle the anti-immigration campaign that continues to imbue this nation. The teacher candidates in this participatory action research were pushed to consider other points of view and different frameworks to scrutinize immigration policies, history of immigration across cultures, and their immigration narrative. Additionally, this article offers a historical appraisal of immigration in the United States. The author concluded that a global competency-centric curriculum “prepares a new generation to be socially responsible members of a multicultural, democratic society.”

The next study in this special issue, *Children of Immigration: Developmental Approach/An Imperative for Social Justice*, a theoretical analysis, examined the utility of a social justice framework in advocating “equity for the immigrant child” in the United States. Authors Effie N. Christie and Maureen V. Himchak offer a historical backdrop of the profile and population shifts of first and second-generation immigrant children in the United States. This backdrop drapery includes the “issues faced by immigrant children including language barriers, lack of decent housing, clothing, separation from parents who have been deported or incarcerated through immigration raids.”

In addition to the demographic landscape of immigrant children in the United States, the authors highlight the obligatory responsibilities of governing bodies such as the United Nations and the United States Immigration Services to immigrant children. The authors also describe the national immigration policies and practices systemically in place to pulverize the ‘American Dream’ for the immigrant child. Scholars Christie and Himchak cited that the “immigration situation, especially regarding immigrant children and the undocumented immigrant is more complex in that it contributes to the social climate that is polemic and contentious,” which is ever so apparent in U.S. politics and mainstream media. The authors posited that the social justice framework grounded in the quadrant concept: “*commutative, distributive, contributive and restorative*” justice can assist “to ensure justice for all people including the child who is often treated as an economic burden and an appendage to the immigration dilemma.” Christie and Himchak challenge not only educators but also U.S. society as a whole with the question: “Who will advocate for the immigrant child?” This question resonates in us all and propels agency for this nation’s “most precious commodity” – the children.

The focus on youth, particularly African immigrant adolescent girls is continued in a qualitative exploratory case study in *Fostering a Humanizing Pedagogy: Imagined Possibilities for African Immigrant Girls*. Crystal Chen, Karishma Desai, and Michelle Knight-Manuel of Teachers College, Columbia University investigate how “a girls’ empowerment program designed and implemented by an African feminist community-based organization, Sauti Yetu Center for African Women” fosters “critical care of the self”, leadership, and a deeper sense of humanity in African immigrant females. This study is particularly needful given “African immigrants face a sharp brand of xenophobic racism...” and “...there is limited research about the schooling experiences of these young people.”

Through the lenses of critical pedagogy and Black feminism, the scholars used a humanizing pedagogical framework to examine how the girls tackle “raced-gendered issues” as they consider “self-defining” their multiple identities, culture, and understanding of the world. The themes that emerged were: critical inquiry, self-determination, and self-advocacy. The findings revealed that the participants in Sauti Yetu’s Girl’s Empowerment and Leadership Initiative (GELI) grew in their consciousness of care for the self from “critical literacy as reading, writing, and speaking” about socio-cultural and educational issues ranging from wearing a hijab to early marriage, and female genital mutilation. The authors highlight the meaningful work that takes place within the Girl’s Empowerment and Leadership Initiative that gingerly pushes girls to construct and re-construct “raced-classed gendered narratives that represent them,” which tacitly celebrates the collective immigrant female care of self.

The theoretical trifecta of the article, *Nanny, Momma, Portia, and Us: Two Black Jamaican Immigrant Women Conquer the Ph.D. and Navigate Academe* included intersectionality, womanism, and the Afro-Caribbean immigrant experience that is peppered with an undergirding of Dubois’ “double-consciousness.” In this scholarly personal narrative (SPN) grounded in autobiography narrative inquiry, the authors Cheryll Albold and Cherrel Miller-Dyce, adroitly and poignantly share their experiential journeys in earning doctoral degrees and the substantial impact various women played in their lives. Narratives of resilience and triumph of Black women in higher education research have been historically marginalized, silenced, and ostracized. Albold and Miller-Dyce, Mayo and Elon scholars, respectively, give a hearty sisterly nod to “scholars within the Black feminist thought and critical race theory traditions who have written about legitimizing the voices and experiences of Black women in an academy where majoritarian and Eurocentric stories are seen as normative.”

With an interior monologue quality, the authors examined their utility of “the pedagogies of resilience, connectivity, and womanism” to complete their doctoral degrees as they pay robust homage to their “othermothers” – “Nanny, Mama” - and “Portia,” the first female prime minister of Jamaica. In their “ME-research and research,” each author meticulously framed her Jamaican familial story cradled in perseverance, hope, love, and resilience along with how they mentored each other as “warm demanders.” In this scholarly personal narrative, Albold and Miller-Dyce discovered a phenomenological finding of what they coin an “immigrant education ethic,” which ultimately served as their navigational compass and trajectory for success as Black immigrant female students in higher education in the United States. The “immigrant education ethic” phenomenon is experiential-based nestled in socio-cultural and critical race theories.

The fifth manuscript in this special issue, *Narratives of Foreign-Born International Teachers: Implications for Dialogic Leadership for Social Justice* written by Makini Beck and Christine Nganga, included the narratives of twelve foreign-born international teachers from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Columbia, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, Kenya, and Romania. The South Dakota State University scholars used their “stories of experience” as data to explore how these foreign-born teachers’ transitioned to living and teaching in the United States and becoming educators for social justice. Specifically, the authors utilized Pedersen’s (1995) five stages of acculturation to describe the transitional shifts and growths of these teachers in their professional, personal, and situated teacher dimensions. These shifts allowed the authors to see the identity resources they developed and used as lenses to frame their advocacy and sociopolitical work in U.S. schools.

The findings revealed that these teachers did not start out as social justice educators. In fact, they were shocked to discover that systems of poverty, racism, and oppression existed in a world superpower such as the United States. However, these teachers drew from their experiences of racial intolerance in the South and created a safe space in the classroom for immigrant students to identify and speak out about their similar experiences. All five teachers enacted a caring activist pedagogy that was built on close relationships, candid discussions, and willingness to teach through a social activist lens. They used their classrooms as platforms for exploring larger societal injustices and provided students with the social competencies needed to succeed in the classroom and society.

The sixth manuscript, *Tilt and Pivot: Immigrant Transgressions through Autoethnography*, authored by Yen C. Verhoeven, presented an autoethnographic study of an immigrant Vietnamese teacher and scholar perspective of growing up in America. Through a personal narrative, the author reflects on her history using vignettes that connect and address immigrant exclusion, re-inscriptions of oppression, and her development as an agent for social justice. Feminist standpoint theory is used as a lens to examine the alternative realities formed through her personal narrative. Scholar Verhoeven describes her experiences in a self-reflection. She shares her inner emotions concerning both social and cultural constructions and invites critical, transformative reflection from the readers.

Finally, the last manuscript was written by scholar Damara Goff Paris, *Intersectionality of Native American and Deaf Women: Cross-Cultural Parallels in Historical Oppression and Identity Formation on Leadership Development*, focused on the lived experiences of American Indian Deaf women. Through a phenomenological-narrative study, the five participants in this empirical research study representing a range of ages, educational backgrounds, and tribal affiliations discussed their identities as women, Native Americans, and members of a cultural and

linguistic Deaf community evolved despite the oppressive views and perspectives of mainstream society.

The author used a phenomenological-narrative qualitative study to explore how women who navigate between two cultures and have been historically oppressed established their identities as leaders. This empirical research study documented commonalities evident among the participants' lived experiences as Deaf, American Indian women who were considered leaders of the Native American Deaf community.

For this manuscript, the thematic topics that shared the most commonalities and addressed intersectionality of oppression across gender, disability, and race, as well as cross-cultural experiences while developing leadership attributes were: service, support, resiliency, self-reliance, evolving identities, job discrimination, and oppression and internalized oppression. The findings revealed that the shared stories of the participants demonstrated the real need to increase focus on the provision of opportunities for Native American Deaf women to find their place within both communities through the guidance of role models. The stark realities demonstrated through their stories were that not one of the participants recalled growing up under the influence of women like themselves-Native American, Deaf and female. As young girls, they became the role models they never had. By sharing their experiences, they provided hope for the next generations. Their voices will finally be "heard."

Conclusion

The all-American story is the immigrant story; it is inextricably one. There are cities all over the country especially metropolises like Birmingham, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New Jersey, and New York with pulsating immigrant populations. The American demographic is rooted in the immigrant experience. The struggle is still here – it is palatable and palpable. Although this is an immigrant nation, African Americans paved the way for every immigrant of color in the strides made with civil rights, educational access, economic attainment, military recognition, fair housing, and other equality and equity advancements.

The articles featured in this special issue not only address the ubiquitous kerfuffle over immigration policies and practices in this country but also the positionality of resilience and advocacy of immigrant women and girls. The raw grit and pure agency in the articles beckon readers to see themselves and place hands on the plow in their vineyard to work toward social justice immigration reform. The United States DNA can be seen as an intricate stew of involuntary immigration and willful immigration in the fiery melting pot. Each article sizzles with fire, and fire is power. With grace and intentionality, the authors and study participants surmount the fire and spark other amazing blazing fires in the pursuit of social justice for immigrant women and girls.

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Immigration Across Cultures Throughout History: Deconstructing the Myths and Misconception in Teacher Education

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



Melda N. Yildiz
Kean University

Situated within the context of teaching and learning in pre-K-16, this participatory action research (PAR) project aims to advance scientific knowledge of social justice education as a means to promote global literacy skills in teacher education programs and attempts to address deep-rooted ideologies to social inequities by creating a space in teacher education and general education courses to re-examine current curriculum as opposed to transformative, collaborative, and inclusive curriculum. In order to develop culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, teacher candidates who participated in the PAR investigated the transformative teaching models through the lens of multicultural education, semiotics, and media literacy in global education context. For their lesson plans, the participants deconstructed and assessed the national and local curriculum and standards; interviewed pre-K-12 students, educators and school library media specialists, and documented their stories in order to articulate the realities of conditions in schools through their research, analysis, and dialogue. Through the rediscovery process, teacher candidates explored and designed strategies, curricula, and programs for improving student outcomes, and integrated multiple literacies as a means of further developing K-12 students' global competencies and 21st century skills while re-thinking and re-designing innovative learning activities.

“A democratic civilization will save itself only if it makes the language of the image into a stimulus for critical reflection, not an invitation to hypnosis.”

Umberto Eco, 1976

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As Palmer (1998) emphasizes, “They [teachers] are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves...” and teacher education programs need to prepare future teachers to be more interconnected with local, national, and global issues and be able to use new media and technologies. They need to be able to differentiate facts from propaganda.

As the current research on biology and earth science indicates, race is a social construct and *Homo sapiens* have not lived on earth long enough to evolve into subspecies (PBS, 2015). In our Participatory Action Research (PAR), we studied the history, culture of immigration while dismantling myths and misconceptions and rethinking the role and the power of immigration, and diversity on developing economies as opposed to a challenge or obstacle for a peaceful world.

In math and science courses for elementary education majors, teacher candidates were given “Draw a Scientist” task. Just like the previous studies confirmed, our teacher candidates mostly drew a picture of a male. Through the use of participatory action research (PAR) methodology, the participants were engaged in a participatory dialogue and semester long curriculum to design activities to rethink the role of gender, immigration, and race in elementary education.

As the transformative education intersects with race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, global education framework can be used as a tool for social justice education. Borrowing and extending the work of critical theorists, particularly, Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire, participants studied the Transformative Critical Pedagogy to teaching and learning in the second half of the 21st century.

We explored three key topics in order to understand the educational experiences of teacher candidates: the wide range of meanings they associate with social justice and the role of media literacy education in teacher education; the impact of developing project-based globally connected, linguistically and culturally projects on teacher candidates’ global competencies and 21st century skills; and the ways in which they respond to transdisciplinary, globally connected, culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum through developing media literacy skills for K-12 students.

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The study investigated 20 students (16 female and 4 male) in teacher education programs and two teacher education faculty. The teacher candidates represented five different subject fields (i.e., biology, math, social studies, physical education and English). They participated in the action research project during Fall 2013.

Our investigation was guided by these questions:

1. AUDIENCE - What are the participants’ personal experiences and reactions to the activities? How can educators prepare students for the symbol-rich culture in which they live in and function as informed and productive citizens in a democratic society?
2. PROBLEMS - What common problems do the participants share in their activities?
3. SUGGESTIONS - What suggestions do participants provide in order to improve teaching and learning?
4. MEDIA LITERACY - What does it mean to be a literate person living in a media rich culture? Why study media?

5. DESIGN - How to design effective instruction integrating media literacy into the multicultural curriculum?

Methods

Participatory Action Research methodology is used. Methods included analysis of surveys, reflection and responses to online activities and the process of developing curriculum projects. The study explored the wide range of meanings participants associate with media education; the impact of transdisciplinary activities in K-12 curriculum; and the ways in which they integrated multicultural education in their curriculum projects.

Goals of the PAR. Participants will be able to:

- argue the challenges and advantages of integrating media literacy, semiotics and global competencies into curriculum;
- develop skills in deconstructing existing curricula, digital resources and communicating media messages;
- examine the process of integrating new media as a tool for teaching and learning;
- provide historical, educational and global point of view on the role of immigration in K-12 classroom;
- develop research-based experiential media literacy learning modules, lesson plans, assessment tools, and curriculum guides that incorporate new media and technologies across grades and subjects;
- introduce the use and the role of media literacy education in developing global competencies and 21st century skills among teacher candidates/ undergraduates; and
- demonstrate creative strategies and possibilities for engaging teacher candidates in developing project-based, globally connected activities and curriculum projects across content areas (e.g., math, geography, cultural studies, world languages).

With our teacher candidates, we explored the immigration from a global perspective, outlined statistics and the public discourse on anti-immigration (new racism) depicting immigrants as a threat. Through the stories and experiences, we argued the crucial role of media and the importance of integrating media literacy and global competency skills in teacher education in order to deconstruct media messages and identify the historical, cultural and economical reasons for anti-immigration such as increasing global inequalities between poor and rich led to immigration flows as well as the need for human resources to rebuild after wars.

We related our classroom discussions to current public debates and movement that narrowly frame the educational issues in the U.S. and reframe the social justice education, immigration policies from another point of view by reworking the “Pedagogy of Plenty” (Cole, 2008) to broaden our perspectives to address equity and social justice in global dimension not in isolation. In our innovative transdisciplinary curriculum projects, pre-service teachers had a chance to deconstruct the media, develop leadership and critical thinking skills while developing 21st century skills. Through their re-discovery process, they explored, designed, and created the strategies, curricula, and programs for improving K-12 students’ outcomes, and they gained alternative points of view on integrating media literacy skills into their teaching and renewed interest and commitment to *culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum* design.

First, we formally presented the learning modules to teacher candidates at the beginning of our PAR study. After the formal introduction and group activities, all participants explored a Gallery Walk on immigration across cultures throughout history. Gallery Walk is based on museum approach to teaching. Gallery Walk for this project was a collection of artifacts (i.e. maps, pictures, posters, audio and video clips) designed to showcase the importance and exemplary usage of geography across content areas. It also provided learning centers for each individual to interact and complete the tasks while interacting in group discussions and writing responses. There were different maps (i.e., Peterson projection) were available for participants to view and explore. The participants wrote their reactions next to these maps and discussed the significance and possibilities for incorporating these maps and technology across curriculum areas.

Self Reflections

For the PAR, each participant was invited to create a digital story answering questions such as Who am I? Why do I want to be a teacher? What is my teaching philosophy? We first wrote autobiographies and our personal stories. For example, my reflection I shared with the students is below.

I grew up in Turkey, immigrated to the U.S. in 1992 and become an American Citizen in 2004. I work harder each day because I feel responsible and fortunate. I am the only person who went to a four-year college in my family and among all my relatives. I owe so much to the people of the world who are less fortunate. I had limited access to books and educational materials while I was growing up in Turkey. That's why I do not take anything for granted. During my junior year at Bogazici University in Istanbul, I took an educational technology course that changed my life and inspired me to explore new technologies further to improve my teaching skills. Later, I came to the US to study instructional technology and multicultural education. Since September 2001, I have been developing and teaching transdisciplinary teacher education courses as well as Women and Asian Studies courses as an affiliate faculty. I was just hired as an ABD to teach educational technology courses. It was my first week. I was preparing my syllabi in the copying room when I witnessed the collapse of the World Trade Centers through the window of the university. The scream of one of our graduate students in that room is still in my ears. "Let's get rid of Palestinians and Muslims." Do I want to be passing- hiding my identity to gain social acceptance because I was not wearing traditional Muslim women clothing? Instead, I chose to share my experiences. I was invited to be in various panels and presentations that Fall semester and I realized how little I knew about Arabs, Arab Americans, and Muslim traditions around the world. It was the semester to rediscover my belief and my role as an international faculty, an immigrant women who needed to provide an alternative point of view to my colleagues and students. My teaching and scholarship have been shaped by my professional and personal experiences. This participatory action research study allowed me to focus on transforming teacher education through race, gender, global and immigration issues using new media and technologies.

Standards and Theoretical Framework

Second part of the PAR, participants studied the role of media education and brain-based research in transforming teacher education curriculum. Some of the theoretical frameworks we explored are: educational media (Barnes & Tynan, 2007), (Buckingham, 2003), media literacy (Hobbs, 1997), multi-literacies (Kress, 2001) semiotics (Chandler, 2014), and multicultural education (Nieto, 2013). Participants explored national, and international standards and frameworks such as (a) National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE); (b) Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE); (c) Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD); (d) Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21); (e) Council of Chief State School Officers' (CCSSO) and Asia Society Partnership for Global Competencies; (f) National Center on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST); and (g) International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

Studying current research and frameworks provided participants educational foundation and various discussion points. For example, they deconstructed the textbooks and educational videos using Semiotics and Media Literacy frameworks.

We watched videos and discuss the role of immigrant women and their portrayal on the media and used several theoretical frameworks and standards. Teacher candidates read articles, watched media reporting immigration statistics and discussed the role of economy in shaping the public debate on immigration. As one candidate said: “We all want a bigger slice of the American Pie.”

Curriculum Development

The third part of the PAR, participants developed lesson plans using the models they have explored such as UDL and global competencies framework.

Prior to creating their curriculum projects and writing their weekly journal responses, teacher candidates attended several interactive lectures and watched clips from Ted.com.

Below are some of the discussion topics.

- New Racism
- Melting Pot versus Tapestry theory
- Semiotics of Media in Teacher Education
- Media Literacy
- Global Competencies and 21st Century Skills
- Visualization in Education

Semiotics of Media in Teacher Education

Semiotics, the science of signs, is one of the scientific inquiry frameworks we used in our PAR study. It opens different ways to question our myths and misconceptions and formulate new questions. Semiotics allowed us to explore the various symbols such as military signals, and religious symbols in textbooks as well as to deconstruct the media images such as statistics, soap operas, and social media.

In his influential book, *A Theory of Semiotics*, Umberto Eco (1976) defines semiotics as “the discipline studying everything, which can be used in order to lie” (p. 7). Eco continues,

“Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting for something else” (Eco, 1976, p. 7).

As Hobbs (1997) said, We need to prepare our teacher candidates to the “symbol-rich culture” as we are going to be surrendered by more images, icons, signs and metaphors from online advertisements banners to book covers. One of my colleagues whose parents came from Mexico told me how her parents saw *Coca Cola* as a high status symbol. When she was a child, she was given coke instead of milk. Because, coke was an expensive commodity in Mexico or in her parents’ point of view, they were providing their children a value.

The meaning of signs or representations is dependent on social, cultural, and historical contexts. We construct meaning based on the physical appearance of the sign; our previous personal and cultural experience; time or era we live in; and context or place it occurs (see Figure 1). There is not one meaning or interpretation of each sign. There are multiple sides and points of view to each sign.

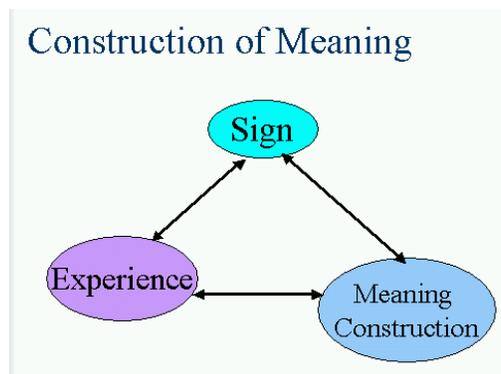


Figure 1: Construction of Meaning

As in James Mangan (1981) doctoral thesis, *Learning through pictures* provides interesting examples to illustrate both cultural and cognitive limitations to the ability to understand pictures. These limitations must be taken into account when designing learning materials not only for rural villagers in Dr. Mangan's study, but the global villagers in the world. Mangan (1981) noted that cultural differences are related to one's perceptions.

Looking at three different pictures of bears from three different cultures may be a great example. One is a picture of Yogi Bear from Western cartoon that can be seen as a dog if one has never seen the cartoon before. Another bear picture from North American Natives, a picture of a Tsimshian bear does not look like a bear to me. Or a hand drawn picture of a bear, may just be perceived as many lines for someone who has never learned to see the bear picture that way (Mangan, 1981).

The greatest difficulty for international language of signs is that the same denoted sign can have many different connotations. When messages are attempted across cultures -whether based on age, economics, gender, ethnic background, location, it is decoded differently. For example, in many cultures eye contact between two individuals talking to each other is a sign of interest. In other cultures, it may indicate disrespect, insult. One of my advisees had a trouble with a few teachers who asked me why my student never participates in class. As a Korean student, we found out when she was ready to answer. She bowed her head to indicate she was ready for an answer while the teacher assuming she was avoiding the eye contact.

As Lester indicates, “Humans always see and hear through the filter of who they are within a community” (Lester, 1995, p. 51). Consequently, the meaning behind any sign must be learned. In other words, for something to be a sign, the viewer must understand its meaning. If you do not understand the meaning behind the orange color of a jacket, it isn't a sign for you (Lester, 1995).

Every single thing has meaning and gives a different message depending on where it is located and who sees it. For instance the color “red” implies different things. Red means stop when it is on a traffic light, stands for blood in medicine. If a woman wears a red dress, or a man wears a red armband, it means something different. In general, red in western culture means usually danger, hot, sexy, embarrassment, left wing or radical, whereas red brings different things in my mind because of my Turkish background. Traditionally, red was the color of the wedding gown. Also, during a Festival, the blood of a sacrificed animal can be put on the face for religious purposes. That's why the physical property of red light stands to somebody (a motorist, a pedestrian, a political demonstrator, or a Turkish woman, etc.), for something in some respect or capacity (stop, political perspective, wedding) (Danesi, 1994).

Both Carmen Luke (1994) and Marshall McLuhan (1967) talk about “grammar” and “language” of moving images. Musicians use notes and scales to communicate, dancers use movement, and scientists use mathematical notations. Media producers also have a unique system of grammar and language, and learning to read it in all its complexity is crucial to being media literate (Scott & Yildiz, 1996).

New Racism

New Racism (Anti-Immigrant Sentiment) is a term coined in 1981 by cultural studies professor of Martin Barker who wrote the book titled: “*The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe*” in 1981. In 1970, increasing global disparities and immigration flow to Europe started an anti-immigration sentiment. Europe needed a human power following an economic boom in 1960s. There is a labor shortage and immigrant workers were invited to move to Europe to fill in this void to work in the factories to do simple low skilled tasks. From the onset, these invited workers were regarded as temporary settlers. They maintained low economic and social status and their children have a hard time integrating into the mainstream culture. As the economy in Europe gets into recession and the unemployment rate goes up, the anti-immigrant sentiments escalate.

The reasons why we focused on immigration in our study are: (a) All participants were first or second generation immigrants; (b) We were interested in developing research based and culturally relevant curriculum integrating new media; and (c) There is a growing need to develop innovative, transdisciplinary, and globally connected social justice curriculum that prepares the new generation to be the productive and peaceful global society.

In the United States, we are a nation of immigrants. According to the Pew Research Center, the nation’s total immigrant population reached a record 40.4 million including 11 million unauthorized in 2011, while the statistics of unauthorized immigration has been slowing down. The number of unauthorized immigrants from 2000 to 2011 has risen from 8.4 million to 11.1 million. Unauthorized immigrants represent 13% of the total U.S. population in 2011.

Passel and Cohn (2011) reports that there were 1 million unauthorized immigrants under age 18 in 2010, and 4.5 million United States-born-children whose parents were unauthorized in the country (Passel & Cohn, 2011).

As the nation’s public opinion and policies are being formed for immigration reforms, teacher education programs need to pay close attention to the growing needs of immigrant population and to address the education issues of the students. Passel and Cohn (2009) report estimates about 10% of more of K-12 students in some states are the children of undocumented-immigrant parents (Passel & Cohn, 2009) and most of these children, were born in the United States, and are U.S. citizens. Unfortunately, the public debate is on the cost of educating these children not on how we can bring “Pedagogy of Plenty” to the K-12 classrooms.

Melting Pot versus Tapestry Theory

Teacher candidates in the study discussed *Melting Pot versus Tapestry Theory* and William Newman’s (1973) suggested assimilation models. Participants had a chance to discuss the different metaphors for immigration (see Figure 2)

A+B+C=A Dominant Culture
A+B+C=D Assimilation into the dominant culture. Melting Pot.
A+B+C=A+B+C All immigrant are welcome to co-exist as part of the tapestry.

Figure 2. Metaphors

Media Literacy

Media Literacy was defined at the Aspen Institute in 1989 as “ability to access, analyze, communicate, and produce media in a variety of forms.” Media literacy is more than asking students to simply decode information that they experience in the media, but they must be able to talk back and produce media. Banning TV or social media is not going to solve the violence, hunger, or change the public discourse on immigration. As Len Masterman (1985) says, “Media are symbolic systems; not simply reflection of reality which must be accepted, but with languages which need to be actively read, and interrogated” (p. 28).

Stories like Zack written by Alan November in his article entitled, “The Web: Teaching Zack to Think” gives an example of a student who wrote a history paper about how the Holocaust never happened. Zack cited his resource from a university professor’s web page. Zack’s story is a great example of the importance of new media literacy skills. “Just because it’s on the Net does not make it true” (November, 2001, p. 42). Students need to be able to identify who the author is, how it is being presented, and whose point of view is being presented.

Global Competencies and 21st Century Skills

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2007) suggests that teaching and learning in the 21st century requires that students and teachers have: subject specific knowledge, learning skills, use 21st century tools to foster learning, teach and learn in the 21st century context, connect learning to the real world, and use assessments that measure 21st century learning. Therefore, teacher knowledge about technology and their ability to incorporate technology into their K-12 classes are important aspects of the teaching and learning process. Educators need to be familiar with technology so that they can promote students’ technology, information, and critical literacy skills and better prepare K-12 students for the literacy demands they encounter as citizens in the 21st century.

“Social interaction software allows greater student independence and critical autonomy” (Masterman, 1985, p 24-25), greater collaboration, and increased pedagogic efficiency (Franklin

& Van Harmelen, 2007). It also provides learners with an effective method of acquiring the 21st century skills. Tucker (2007) cites Bugeja's "digital displacement" phenomena: "though family members may be sharing the same physical space, psychologically each one may be in his or her own little universe, making difficult for parents to penetrate the child's universe, and impairing communication" (p. 3). Bugeja (2008) warns of digital distractions and outlines significant issues to consider in implementing changes in education. He writes: "Due to academia's reliance on technology and the media's overemphasis on trivia, we are failing to inform future generations about social problems that require critical thinking and interpersonal intelligence" (p. 66).

As corporate entities create pressure from the outside, coming up with new technologies on a minute-by-minute basis, Noon (2007) questions what it means to be a media literate "global citizen" and questions the role of schools in preparing students for the work force.

Myths and Misconceptions: Hidden Biases

Participants explored their hidden biases. We used "Project Implicit" (Retrieved from <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>) to measure our unconscious and hidden biases. We explored and shared our own hidden biases. We discussed how we develop our myths and misconception. In order to prevent discrimination in our classrooms, we argued that first we need to figure out the foundation of our stereotypes and prejudices. Teacher candidates read articles and explored lesson ideas from Tolerance.org and Rethinking Schools.

Participants reflected several eye-opening experiences. One was a response to an article by Kelley (2012) called "10 Facts you need to know about immigrant women." Another one, after they watched a documentary called Mickey Mouse Monopoly. For instance, it was a great discussion on how media portrays immigrants and people of color by giving them certain negative roles or accents.

One student created a lesson plan on Cinderella story from China. We watched a clip by called Yeh Shen. When we deconstructed the video, we found out the good characters speaks perfect English as opposed to evil characters had a heavy Chinese accent. We discussed how the idea is not to ban media but provide media literacy skills to our students so that they will be able to point out the accent and facial features and deconstruct media images and messages. "It was an eye opening discussion" as one participant, said, "I see how we may see people from another country as evil because of their accent."

In addition to participants creating lesson plans integrating maps and media into the curriculum, they developed Internet search skills, focused on deconstructing websites, analyzing wiki entries. By actively involving participants in collecting and analyzing data, taking and uploading pictures and videos, producing media such as interactive maps, wiki pages, blogs and digital stories, they understood the conventions of the medium. As they became the producers of their own media projects, they developed media literacy skills, and became informed consumers and citizen of the world.

Conclusion

During the study, we integrated multiple literacies as a means of further developing K12 students' global competencies and 21st century skills while re-thinking and re-designing innovative learning activities.

Participants argued the challenges and advantages of integrating media literacy into K12 curriculum; developed skills in deconstructing existing curricula and digital resources and media messages; examined the process of integrating new media as a tool for teaching and learning; integrated the use of media in an instructional context in order to develop global understanding; explored lesson plans, assessment tools, and curriculum guides that incorporate new media and technologies across grades and subjects; experienced how a critical approach to the study of new media combines knowledge, reflection, and action to promote educational equity, and prepares new generation to be socially responsible members of a multicultural, democratic society.

Further Discussion

Teacher candidates in the study organized lesson plans and resources on their electronic portfolios. They created their blog and used social media to advocate for culturally and linguistically responsive for K-12 children. Based on our findings, we developed a gallery walk (<http://galeri.wikispaces.com/Immigration>) outlined list of documentaries, cartoons, infographic, as well as online *e-Race-ing* resources for teacher educators and K-12 teachers and invited other teacher candidates and faculty to explore our research and provide feedback.

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Children of Immigration: Developmental Approach/An Imperative for Social Justice

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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This paper outlines a theoretical framework that applies the concepts of commutative, distributive, contributive and restorative justice to advocate for social justice for the immigrant child. Child migration is a contemporary phenomenon that has resulted in the formulation of international and national declarations and laws in an effort to provide the migrants with a global safety net or restrict their entry across borders. The perils of human trafficking involving migrant children are discussed as well as citizenship issues throughout the world. Past and current immigration policies address the failure of the United States to respect the human rights of immigrant children and in the process discard a valuable and critical future resource (Haskins, 2011). Practitioners and educators will be better informed and empowered to argue for equity for the immigrant child using the strategies and principles of this framework.

Introduction

Understanding social justice and its important role in implementing policies and practices in a just manner, particularly as applied to immigrant children, can be difficult and complex in a society that has engendered negative cultural beliefs about immigrant families. Children and women are often discounted as "...valueless economic actors" (Clifford, Pearce & Tandon, 2011, p. 7) yet their contributions "are crucial to building new economies and expanding existing ones" (p. 7). The experiences and voices of immigrant children are silent in a society that has displaced the human agency theory with administrative actions of alienation, separation, and uncertainty.

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The children of immigrants face insurmountable challenges including poverty, discrimination, deportation, isolation due to language and cultural barriers as well as difficulties in attaining access to the nation's educational system. The well-being of immigrant children is essential to the survival and productivity of the nation because they are the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population. Since 1990, children who contributed mostly to the net growth were under nine years of age and living with immigrant parents (Passel & Taylor, 2010). In 2008, nearly one in four youth aged seventeen and under lived with an immigrant parent, up from 15 percent in 1990 (Passel & Taylor, 2010). The situation of the present day immigrant child is more complex than earlier waves of immigrants because of the diversity in national origin, socioeconomic status, acculturation patterns. Moreover, the growing number of immigrant children is occurring simultaneously within a period of escalating socioeconomic inequality (Tienda & Haskins, 2011). To better understand the enormity of the immigration crises concerning children, The Child Trends Data Bank reported that the percentage of immigrant children, either first or second generation, increased by 45 percent between the years 1994 and 2014 (<http://www.childtrends.org/our-research/>). For the purpose of this data, first generation children are those who were born outside the United States and second generation immigrants are those who were born within the United States and its territories (Bhabha, 2014). Also, the Child Trends website reports that 28 percent of immigrant children had one parent born in the United States. While the largest proportion of immigrant children comes from Mexico; the three next most common countries of origin for the parents of immigrant children are El Salvador, India, and the Philippines.

In the past, implementation of policies and practices regarding immigration were based on exploring the reasons for immigration emphasizing the push and/or pull factors affecting people within a given life situation. The push factors for immigration were often related with environmental disasters, civil strife, religious and political freedom and human rights; the pull factors were related to economic advancement, political opportunity, seeking a homeland and exploring new frontiers (Graham, 2006). Immigrant children are usually the central focus of this movement, that is, the desire for a better life and opportunities particularly in education and perceived economic prosperity. According to Christie (2010),

From the nation's founding and throughout the 19th century, the economic benefits of immigration were promoted in tandem with a policy of colonization and relentless expansion into territories westward that were once the domain of indigenous peoples. At the same time, the growing demand of industry for cheap labor drew hordes of new immigrants into the cities. As the immigrant population increased so did the issues confronting urban schools such as increased class size, and children from impoverished families with lower levels of education than the earlier immigrants. Such problems continued well into the last decades of the 20th century. In response, some state and local governments adopted measures whose effect was to limit the resources available to immigrants. (p. 455)

In response to these issues, the concepts of commutative, distributive, contributive and restorative justice will be applied and integrated with five basic principles focused on their impact on the immigrant child in order to better inform and support advocacy (Kerwin, 2014). Likewise, these principles will not necessarily be addressed in the order of their presentation. The five principles are as follows:

- Persons have rights to find opportunities in their homeland;
- Persons have rights to migrate to support themselves and their families;
- Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders;
- Refugee and asylum seekers should be afforded protection; and
- The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected (United States Conference of Bishops (USCB), 2003, p.1).

Social Justice

Social justice, as the primary form of justice, incorporates four other forms of justice:

- *Commutative justice* refers to the relationships of a member within the group culture and fosters equality for fair standards of reciprocity in society.
- *Contributive justice* advocates that individuals become productive participants in society and that society has the obligation to empower them to participate.
- *Distributive justice* requires that the allocation of resources be evaluated from many perspectives so that many individuals in society have their basic needs met.
- *Restorative justice* seeks to reconcile conflicted parties in a way that enables them to find common ground for a new, more equal footing in broken relationships (Himchak, 2005; Reisch, 2002).

The social justice perspective examines the principles above as well as the four social justice corollaries in a global quilt of fractured policy and impoverished rhetoric. All four forms of social justice reflect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This Declaration asserts “The recognition of the inherent and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family [which] is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (Preamble, 1988, p. 1; Axin & Stern, 2006). However, long before human rights were written in international documents and national constitutions, people in ancient traditions have adopted human rights as a basic principle of social justice in society. The earliest implementation of human rights and social justice have been recorded in the Hammurabi Code, the Old and New Testament writings, the Koran, teaching of Confucius, Hindu Vedas, and Native American legends (Shiman, 1997).

The United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed that “everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>). This statement referred to the human rights and dignity of undocumented immigrants. Primary importance was emphasized in the document regarding the rights of children to special care and assistance. The Declaration of the Rights of the Child states, “The child, by reason of his or her physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth” (United Nations General Assembly, 1948, para. 9).

On September 24, 1924, The League of Nations adopted the “Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child” as follows (<http://www.un-documents.net/gdrc1924.htm>):

By the present Declaration of the Rights of the Child, commonly known as ‘Declaration of Geneva,’ men and women of all nations, recognizing that mankind owes to the Child the best that it has to give, declare and accept it as their duty that, beyond and above all considerations of race, nationality or creed:

1. The child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually;
2. The child that is hungry must be fed; the child that is sick must be nursed; the child that is backward must be helped; the delinquent child must be reclaimed, and the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succored;
3. The child must be the first to receive relief in times of distress;
4. The child must be put in a position to earn a livelihood, and must be protected against every form of exploitation; and
5. The child must be brought up in the consciousness that its talents must be devoted to the service of fellow men.

In 1989, the United Nations General Assembly Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted a resolution with 41 articles about the rights of children with the following excerpt referencing the declaration (<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/44/a44r025.htm>):

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children...

The following section details the principles of social justice and their relationship to the issues faced by immigrant children and families in an increasingly global environment of mistrust and hostility towards immigrants.

Sovereign Nations Have the Right to Control their Borders and Persons have Rights to Find Opportunities in their Homeland

This section will delineate the rights of persons to seek and find opportunities in their own homeland as well as for nations to control their borders. These concepts constitute Commutative Justice.

Commutative Justice. Primarily, there is recognition that sovereign nations can control their borders for the common good of its citizens; however, while the sovereign states, may impose reasonable limits on immigration, the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated. The rights of sovereign states are challenged when control is

exerted merely for the purpose of acquiring additional wealth by exploitation of workers (Kerwin, 2006). Further, all nations have an obligation to the universal common good of the people in the world's community. Under these precepts, it requires that the global community is responsible in protecting the undocumented immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers by establishing an immigration system that transitions them in a safe and dignified manner to the status of citizenship (Kerwin, 2014).

The present day immigration situation, especially regarding immigrant children and the undocumented immigrant is more complex in that it contributes to the social climate that is polemic and contentious. When examining the issue from the social justice perspective, it is important to understand that justice includes both equality and equity and has two dimensions, namely, individual rights and the common good of society. The common good concept implies that a culture provides for health, welfare, and the dignity of all people, and promotes the best interests of everyone, not just a few. Thus, the potential in implementing policies and practices utilizing the common good concept must be considered not only from the perspective of the individual, but from its impact on society. Several principles underlying the common good concept should be considered in the discussion regarding social justice in the context of immigration. All participants in formulating policy should acknowledge that no one has all the answers to the situation and that the disagreeing participants are acting in good faith with good intentions. It also advocates that each group of participants in society put forth its best construction of differing positions, addressing the strongest points rather than seizing upon the most vulnerable aspects of the different positions to discredit the more vulnerable participants in society. Participants also embrace the realities of the institutional and governmental cultures of society, not by simple defiance nor by naïve acquiescence, but by acknowledging both the valid achievements and real dangers that exist (Kerwin, 2014).

Nations also have an obligation to the universal common good and should seek to accommodate migration to the greatest extent possible. Powerful economic nations, such as the United States, have a higher obligation to serve the universal common good (Pope John XXIII, 1963). In the current global environment, in which there are jobs in the United States that immigrants can fill, an immigration system should be established that provides avenues for persons to enter the nation legally in a safe, orderly, and dignified manner. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection from harm and persecution.

The implementation of sovereignty is always changing, as states, individually and collectively, struggle with new problems and opportunities, explore new endeavors, advance in technology and communication, establish new norms while learning from their past practices. Transformation of sovereignty is a reflective process in establishing and articulating new norms, and understandings of old norms and practices into the framework of international law and politics. Presently sovereignty is essentially based on borders, not any capacity on the part of governments (Donnelly, 2004).

Within the current century globalization has become a major trend and a challenge of sovereignty rights for the world-wide community. With the increase in economic growth in world-wide partnership in trade, major concerns over security issues have also arisen. Two main factors have shaped the migration policies and the protection rights of citizens with the states. The first factor was the increase in the number of international labor markets that created new opportunities and the need for skilled and unskilled labor that could be filled by migrant workers. The second factors were the shortage in the labor force, population decline, and an increase in the world's aging population (Miller & Baumeister, 2013). In addition to these two socio-economic

factors, the tragic event of 9/11 not only increased national security but heightened border control and rapid regulation with government gate-keeping and security agendas in keeping high-risk migrants and suspected terrorist from entry across the United States borders.

Commutative justice calls for all members of just society to accept and to empower the immigrants to define their relationships as members within the group culture and to foster equality for fair standards of reciprocity in society. In respecting the immigrant person's dignity and worth by seeking equality based on fair standards, it also requires reciprocity in human relationships by the members of society. Commutative justice rejects the encroachment on others' rights while encouraging self-determination of the immigrant's choices. Immigrants are then better empowered to define themselves as people who have self-awareness and responsibility in their choices in developing life plans as new arrivals in a strange land. Persons who enter a nation without permission should be treated with respect and dignity. They should not be detained in deplorable conditions for lengthy periods of time, shackled by their feet and hands, or abused in any manner. They should be afforded due process of the law and allowed to articulate a fear of a return to their home before a qualified adjudicator nor should they be blamed for the social ills of a nation (United Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005; Kerwin, 2010).

Persons Have Rights to Migrate to Support Themselves and Their Families

The right to migrate is intrinsic to supporting oneself and one's family, which constitutes the principle known as Contributive Justice.

Contributive Justice. In the current condition of global poverty, and at the cost of leaving their homes and risking their lives to enter a new nation, undocumented persons have the right to migrate to other countries, as well as to find opportunities in their homeland to survive and to support their families. Contributive justice advocates that the immigrants become productive participants in society and that society has the obligation to empower them (Himchak, 2011; Reisch, 2002).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) held that "the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community" (Preamble, Convention of the Rights of the Child, para. 5). Human relationships enable people to meet their needs and provide an important vehicle for change. For children to reach their full development, it is essential that they grow up in a family environment fosters an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Contributive justice explores the avenues in society that empowers immigrant family in establishing and maintaining family stability, family engagement, family relationships, family responsibility and family diversity in becoming collaborative participants in society (United States Conference of Bishops, 2003, 2005; Himchak, 2011; Reisch, 2002).

Conversely, there are many barriers in and among immigrant family members including culture, education, employment, knowledge of the health care system, and language as they struggle in adjusting to their environment. Culture provides a sense of identity for the immigrants in their affiliation to the group (Haley, Alan, Chen & Burton, 2002). Respecting cultural diversity and understanding the importance traditions and cultural values of the immigrants for the protection and harmonious development of their children is imperative for establishing and maintaining family stability, family engagement, family relationships, family responsibility in

improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries (Haley et al., 2002).

Contributive justice advocates for the immigrant family members, policy makers, government officials, all professionals and all citizens in determining the services that serve all parties as the general welfare in the development of individuals, families, and communities and the common good of society, especially the children who are the future citizens (Himchak, 2005). The Dream Act (Mahatmya & Gring-Penble, 2014) in its family impact analysis acknowledges and “respects the family as the basic unit of society and respects diversity of family life that is the different cultural, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds; various geographic locations and socio-economic statuses and families with special needs and families at different life cycles” (p. 81). The Dream Act promotes family stability, family engagement, family relationships and family responsibilities by empowering “partnership with families in assessing and balancing the competing needs, rights and interest of family members and preventing the participating families from be devalued and stigmatized” (p. 81) and being subjected to impoverished living situations.

The Human Dignity and Human Rights of Undocumented Migrants Should be Respected

This section describes the respect that should be afforded to the migrant despite the fact that he or she is not documented.

Restorative Justice. Restorative justice seeks to reconcile conflicting parties to find common ground (Shiman, 2004). It considers the basic moral test of any community or society to be in the way in which the most vulnerable members are faring. The concept of restorative justice is further developed by Rawls’ (1971) conception of justice. In the Original Position (Rawls, 1971), “the people in a society choose the principle that minimizes the worst possibilities for any group so that the greatest benefit of the least advantaged is provided and protected” (p. 12).

The ideal of social justice challenges individuals to advocate against injustices in society. Educators and practitioners advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and to promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice. Professionals pursue change with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups to address poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. Professionals expand choice and opportunity and promote justice (NASW, 2003). Restorative justice seeks the common ground for all voices to be heard, in particular, the poor. In resolving immigration issues, actions taken should benefit society as a whole (Himchak, 2011).

Refugee and Asylum Seekers Should be Afforded Protection

Distributive Justice. Distributive justice implies that the goods of society should be distributed in the fairest way; therefore, the most seriously injured would have access to their basic needs. Reamer (1990) presents four main criteria for distributing scarce resources: equality, need, compensation, and contribution. Reamer (1990) states that “members of society assume an obligation to assist those in need, especially those who seem unable to help themselves” (p. 36).

Professionals, federal and state government officials have the ethical responsibility to promote the general welfare of people and their environments (NASW, 2003). No one country can provide for or meet the needs for the millions of immigrants from around the world. In fact, the lives of legal citizens in all countries are impacted at one time or another, either negatively or

positively, by the migration of undocumented immigrants (Stephan, 2011). The views of the legal citizens must be included in the discussion regarding the transmigration of immigrants. All parties need to seek a common ground position in reaching a constructive way to resolve complex disputes. Multiple perspectives should be considered by the groups ultimately any consensus reached should benefit all participants (Negy, 2012).

The inequity in the distribution of subsidies and the equal access to health care has been a major conflictual issue polarizing the United States. Limited resources in subsidizing programs for the impoverished Americans in Medicare and Medicaid have become a major concern. While the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants have medical needs and emergencies, their costs are absorbed by the American taxpayer (Brimelow, 2008). Although the undocumented immigrants may pay taxes, “the majority of undocumented immigrants are poorly educated and are of low-income” (“Other Major Findings,” Pew Hispanic Center, 2009); therefore, the costs for undocumented immigrants extend beyond primary health care and may include nutritional programs, and childcare. The inequity in the distribution of subsidies and the equal access to health care has been a major conflictual issue polarizing the country.

Profile of the Immigrant Child

Who is the Immigrant Child? The immigrant child is often described through immigration policies and statistical data. In the United Nations, Convention Rights for the Child, Article 1, the child is defined as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless the law applicable to the child majority is attained earlier” (1989). The United States immigration services defines the child as being an individual who is not married and under 21 years of age (U.S. Immigration Services 2014). The Dream Act defines the immigrant child and youth through the eligibility criteria as follows:

The child and/or adolescent must be between the ages of 12-35; arrived in the US before the age of 16; resided 5 years continuously in the U.S.; graduated or will graduate from a U.S. high school or obtain a GED diploma, and the immigrant must be of good moral character that is the individual is not convicted of murder or convicted of any other Federal crime. (American Immigration Council, 2010, para. 5)

Passel and Taylor (2010) presented a statistical profile describing the immigrant child according to population growth between 2005-2009. The immigrant child was under nine years of age and living with both parents. Additionally, one out of four of the fifteen percent of the youth 17 years of age and under are living with an immigrant parent. Seventy- three percent of the children of undocumented immigrants are U.S. citizens. In 2008, four million mixed-status immigrant families lived in the U.S. as opposed to 1.5 million undocumented immigrants living in the US. In the same year, the Census Bureau estimated that among the nation’s population only 4% were undocumented immigrant; however, immigrant children made up 6.8% of the students enrolled in the nation’s elementary and secondary schools (Passel & Cohn, 2009).

Diversity is an essential factor in describing the immigrant children and youth of today. The immigrant youth are “more diverse racially and ethnically than in any other time in the nation’s history; they are also more diverse than any other age group today, and the principal source of this diversity is immigrant youth” (Passel, 2011, p. 30). This factor impacts upon the types and scope of the resources needed to educate bilingual youth. In 2009 White, non-Hispanic

children accounted for 56 percent of all children under eighteen. The representation of Hispanics and Asians is substantially greater among immigrant youth and adults than among U.S.-born children of native parents in the total population. According to Passel (2011), in the 1990s, 58% of the children in the United States were White, while 58% of the immigrant youth were third generation Hispanic in origin and 16% Asian in origin. Finally, out of the seventy million youth residing in the United States today, one-fourth are immigrants. It is projected that by 2050, the number of immigrant youth will grow to become one-third of the 100 million of all the children in the United States (U.S. Immigration Services, 2014).

Child Citizenship Rights. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders, a right that is the traditional and fundamental principle that underpins the regulation and admission of aliens limiting their freedom of movement. According to Bahbha (2014), “Israel is an extreme case in point. It ignores the residence or ‘private life’ rights of children born in Israel to parents without legal status; however long the child stays in Israel he or she never qualifies for citizenship” (Bahbha, 2014, p. 69). Cases in the United States have determined violations of family unity and sanctity. A Guatemalan undocumented mother who had been incarcerated after a raid at a Missouri processing plant lost custody of her U.S. born child to a local couple by a judge declaring that the “biological mother had little to offer” and would be deported (Bahbha, 2014, p. 101). Children, in essence, have no rights, even as U.S. citizens to use their citizenship to anchor their family’s unity. The reality of the 4.5 million U.S-citizen children “growing up with at least one undocumented parent are close to twice as likely to face poverty as other citizen children; they thus experience a form of de-facto ‘semi-citizenship’” (Bahbha, 2014, p. 71). To better understand the dilemma faced by US citizen children of undocumented immigrant parents, it is important to note a decision by a U.S. Appeals court judgment (*Acosta v. Gaffney*, 558 F 2d 1157 93D CIR.1977) Citing *Perdido v. INS*, 420 F.2d 1179, 1181 [5th Ci. 1969]:

A minor child who is fortuitously born here due to his parents’ decision to reside in this country has not exercised a *deliberate decision* to make this country his home, and Congress did not give such a child the ability to confer immigration benefits on his parents. It gave the privilege to those of our citizens who had themselves *chosen* to make this country their home and did not give the privilege to those minor children whose noncitizen parents make the real choice of family residence.

Decisions by the supreme courts in the United States, Canada and Ireland to name only three out of the many countries, have “attacked the alleged arbitrariness of birthright citizenship” and assigned the rights of children’s citizenship to the adults as rights-holders rather than to the child thus pointing to these nations’ attitude towards the immigrant child’s status as a dependent rather than an individual and rights-holder (Bahbha, 2014, p. 72). Because the issue of birthright citizenship is being debated by many in the United States (Culliton-Gonzalez, 2009), including the courts, and argued to be a property right, it is briefly mentioned here as one of the controversies centered on the child’s right to resources and services. Recent court decisions in the United States have reduced the child’s rights to that of “mere bystander” as undocumented parents have been deported and separated from their citizen children through the application of harsh standards that contradict the rights to equal protection of U.S. law to which all citizens are entitled (Bahbah, 2014, p. 89).

Human Trafficking. The exploitation of children by traffickers, even in well organized child welfare systems is evidenced by the following documented incidents. "In Sweden, eighty-seven refugee children in the custody of the local authorities went missing in 2001. In the United Kingdom, sixty-seven unaccompanied West African children placed in the care of social service disappeared over a period of years in the late 1990s" (Bhabha, 2014, p. 140). What is even more alarming is that these situations are not unusual. It is estimated that approximately 20 percent of children that were in a social service system of care vanished over an eighteen month period only to be discovered back in the traffickers hands having slipped through the cracks of the United Kingdom's protection system (p. 140).

Looked upon as a human rights abuse by the last two presidents of the United States, Bush and Obama, a published list of countries is ranked by an annual Trafficking in Persons or TIP report. Human Trafficking, particularly of children, is universally looked upon as slavery by international law and perpetrators could be pursued and prosecuted; however, the link between slavery and trafficking is unclear and not well understood. In 2004, the United Nations issued a Protocol known as the Palermo Trafficking Protocol in an attempt to "Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children"(Bhabha, 2014, pp.150-151). Bhabha (2014, 150-151) also states:

Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment , transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or fraud of deception of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Human trafficking is a complex world-wide problem and the root causes of the practice paint a painful picture of unemployment, poverty, civil and political turmoil. Parents desperate to remove their children from war-torn countries or economic peril resort to opportunistic smugglers to transport them to a safe haven but falling instead into unscrupulous criminalization (Bhabha, 2014).

Education. As cited by Christie (2010),

Policies of exclusion in the public sector have become popularized as anti-immigration sentiment has mounted against both the documented and the undocumented. On the one hand policy-makers have asked the questions of incorporating and Americanizing immigrants into the dominant culture while on the other, there have been efforts to stem the flow of immigration and disenfranchise those who are non-citizens and unworthy of the country's privileges. (p. 454)

Hernandez, Denton and Macartney also point to the challenges schools face in teaching a unique group of ethnically and culturally diverse children of immigrants (2012). According to Passel (2011), one-fourth of the United States' 75 million children under age eighteen, are either foreign born or U.S. born to immigrant parents. Policy makers, faced with the changing demographics of youth living in the United States, will have to deal with issues of education funding, Social Security, health benefits as well as poverty and increased presence in the U.S. labor force during the next forty years.

From 1870 to 1920, the United States experienced a high level of immigration, far more than half a century representing 13.5 percent of the population. World War I and more restrictive legislation led to little immigration from the 1930s to World War II and after. In 1965, legislation prompted the expansion of immigration and subsequent growth in the foreign-born population. The origins of the new immigrants shifted to Asia and Latin America as well as Mexico in the 1970s including unauthorized Mexican immigrants. Of the 12.5 million Mexican immigrants living in the United States in 2007, 55 percent of them were unauthorized (Passel, p. 25). Concurrently, the White and non-Hispanic majority race is on the decrease while the fertility rates of the Latino groups will rise past the moderate fertility rates of Blacks.

Landale, Thomas and Van Hook (2011) found that Mexican children have issues with economic integration because of “low education, skills and financial resources” (p. 50) of their parents leading to a more marginalized status and inequitable opportunities for economic security. “For children living in poverty increases the risk of negative outcomes including health and developmental problems, poor academic performance, low completed education, and low earnings in adulthood” (p. 51). Other refugee groups also have varied educational experiences with immigrants from Cambodia and Laos being less advantaged than the Vietnamese based on the educational and skill levels of their parents.

The critical need for early childhood education was examined by Karoly and Gonzalez (2011) concerning the issues faced by immigrant children including language barriers, lack of decent housing, clothing, separation from parents who have been deported or incarcerated through immigration raids. Early Care and Education programs could help to promote healthy developmental opportunities and reverse negative educational and future income outcomes (Hernandez et al., 2012). It is estimated that 50 percent of under six-year olds are located in California. While high-quality programs are made available, including services associated with special education interventions, Karoly and Gonzalez (2011) proposed that immigrant parents have not fully accepted or participated because of fear of disqualification from employment out of the formal labor market.

The tension in addressing the equality and equity in the education of immigrant children arises from the public perspective of being insensitive towards their needs. The costs of education are escalating, and it is the middle class of American citizens bearing the financial burdens. Presently most of the public schools in urban centers are overcrowded, understaffed and underfunded suffering budget cuts for teachers and resources at the expense of escalating administration costs being paid by one segment of the population, the property owners. Nagy (2012) expressed the sentiments of many American citizens in the following excerpt:

According to the Center for Education Reform (2011), the national average expenditure per pupil in public schools in 2010 was \$12,018. Yet, in schools all across the nation, seats are occupied in various degrees with students who, through no fault of their own, are not authorized to be in the United States. Most children of undocumented parents qualify for “free” breakfasts and lunches based on their parents’ income (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Expecting (legal) American children to attend underfunded and understaffed schools because, in part, significant portions of school budgets are diverted toward educating children from other countries is a disservice and is unfair to American children. (p.139)

Although the concept of equality requires the responsibility to support the education of all children, it may appear to be very inequitable to support the immigrant children in preference to the legal children. However, the real issue of supporting children and providing necessary resources lies with the inequity in the distribution of taxation requirements solely on the property taxes of middle and lower income earners.

Equality and equity in education require that the United States government mandate support of a federal and state education to all people beyond K-12. Yet in higher education, limited resources have been prevalent in the annual budget cuts, increasing tuition to cover operational expenses, and the limited finitenumber in available funding for student placement. The Dream Act advocates that the undocumented students be granted equal status for in-state tuition, equal opportunity in occupying seats with limited placements and acquisition for governmental financial loans and grants. Extending these benefits for undocumented immigrants contributes towards the rejection in benefits for some of the legal American working class with less competitive admission scores (Brimelow, 2008; Krikorian, 2008).

Summary

Who Will Advocate for the Immigrant Child?

Social justice and its various forms challenge nations to bring the concerns of the poor and vulnerable to all levels of resolution and concrete action. Commutative justice defines the individuals' relationships with members within the group culture and fosters equality. Contributive justice advocates for the immigrants and government officials and professionals in becoming participants in decision-making. Distributive justice requires the fair allocation of resources; restorative justice seeks to reconcile conflicting parties to find common ground (Shiman, 2004). The social justice and human rights approach empowers educators and professional practitioners to protect the rights of the marginalized and people at risk, providing services without judging their worthiness.

In the United States, California's Proposition 187 sought to deny health and social services to undocumented immigrants reaching a culmination in draconian national laws of exclusion and subsequent detention of immigrants on re-entry after travel abroad with the enactment of The Anti-Terrorist Act. Within the scope of laws, policies and judicial decisions, there is ample research to state that citizenship and immigration experiences differ for men and women (Singer & Gilbertson, 2003, p. 36). While some laws have been altered and assertions from the courts and international tribunals have called for a human rights approach to the treatment of child immigrants and their caregivers, "Universal access to basic education and health care" for "migrant children have not yet been protected by domestic and EU courts as have family-unity rights" (Bhabha, 2012, p. 279). As a result "young migrants continue to find their rights trumped by local xenophobia, bureaucratic discretion, or other forms of political expediency" (p. 279). The exploitation of children in trafficking or recruitment as soldiers in violation of international law is a reality in some countries. It is estimated that 300,000 children are involved in armed conflict around the world. Children are often left to fend for themselves as parents are detained or deported. Neglecting immigrant children's needs or denying them the resources and services needed to nurture and support the world's future is tantamount to rejecting its most precious commodity.

Every governmental and educational program needs to have in its last analysis and main purpose to service the human person. Such programs should reduce inequalities, eliminate discrimination, and empower the individual to progress in human and spiritual development. Promoting the true development of people requires the desire, the right, and the responsibility to ensure justice for all people including the child who is often treated as an economic burden and an appendage to the immigration dilemma. Securing justice requires the desire, the right, and the responsibility to promote equality for every human person and to foster solidarity with all people in society. The plaque at the foot of the Statue of Liberty says it best (Lazarus, 1883):

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me...

These famous words should be the imperative for social justice for every immigrant child.

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Fostering a Humanizing Pedagogy: Imagined Possibilities for African Immigrant Girls

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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This qualitative case study examines how an African feminist community-based organization, Sauti Yetu's Girl's Empowerment and Leadership Initiative (GELI), creates pedagogical spaces that recognize the full humanity of African immigrant adolescent girls. Specifically, this study explores how GELI teachers, mentors, and students foster critical inquiry in Girls Leadership programmatic spaces within schooling institutions and facilitate self-advocacy in mentoring programs. The study argues that the partnership of knowledge production and critical care for the self act as a form of leadership where African immigrant girls come to, engage in, and act upon a fuller realization of their humanity within pedagogical spaces. Through collecting and analyzing three types of data (written documentation, semi-structured individual and focus group interviews, and program observation), the study has implications for teachers, school administrators, community leaders, and teacher educators as it (a) contributes to the limited research base on African immigrant girls and their leadership development in urban communities, (b) explores how community-based organizations lead to possible counter pedagogical spaces to multiple dehumanizing institutional locations, and (c) argues for the imagined and real possibilities of African immigrant girls to transform their own lives and the lives of local and transnational communities: community-based leadership, humanizing pedagogy, immigrant advocacy.

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Introduction

According to the U.S. National Census Bureau conducted in 2010, the last decade has seen an unprecedented increase in immigration. Increased migration has intensified already strained debates on immigration in US national policy, which are reflective of and perpetuate anxieties about immigrants as threats to a nationalist American culture. Thus, national identity is assembled through a notion of citizenship that subjugates racial, ethnic, and cultural differences through assimilationist logics (Giroux et al., 1996). Anti-immigrant national discourses are overlaid with convergent discourses of racial difference (Omi & Winant, 1994). And therefore, xenophobia is particularly acute when paired with the anti-blackness that saturates a society's social fabric. This is the stark reality faced particularly by African immigrants, a growing population in America. The cover of a Newsweek issue in the fall of 2014 exemplifies the haunting racist legacies of colonialism. It features an image of a chimpanzee situated behind the words, *A Back Door for Ebola: Smuggled Bushmeat Could Spark a U.S. Epidemic*. This image is essential in understanding how African bodies are mapped on American terrain - it represents familiar narratives of 'diseased,' 'primitive,' and 'backwards' Africa and African people rampant in the national imagination.

This climate seeps into the school context through exclusionary educational policies such as English-only movements, privatization, and high-stakes exit exams for immigrant youth categorized as English language learners (ELLs) (Fine, M., & Jaffe-Walter, R., 2007). Scholars investigating the intersection of immigration and education have illuminated reproductive processes through which young people find their place in America's racialized hierarchy (Olsen, 1997; Lee, 2005). However, despite the fact that urban metropolises such as New York City have experienced a 141% increase in African immigration (Kent, 2007) and African immigrants face a sharp brand of xenophobic racism, there is limited research about the schooling experiences of these young people (Arthur, 2000; Knight & Watson, 2014; Rong & Preissle, 2008). It is important to note that the newer wave of African immigrants is younger, and more likely to be female (Kent, 2007). Often, African immigrants are folded into the category of African American even though these racial categories do not hold in the same way (Forman, 2005). Thus, both in the educational contexts and in academic research, the specific racialized and gendered bodies of African immigrants in the US context are invisible.

Against this backdrop of visible and visceral anti-blackness and xenophobia paired with the invisibility in educational contexts and academic research (with a few exceptions: Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Knight, Bangura, & Watson, 2012), this article seeks to highlight a girls' empowerment program designed and implemented by an African feminist community-based organization, Sauti Yetu Center for African Women. We posit that Sauti Yetu's Girls Empowerment and Leadership Program facilitates pedagogical spaces that recognize the full humanity of African immigrant girls (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010; Hill Collins, 2013). Specifically, ongoing dialogue among GELI teachers, mentors, and students facilitate critical inquiry of their lived experiences and racialized and gendered issues within and faced by their communities. We argue that such community-based humanizing pedagogical spaces foster dialogical knowledge production and critical care for the self. By critical care for the self, we mean the ability to reflect, critique, question and act upon the raced-gendered issues that they encounter daily. We see the partnership between such knowledge production and critical care for the self as a form of leadership where African immigrant girls come to, engage in, and act upon a fuller realization of their humanity within pedagogical spaces.

Literature Review

In this context, we perceive that Sauti Yetu offers possible counter pedagogical spaces to the multiple dehumanizing institutional and discursive locations faced by the young women on a daily basis. Therefore, we draw upon the notion of humanizing pedagogies from the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy. We dovetail this with literature in Black feminisms, which further illuminate African women's knowledge and self-advocacy. By self-advocacy, we mean the ways in which African immigrants girls utilize their knowledge and agency to engage in critical care of the self (Hill Collins, 2013).

Paulo Freire's humanizing pedagogies are seen as central to his philosophical ideals. According to Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010), Freire's philosophy is guided by the idea that humans are motivated by a desire to engage in the process of becoming. Freire (1970) suggests that the course of humanization leads to the possibility of authentic liberation. Humanizing pedagogy is defined as an approach to instruction that seeks to "express the consciousness of the students themselves" (Freire, 1970, p. 51). To that end, educators engaging in humanizing pedagogies foster problem-posing education where students become co-investigators in dialogue with their educators. Bartolomé's (1994) instructive piece argues that humanizing pedagogy builds on the realities of students' lives, examines the socio-historical and political dimensions of education, and positions students as engaged participants in knowledge construction.

Dialogue is the pedagogical mode that is paramount to processes of humanization and leads to critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is "...learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p. 17). Students and teachers perceive their own positioning within broader socio-economic structures. The pedagogical tool of dialogue locates students as knowledge bearers and knowledge producers. Jennings and Da Matta (2009) note that students become "subjects who actively make meaning of their own lives and the world around them, rather than objects who passively receive content knowledge from teachers" (p. 217).

Empirical research regarding humanizing pedagogies attends to students' overall well-being (Cammarota & Romero, 2006; Jennings & Da Matta, 2009). Cammarota and Romero (2006) suggest that humanization occurs when students are provided with opportunities to share about their lives, are shown compassion for dehumanizing experiences they have faced, and are active in places where learning is situated in social issues relevant to their lives and communities. Jennings and Da Matta's (2009) research on female educators in Brazil suggests that humanizing pedagogies reflect feminist ideals, which perceive students as "emotional and social beings, and not solely cognitive learners" (p. 225). Similarly, Patricia Hill Collins (2013) argues that critical pedagogy within Black Feminisms supports teaching for empowerment that involves "resisting separating reason from emotion, thought from feeling, and feeling from actions" (p.130). In so doing, educators can support the struggle for self-definition that involves a critical stance toward commonsense understandings of Self and Other. In particular, Black women's experiences of race-class-gender as systems of power illuminate their own interpretations of their social worlds and the self-advocacy needed to challenge raced-classed-gendered stereotypes of Black women (Crenshaw, 1991; Knight, 2002). In particular, African feminisms emphasizes how "the denial of the importance of African relational gender roles often relegate the African women to subject/victim" and hides the ways in which they can theorize from their lived experiences to produce knowledge that heals the self and community (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010, p. 619).

Methodology

Context and Participants

Sauti Yetu is an immigrant-led advocacy and social service non-profit organization in New York City serving the growing population of African immigrant women, girls, and their families. In 2007, Sauti Yetu began the Girls' Empowerment & Leadership Initiative (GELI) in response to an expressed community need for a program that would address the developmental needs and educational access of young women ages fourteen through twenty-one. GELI's members are immigrant and/or refugee adolescent girls primarily from Muslim and West African families. Most are English language learners who speak West African languages including Wolof, and Fulani.

The study was conducted over the course of one and a half years at the Sauti Yetu Center for African Women and one international public high school in New York City. The purposeful sample for this study consisted of three program staff within GELI, twelve mentors, and a focal group of ten high school African immigrant girls who represented a range of literacy skills and consistently attended GELI youth programmatic activities. This purposeful sample was selected because participants could illuminate understandings of their experiences within the organization (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Data Collection, Analysis, and Methods

We chose a qualitative exploratory case study design to examine the multiple perspectives and experiences of African immigrant girls and staff members¹ within Sauti Yetu (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Written documentation were objects of collaborative discussion in the interview process, and were collected to evaluate how Sauti Yetu is keeping written records and utilizing them for programming purposes. Semi-structured interviews took place with current staff, teachers, African immigrant girls, and former mentors of previous African immigrant girls in the program. The interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes in order to understand how each participant made sense of their individual and collective experiences. Lastly, 60-90 minute participant observations conducted at all of Sauti Yetu's programming activities examined how Sauti Yetu is supplementing literacy supports for African immigrant girls within and outside of school. Field notes and thematic memos were taken after the interviews and interviews were transcribed, concurrent with document review and classroom observations.

Data collection and analysis was an on-going iterative process that occurred throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Interviews, observational field notes, and document data were initially coded using a coding guide based on literacy concepts in the literature such as critical literacy and culturally relevant literacy. Following this, we inductively coded across data methods and generated new themes that emerged such as self-determination and self-advocacy. Overall, this study builds trustworthiness through a triangulation of multiple methods. Rather than generalize the findings to all community-based immigrant organizations, the study engages the notion of transferability for other community-based immigrant organizations and urban schools.

¹ All names used in the article are pseudonyms

Findings

Fostering Critical Inquiry in Girls Leadership Spaces

Aligned with our critical and humanizing pedagogical framework, we see critical literacy as reading, writing, and speaking as care for the self. In our findings, we acknowledge that critical literacy involves how the girls come to a critical understanding of the world and the ways in which they can play an explicit and self-referential role in changing it (Morrell, 2008). In examining the leadership groups, we found that the girls take up major aims in communicating with others through constituting and reconstituting the self. Through identifying oneself in communion with others, the girls are achieving personal and collective advocacy, and therefore engaging in humanizing pedagogy that seeks to produce student consciousness and expression (Freire, 1970).

The strongest example of this consciousness was seen through the girls' educational debates on a particular issue facing the girls' present realities in their homes, local communities, and global communities: the act and purpose of wearing the hijab, girls' rights to education, early marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGC). First, in a large group, girls discussed the issue while relating it to their own lives and culture. Secondly, the girls wrote pros and cons for each issue in order to learn about multiple perspectives. They were asked not to just evaluate their own stance, but to also be able to conjure up reasons that might be against their own through brainstorming multiple perspectives on poster paper². For example, in *Figure 1*, they were asked to write down "what someone for early marriage would say," and "what someone against early marriage would say." Similarly, a second group evaluated the perspectives of women's right to education in *Figure 2*. Here, the group anchored the issue in relation to gender, comparing their rights of women to those of men. They challenged the notion that "women don't need education because they have to just take care of the household" and instead argued that women are "independent" and an education would "help promote growth and maturity," by maintaining a "broader perspective." In both instances, the girls evaluated their own stance with and against the backdrop of dominant narratives and the narratives of their own lives.

Lastly, they were asked to express each side's opinions to another partner as a form of debate practice. The last step of the project was to record a "commercial" with a "slogan" using the organization's iPads to formally record a public service announcement (PSA). For example, in one programmatic observation, Asha, a member of the group working on issues of early marriage created a sign for her PSA that said: "Stop early marriage for young women to help them to have education." In her recording, she stated, "Hi, My name is Asha. The reason why I chose this is because some girls marry early and they do not go to school anymore. For my idea to stop this is to help them have an education first so that they can get married."

As indicated here, Asha and her group members believed that early marriage was connected to a second issue — one that may prevent women from receiving a proper education. While Asha and the girls voiced such opinions, Ms. Lydia, the teacher of the Girls Leadership Group, made sure to have the women evaluate both sides of the issue and discuss how their argument may further challenge other reasons and notions of early marriage. Girls of the GELI program were asked to be articulate in their opinions by questioning and challenging dominant narratives of African women, a critical notion of dialogical transformation (Freire, 1970). Most importantly, not only were the girls asked to express their own opinions through collaborative

² Figure 1 and 2 included in the Appendix.

work, but they were also asked to take up social action by practicing public service announcements.

In such discussions, members of the GELI group were advocating for and reconstituting themselves in relation to their local and global community through assessing and evaluating all sides of the issues. By writing down their opinions, verbally expressing perspectives, and partaking in differing perspectives while critically challenging socio-educational and sociopolitical issues in their worlds, the girls learned how to challenge patterns of domination by constituting first, where they stand in relation to such issues; second, how such issues are played out in their local and global communities; and third, how where they personally stand can be a voice among a variety of perspectives regarding such issues. In critically examining these debates, the girls do not constitute truth but rather engage in the process of becoming — recognizing that as they develop their own perspectives on humanity, they are becoming engaged and active participants in the construction of knowledge (Cammarota & Romero, 2006; Freire, 1970). In multiple instances, our data demonstrated that critical reading, writing, and speaking allow students to engage in a humanizing pedagogy, one that recognizes that transformative and dialogical education is always in the process of being remade.

Facilitating Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy in Mentoring Relationships

The ethos of care within the organization and the mentoring relationships challenged gendered-raced-classed narratives embedded within some traditional images of African women to support African immigrant girls' self-advocacy in their lives. One fundamental aspect of critical care for the self can be characterized as self-advocacy in the midst of raced-gendered-classed narratives, such as sibling care and cooking, for African immigrant girls. By self-advocacy we mean the ways in which African immigrant girls engage holistically in self-defining their identities and acting on their knowledge emerging from their daily experiences.

The executive director of the organization, the program director of the GELI program and mentors, challenged the notion that sibling care was a barrier to the realization of African immigrant girls' desires and goals. For example, staff members within the organization created an environment and organizational structure whereby African immigrant girls could bring their siblings while they participated in events sponsored to support their empowerment as young women. Many mentors also spoke of the African immigrant girls' responsibilities to sibling care while simultaneously highlighting self-advocacy as one element of critical care of the self. For example, May noted the following about her mentee:

She's from a big Ivorian family so there were those typical things, like she would take care of younger kids and like when we would go to the library, she'd often have like her sister was maybe with her. I would imagine that that would be different were she a boy.

Unsurprisingly, May facilitated her mentee's self-advocacy in school. As she explained, I was

...really encouraging her to continue to sort of advocate for herself...doing sort of scenarios where she would pretend I was her Social Studies teacher and how she would get the help that she needed. How she would ask him and that sort of stuff. I think in high school, it's hard, I mean you kind of have to advocate for yourself....And I think she had sort of added pressure in that her parents weren't as comfortable stepping in as Upper

East Side private school parents probably are, when they're paying thirty-five thousand dollars a year for their kid to go to school in New York.

Similarly, Jane, another mentor, focused on sibling care and her mentee's desires. She noted,

She still has a lot of responsibilities at home. As much as I imagine she did when she was living in Africa...She had siblings that she was helping take care of, and she was struggling in school. But she was saying that she wanted to volunteer at a hospital, to get to know the hospital industry and consider being a doctor. ...And she was very happy with that...she's going to go down to the hospital to meet the volunteer coordinator. So that was the goal, for her to not just say what she wanted to do, but to follow through.

May and Jane provide a glimpse into their mentoring relationship as a counter pedagogical space that exists to challenge the narratives that sibling care and family responsibilities mean that African immigrant girls do not want an education or see their future outside the home. Black feminists advocate for the self-definition of Black women and the recognition of personal experience as a legitimate source of knowledge (Cooper, 1988; Hills Collins, 1990; Grant, 2013). In participating in this advocacy, the mentors engaged their mentees in dialogical knowledge production and action through role-play and future-oriented conversations that validated their lived experiences.

Another mentor, Tina, reflected on her relationship with her mentee and noted how “the heterosexual and the gendered identities that we both share are probably the most prominent things that, that I think shapes our dynamic between us.” She goes on to express the unique “dilemmas her mentee faces especially for her as a young woman from a culture where women are still expected to marry soon, to be mothers soon, and so anything outside of that will raise alarm, you know, it'll raise eyebrows.” Pedagogically, through conversation, encouragement and questioning techniques, she engages her mentee's expression, feelings, and knowledge of her preferences in the midst of the expectations for some West African women living in the U.S.:

I think I support her in encouraging her to make sure she understands her own preference, like, “Where is Janae in all of those expectations? What does Janae want?” So I'm always constantly saying, “Well, what do you want, what do you think, how do you express that? Do you feel you can express those things?”

In thinking through the preferences for what Janae wants, Tina also offers a more nuanced reflection on how gender influences the ways in which her mentee engages in self-advocacy to challenge the dichotomies of the image of the traditional/modern African immigrant women (Wane, 2013). For example, Tina goes on to state:

She's expressing the dilemmas...what it means to be a woman, what it means to be a West African woman in the tradition of her mother and her grandmothers...She's struggling with how to be this West African woman who is valued and appreciated within her context, within her cultural community and context.

And as her mentee shares with her, “Yeah, people think I don't know how to cook, you know, because I want to go to school and I care about education. You know, they automatically

assume that I can't do these other things." Tina's mentee allows us to see the ways in which she embodies a "both/and" perspective of how she sees herself and how she deliberately shapes how others will see her. For instance, she states that "a lot of her friends don't know that she can cook...even her male companions don't know she can throw down." Pedagogically, the mentoring relationship affords opportunities to understand how one African immigrant girl is in the process of self-defining within traditional/modern notions of the African women and the ways in which she utilizes her agency to choose when and where she will let others see the different identities that she embodies in her daily life.

Implications and Conclusion

This article highlights the rich and complex pedagogical work that takes place within Sauti Yetu, and specifically within the Girl's Empowerment Leadership Initiative. We illustrate how through dialogical knowledge production, African immigrant girls interrogate the ways in which raced-gendered-classed narratives are constructed to serve as barriers rather than spaces of possibilities in their lives. In the humanizing pedagogical spaces, African immigrant girls are encouraged to grapple with the raced-classed gendered narratives that represent them, and those that they experience such as early marriage, sibling care, and education. The pedagogical spaces disrupt the fixed qualities of these aforementioned discourses as they are presented as narratives that the young women are encouraged to fully engage with, and as narratives that are open for contestation in relation to the critical care of self. As illustrated in the findings, the humanizing pedagogical spaces led and facilitated by this community-based organization offer suggestions for community-based organizational staff, teachers and all concerned with the lives of African immigrant girls. Educators are encouraged to examine the ways in which they might draw upon the lives of African immigrant students who are knowledge producers and agents of change acting on imagined possibilities for their lives. Here, Sauti Yetu engages in humanizing pedagogies, which render a viscerally significant learning space for African immigrant girls as they strive to lead self-determined lives in the United States.

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Appendix

Figure 1

Early Marriage for African girls

Reasons why it should not change

- Financial (\$\$) help for the girls' family
- To prevent early pregnancy outside of marriage
- After 25-35 years old, women are not seen as "marriage material"

Reasons why it should change

- Girls are not as independent as they could be
- After marriage many girls drop out of school

Figure 2

Girls Education

Important

- You can support yourself- don't have to depend on husband
- Helps promote growth and maturity-a broader perspective
- Good future
- Knowledges [sic]
- Independent
- Feminism (women should not always let the men know everything)

Not as important as boys' education

- Women don't need education b/c they have to just take care of household
- Men should have more power and control over women
- The husband can take care of the woman; Therefore education is not the only way to succeed

Nanny, Momma, Portia, and Us: Two Black Jamaican Immigrant Women Conquer the Ph.D. and Navigate Academe

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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In this scholarly personal narrative, two Jamaican-born, Black immigrant women scholars reflect critically on their motivations to pursue a doctoral degree and the synergistic origins of their Afro-Caribbean feminist orientations. The authors, immediately upon meeting each other in a Ph.D. program (six years ago), formed a unique bond that resulted from their tacit understanding of the strong ethnic, cultural, and womanist influences in their development as female scholars. The authors in the article explore the ways in which intersectionalities between Caribbean ethnic identity, historical Afro-Caribbean educational discourses, voluntary immigrant status, and womanist leadership were constitutive in the development of personal agency, cultural adaptation of feminist ideologies, and likely resulted in resilience, perseverance and social justice orientations in their academic career and personal lifestyle choices.

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“...the way in which the circumstances of history, natural geography and resources of the region have evolved into something which is viewed by others and by ourselves as Caribbean, despite colonialism, and because of colonization” (P. Mohammed, 1998, p.7).

Black immigrants, a population which represents about eight percent of the total U.S. foreign-born population (Grieco, 2010), have a complex dual identification that is often overlooked in American society. We have a visible racial status in the Black/White American race dichotomy and racially identify ourselves as Blacks, and an ironically invisible marginalized ethnic status as we are often mistakenly identified as African Americans (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Kasinitz, 1992). Bryce-Laporte (1972) eloquently describes the dichotomous experience of Black immigrants in America by stating, “On the national level, they suffer double invisibility, in fact-as Blacks and as Black foreigners” (p. 31).

Despite National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and U.S. Census data year after year showing that African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants, after emigrating, have higher rates of degree attainment than any other American immigrant group, except Asians (Erisman & Looney, 2007), we are practically invisible in higher education research. As a whole, such research often fails to delineate or address the multiple ethnicities, national origins and family background of learners within each of the five broad federal racial classifications that are designated by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White, and two ethnicities, Hispanic or Latino and non-Hispanic or Latino (Humes, Jones & Ramirez, 2011) and are the concepts most frequently used to report campus diversity. This bare minimum standard of monolithic reporting of campus enrollment data suppresses information about immigrant learners’ social and economic characteristics that may influence their educational experiences and may unwittingly reinforce the marginalization and, by implication, subordination of the unique educational issues of sizeable ethnic immigrant communities within each racial category.

As social justice researchers, both authors are well aware of the issues facing Black women in academia. Consequently, our impetus for writing this article is similar to Fries-Britt and Turner Kelly’s (2005) article entitled, “Retaining Each Other: Narratives of Two African American Women in the Academy.” In this article, the authors use the approach of scholarly personal narratives to situate their experience in the academy, giving the reader guidance, wisdom, and strategies for retention and success. We pay homage to their work and other scholars within the Black feminist thought and critical race theory traditions who have written about legitimizing the voices and experiences of Black women in an academy where majoritarian and Eurocentric stories are seen as normative. Our contribution to the canon builds and compliments the extant literature but essentially disaggregates race and ethnicity, as we became excited that we would be able to tell our story from the epistemic lens of our “triple realities...Black, female, and immigrants” (Palmer, 1983, p.3) – therefore, not only as Black women scholars, but as Jamaican immigrant women scholars in institutions of higher education in the United States.

As such, in this essay, we first invoke the constructive methodological tradition of scholarly personal narrative (Nash, 2004), to situate our autobiographical sketches as qualitative data that reveal the self-preserving ways that immigrants use education as a tool of liberation (hooks, 1994). Through our story, we honor our foremothers whose home-centered feminism prepared and sustained us during the doctoral journey. Second, we socio-culturally contextualize our convergent pathways to the Ph.D.; thereby, illustrating how our Jamaican-immigrant culture

steeped in hard work and collectivism resulted in the application of “othermothering” (Bernard et al., (2000) strategies used to support each other. Third, as Jamaican-immigrant female scholars, we want to provide our fellow educators with an insider’s perspective on a phenomenological unique finding of our personal data that we have labeled an *immigrant education ethic*. Finally, we hope to inspire and empower a next generation, especially immigrant women of color, who are considering doctoral study and a career in the academy.

Using Scholarly Personal Narratives: Legitimizing Our Experiences as a Form of Social Justice

The qualitative research tradition is laden with methodological strands that allow researchers to honor and re-center the stories of participants as valid and reliable. Narrative inquiry in qualitative research centers stories and storytelling as methodically sound (Gubrium & Holstein, 1998), multidimensional (Chapman, 2004), serve as sites of resistance for disenfranchised and marginalized populations and act as vehicles of persistence and liberation (Rodriguez, 2006). Concomitantly, personal narratives are rooted in intersectionality and dimensionality espousing temporality and point of view (Oches & Capps, 1996). Such positionality is entrenched in the socio-cultural, political and economic engines of daily life. Situated in the narrative tradition, “Nanny, Momma, Portia and Us,” conterminously immix our heuristic experiences with race, gender, immigration, higher education, and culture as a way to underscore how we navigated academe and subsequently conquered the Ph.D. using critical and sociocultural theories, as well our Jamaican ethnic identity as our conduit.

In the United States, the discourse on Blackness, social justice, higher education, and their connections with the immigrant experience is often not echoed or is silenced. Murray-Johnson (2013), using a critical race feminism approach, echoes similar sentiments as she calls for more “cultural decoding” (p. 55) between the experiences of African American and Caribbean women in academe. Alfred (2003), in her qualitative study of Anglophone Caribbean women in higher education institutions, found that:

some experienced marginality, alienation, and isolation, which they attributed partly to their Caribbean culture, their language, and their racioethnic identity. Their marginality also resulted from the behavior of faculty and students who initially “ignored them in discourse communities that were not sensitive to cultural differences. (p.256)

It is within this context that we want to re-center the doctoral experience to extrapolate the pedagogies of resilience, connectivity, and womanism that we utilized to complete our Ph.D.s. Moreover, as a scholarly personal narrative (SPN) is our methodology, we adopt the philosophy that, “she who learns teaches” (Bernard et al., 2000), a finding from their qualitative study on the role of feminism, africentricity in higher education, and othermothering of African Caribbean students and faculty in Canada.

The validity of voice is our catalyst for situating this article as a scholarly personal narrative (SPN). Robert Nash is an important contributor to the field of personal narratives, more specifically scholarly personal narratives (Nash & Bradley, 2011). For Nash and Bradley (2011), SPN is the intersectionality between personal stories and scholarly research. Consequently, Nash

& Bradley (2011) term the process of intersecting the personal and the academic as “Me-search and Research.” According to Nash and Bradley (2012):

SPN is ethnographically self-interrogating; it starts with the writer’s life rather than with the lives and research of others; it uses the author’s personal story to test out a hypothesis; and it functions as a way for writers to author themselves by exploring an abiding concern that seriously interests them from a developmental perspective. (p. 4)

Furthermore, Nash and Bradley (2011) also let us know the types of narratives included in SPN. They state, “SPN writing sometimes contains combinations of autoethnography, memoir writing, personal narrative essays, and autobiography” (p. 21). The multidimensionality of SPN underscores the permeating anchors of the methodology as its blurred categories and boundary effects (Langellier, 1989) highlight the nuances in narrative methodologies, which we believe accurately mirrors the intersecting nature of identity and the constructed realities of being Black, Jamaican women in the United States. Thus, in the spirit of multidimensionality, epistemologically, our Me-search and research, teaching and writing, are influenced by Black feminist thought, critical pedagogies, such as critical race theory. In addition, our work is also laden in critical theories, such as Freireian critical consciousness, social justice education, Jamaican history, language and culture, and Black diasporic writers and philosophers, such as Marcus Garvey. SPN, as inquiry, facilitates and fuels our subjectivity that “stories that people tell about their lives are never simply individual but are told in historically specific times and settings and draw on the rules and model in circulation that govern how story elements link together in a narrative logics” (Maynes, Pierce, Laslett, 2008, p. 3). We invite you to take the journey with us as we historicize and embark on situating our personal narratives within academe and the wider society.

Autobiographical Sketch: Cherrel Miller-Dyce

Family, community, commitment, collectivity, and an abiding work ethic were branded in the fabric of my soul as a child growing up in Jamaica. Our family operated on systems thinking, in that the whole is greater than the parts. Such a Bronfrenbrennian epistemology has shaped my interactions with humanity, as well as the predilection for researching and teaching about issues of social justice and diversity. Analogously, my axiological and ontological frames of reference were influenced by the stories my grandmother and grandfather told me. They were rural farmers but were firm in their convictions that I must be educated. As such, when my parents decided that my mother would migrate to Canada to seek a better life for us, my grandparents and aunts stepped in to help my father raise me. I truly understand the social and cultural capital of being raised by the village.

At the age of 12, I left Jamaica to join my mother in Canada. My grandmother and father put me on the plane in Kingston, Jamaica, and I will never forget the moment my grandmother silently looked into my eyes and transferred all her hopes and dreams, the lessons of humility, hard work, faith, longsuffering, and community to me. When I arrived in Canada, my mother reminded me, “You are here to get an education.” I knew, as I always did in Jamaica, that any educational accomplishments I received were not just me for but for my community. In the genealogy of my scholarship are prophetic, cultivating, and nurturing Black Jamaican women,

who knew nothing about the academic discourse of womanism or Black feminist thought but yet were valorous advocates of identity formation and development.

For many of us, the immigration process is seeded in self-doubt, cultural shock, linguistic challenges, and xenophobia from others who view immigrants as the other. I experienced all of these emotions in my Canadian schooling experience. However, because my identity was formed and shaped by the village, I had the social capital and the community cultural wealth of knowing that despite the challenges, I had the village as my strength. Coleman (1988) describes social capital as:

Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible. Like physical capital and human capital, social capital is not completely fungible but may be specific to certain activities. A given form of social capital that is valuable in facilitating certain actions may be useless or even harmful for others. Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors. (p. 98)

Social capital was provided for me by my extended family both in Canada and Jamaica who kept me motivated to continue my education. Their words of encouragement, life lessons, and financial support were the elements of social capital, which allowed me to continue to success. Like social capital, I relied on my indigenous knowledge, essentially my community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) to navigate the Canadian and American school systems using the stories my family told me, as well as Jamaican cultural pride where Blackness was celebrated and not devalued. Such a construction of and use of community cultural wealth echoes Yosso's (2005) premise that "community cultural wealth is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression (p. 77). Undoubtedly, my early years in Jamaica concretized my identity, and it is with national pride that I continue to conquer academe.

I was educated in the Canadian school system, and after receiving my bachelor's degree, I migrated to the United States, where I completed both my master's and doctoral degrees. Cheryll and I met when I was in the second year of my doctoral program. I was a full-time graduate assistant, and she was relocating to the area and applied to our program. As part of the program's recruiting effort, I spoke to Cheryll over the phone, providing her with student perspective on the program. When we met face to face, we bonded over our shared Jamaican cultural identity, family traditions, and cultural knowledge. We began to relate to each other how our mothers and grandmothers and countless other women in the Jamaican context "othermothered" each other. Socioculturally and linguistically, we utilized our Jamaican identity to help us navigate academe because we knew that we had an added perspective to this process, which was the immigrant experience. So, in classrooms and discussion with faculty and peers, we filtered the narrative through the immigrant frame of reference and the Jamaican National Motto: "out of many, one people." We identified with our African American colleagues, but the cultural synchronicity of our Jamaican ethnic identity provided us with a wider lens to navigate academe.

Autobiographical Sketch: Cheryll Albold

I hail from a long line of Afro-Caribbean feminists who did not know about Black feminist epistemology. They simply lived challenging lives with grace and a strong voice. My young grandmother, married at age 17, birthed and raised eight (five boys and three girls) children almost by herself, while her husband was abroad in England working to support the family, which remained in Jamaica. My mother first came to the United States by herself, leaving behind her three young children in the care of her sister and husband, and worked tirelessly to first migrate her family and then later as the primary wage earner for many years, including after a culturally groundbreaking decision to go through divorce rather than suffer in a failing marriage. I left Jamaica at six and arrived in the United States in 1975, the first of her three female children to join my mother in New York.

During my grade school years, I stuck out. Ironically, although my “alien” registration card (“green card”) granted me entry and permanent U.S. residency status, I may as well have been a Martian. My appearance, accent, even the food I ate at the lunch table, and definitely my reserved behavior in the classroom, reinforced my sense of being alien and other than White and other than African American. Specifically, I recall one day coming home in tears after being teased by Black kids who looked like me but did not accept me. I went to my mother, collapsing at her feet and begging to return to Jamaica. She embraced me but did not try to assuage my insecurities with soothing words. Instead, she held me away from her, looked into my eyes and told me in a stern tone to be proud of where I came from. Moreover, she told me that she, too suffered indignities and struggles in the workplace, but our role as immigrants was to work hard and prove that we belonged here just like anyone else. She told me that she came to America so that I would have the opportunities that she did not to be educated at the highest levels and in the best institutions. She told me that I descended from proud and strong women in our family history who knew sacrifice and deep personal struggle. She told me they would expect me to accomplish great things through my education and eventually my profession. In the full circle of life, over 30 years later, I found myself having a similar conversation with my own daughter.

The next day, I returned to school with resolve, not just to be as good, but to be the best, and thanks to my mother, I now knew the classroom was my playing field. So, I learned to speak without an accent, and I worked hard in school. I won over my teachers with humility and respect for their teaching. I read voraciously and soaked up learning like a desiccated sponge. Later, I won partial scholarships to pursue my bachelor’s degree and worked full time while I obtained my master’s degree. During that time, I married and started my family. However, my mother’s words that day about obligations to her migrant hopes for my education attainment, meant that eventually I would also pursue a Ph.D. In 2011, the time was right, and the opportunity presented itself in the form of a spousal job opportunity in another state. I researched the doctoral programs in the area and chose one that aligned with my career goals and which would expand on the educational concepts learned in my master’s program. I prepared myself to have a solitary journey-to be as I had been in the past-one of few Blacks, few women, and most certainly, I felt sure that I would be the only Afro-Caribbean or definitely Jamaican-born woman.

During a phone call to learn more about the program, all my assumptions were laid to waste. On the phone speaking to Cherrel about the doctoral program, I recognized tinges of a familiar vernacular. That unmistakable Jamaican accent was a familiar embrace. Throughout the program, we would spend endless hours comparing our notes on our journey to the Ph.D. We talked endlessly about our Jamaican culture, our respect and deep love for our mothers and

grandmothers who inspired us. We bonded as Black women, and even more as Jamaicans, and most importantly as Afro-Caribbean mother-scholars nurturing our families as we nurtured our scholarship. Although we saw other people who looked like us also on the same doctoral journey, it was our shared ethno-cultural experiences and culturally-based valuing of education that mostly facilitated our adaptation to the rigors of doctoral study. Through our Afro-Caribbean bond, we had an immediate and enduring sisterhood to support each other in the process. Above all else, we were motivated to succeed, not only for ourselves, but also for our families and the Jamaican community. More importantly, we were determined to teach others how to succeed as we did. In order to illuminate the multiple identities and spaces that we navigated on our academic journey, we believe that a discourse on race, gender, and educational aspiration is necessary for underscoring our womanist perspective.

Nanny, Momma, Portia, and Us: Contextualizing Gender, Race, and Educational Aspiration

Jamaicans comprise the largest population (19 percent) of any single Anglophone Caribbean group, which comprises 54 percent of the more than three million foreign-born Blacks in the United States (Grieco, 2010). As young Jamaican children, we learned life lessons in three impressionable ways: through national folklore, from the aphorisms and teachings of our mothers and an entire village of extended family, and finally, through the examples set by the islands' leaders and public figures.

An unfortunate and common misconception of Afro-Caribbean women is that they lack interest in civil and women's rights (Mohammed, 1998; Palmer, 1983). Afro-Caribbean women may appear to embrace, instead of challenge, traditional gender roles. Mohammed (1998) counters this stereotype with the explanation that Caribbean feminism assumes a unique form beyond traditional ways of thinking about feminism because island colonial history and imperialistic paradigms necessitated that men and women work together not against each other. She describes a multi-tasking form of Caribbean feminism, explaining that throughout history and modern times, the conditions of men and women in the Caribbean are intertwined. Therefore, the movement "has responded to the same issues [for women and men] of class, race/ethnicity, nationhood and to gender identity" (Mohammed, 1998 p. 17). One historical example is Nanny, a legendary Black Jamaican maroon and slave revolt leader in maroon folklore, as tales of her heroism (including deflecting bullets with her behind) portray her as a fierce protector of her people from oppressions of slavery (Bascomb, 2014). Based on her heroism, Nanny was historicized as one of the seven Jamaican national heroes. Most importantly, she is the only female in this category and is an inspiration for many Jamaican women who are advocates for social change, economic opportunity and development and political consciousness.

Another characteristic of Caribbean feminism, articulated by Mohammed (1998), may best be described as being "nurturing in recognition of a shared condition" (p. 28). Our mommas [inclusive of our grandmothers] were our first Afro-Caribbean feminist role models and taught us to eschew deficit model thinking. Alfred (2003, p. 249) found that early Caribbean socialization had prepared the women in her study for two significant things: "how to live through struggle" and from that struggle "how to learn." Watching and heeding the wise words of our mommas prepared us for the rigors of the Ph.D. because they imparted to us their foremothers' ways and practices of managing their households, providing for their families and raising children in the face of a great many challenges, including survival in a foreign land. This kind of womanist

modeling occurred outside the ivory towers of academia and compliments Hill Collins' (1999) assertion that the intellectual tradition of Black women ways of knowing occur where Black women work and is enacted by those who do not hold academic degrees, but who are the conduits for framing a particular Black women standpoint. Hence, the role of the female voice or the maternal connection is an essential tenet of Black feminist and womanist thought (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002). Black feminists, such as Patricia Hills Collins and bell hooks, often write about the lessons taught and learned from grandmothers and mommas.

It was from our mothers that we learned the valor to stand up for ourselves as women, but more importantly we learned tacit and heuristic skills to negotiate life's uncertainties through planning and preparation. Thus, our mothers (momma), and grandmothers in their absences when they emigrated leaving us behind, were our first teachers and therein were pedagogically our first "warm demanders" (Kleinfeld, 1975). Trained educators who skillfully employ "warm demander" pedagogy simultaneously occupy a position of warmth and trust, while actively demanding the absolute best academically from their students (Adkins-Coleman, 2010; Bondy & Ross, 2008). This is familiar to us as the strategy that our Jamaican mommas successfully used as a lever to shift our focus from skin color generated inequities to the liberating power of hard work, self-sacrifice, and intellectual development, essentially creating for us a unique epistemic standpoint from which to filter our experiences.

We had to navigate and manage multiple tasks in our doctoral program and at home. Without knowing it, our mothers bequeathed to us three important elements for successful learning: warmly instilling in us that we had the intellect and capability to learn, teaching us to lead our households and our lives, and holding us to a culturally-based high expectation to achieve the highest degree of education possible. During our program, this came full circle as the authors carried on this tradition, serving as warm demanders and "othermothers" to each other during the seemingly double juggernauts that were comprehensive exams and dissertation writing and individual challenges presented by a pregnancy and childbirth two weeks prior to defense (Cherrel) and change of dissertation topic after proposal stage (Cheryll).

Concomitantly, Portia Simpson-Miller, a trailblazer who has now changed Jamaica's history as its first female prime minister (Adams, 2006), the third female head of government in the Anglophone Caribbean and the second person in the history of the Jamaican government to be non-consecutively elected to the office twice, is another example of how the intersectionality of race, gender, culture and social change in Jamaica has influenced our lives. In highlighting the shift in Jamaica, electing a female prime minister, Adams (2006) posits that "people accepted Simpson-Miller because - like our ancestors - she is a survivor" (p.185). For us, this type of survivor narrative transcends geopolitical boundaries in that we no longer live in Jamaica; however, we are still socio-culturally, economically, and politically attached to our country, although we now work and live in the larger Black diaspora.

As such, our inclusion of the Honorable Portia Simpson Miller here is in her symbolic value as another Afro-Caribbean womanist whom we admire for her activism and stalwart defender against inequity, and according to Jamaican Information Service (JIS), "On January 5, 2012, Mrs. Simpson Miller was sworn in as Prime Minister of Jamaica for the second time. As Prime Minister, she currently has Ministerial oversight of Information, Development, Sport, Women's Affairs and Defense" (JIS). Like our deeply personal connection with Nanny and our mommas, Simpson-Miller's embrace and understanding of her unique subjective positionality within the Jamaican political and social context is a manifest of the unique kind of Caribbean feminism that Mohammed (1998) discusses and which resonates deeply with us. It is precisely

these kinds of Jamaican national and Afro-Caribbean gender-embedded leadership and pride that have fortified us to persist in leadership roles in various American institutions of higher education.

Adams (2005), in her discussion of gender in the Caribbean, forwards that “given the importance of the inter-subjective, we need to have a better appreciation of the myriad cultural locales in which subjectivities develop” (p.11). Prime Minister Simpson Miller, dubbed by the public as “sister P,” is a living exemplifier of the consanguinity evident in our shared racialized history, gendered affiliation, cultural background, and lessons from our foremothers. This quote points to the importance of how some Jamaicans see her legacy:

In her, they see a glimmer of hope, a change for the better. She exudes the strength of black women before her: Nanny of the Maroons, Ida B. Wells, Harriet Tubman and Shirley Chisholm. Right now, Simpson-Miller makes Jamaicans feel the possibilities are endless. (Adams, 2006, p. 186)

Overall, in contextualizing gender, race, and educational aspirations, we have outlined how historical and contemporary Black Jamaican women have influenced our identity and motivation to successfully complete our doctoral studies, thereby unearthing for us a central component of our success. In a critical phenomenological examination of our stories as data, we propose that a central component that supported and marshalled our success was an adherence to what we term the *immigrant education ethic*.

Immigrant Education Ethic: A Phenomenological Finding from Scholarly Personal Narratives

Historically, a deep drive for education and academic success is well known to be highly valued in immigrant populations (Ogbu, 1990; Wechsler, 1977). Anglophone Caribbean immigrants, in particular, have long viewed emigration as a means of economic opportunity for themselves and simultaneously the best means of securing an educational advantage for their children (Alfred, 2003; Palmer, 1983). Moreover, Anglophone Caribbeans’ reliance on education for generational uplift uniquely stems from an enmeshed and historical and socio-politically entrenched British colonial ideology that rewarded educational attainment as a ladder for post-colonialism social mobility (Austin, 1983; Palmer, 1983). In her essay on Jamaican culture and ideology, Austin (1983) describes a continuing “ideology of education” that existed even in pre-emancipation Jamaica, when free colored persons could apply for the same privileges as Whites in the society, but only if they were baptized Anglican and educated. Austin writes “the ideology of the situation was such that education and a moral life made one equal to a white man” (p. 235). A similar, albeit more contemporary, view was summarized by Alfred (2003):

Anglophone Caribbean immigrants bring with them a disciplinary approach to learning that stems from their early schooling socialization. In the West Indian culture, academic success was engineered, nurtured, and rewarded with upward social mobility and high visibility. Because of these rewards, there was a disciplined approach to learning that was promoted by the schools, the family and community. (p. 296)

We not only concur with these statements; we would further add that the same discipline and self-determination exhibited by one's parents' strong immigrant work ethic (think Jamaicans popular television parody of having multiple jobs), post emigration becomes transmitted to the first and second generation children and concomitantly manifests in a parental and ethnic community with insistently high expectations and culturally valuing of education (Alfred, 2003). Jamaican immigrant children are held as accountable to work hard for our educational achievements as our parents were working hard to provide us with the opportunity.

Because we emphatically know this was a guiding ideology during our pursuit of the Ph.D., we have labeled it for ourselves as a parallel *immigrant education ethic*. Although similar in concept, we differentiate immigrant education ethic from other explanations that describe immigrants' emphasis on the importance of education, such as Kao and Tienda's (1995) "immigrant optimism," because for us, as insiders to the phenomena, we understood education to be a core learned value, and an ethic denotes a deeper commitment to a principle rather than a simple belief. We define the *immigration education ethic*, by our actual experiences, to be the manifest principle, wherein Jamaican-immigrant parental dreams and goals of higher education for their children are believed to be most successfully fulfilled through the coterminous labor of parents in the workplace and insistence on self-discipline of the child in school.

We immediately recognized this *immigrant education ethic* in each other's motivations and decisions to pursue the Ph.D. We realized that our bond while completing our doctoral program was forged by a shared aforementioned West Indian and British colonial ideological identification with the liberating power of education. Another way of viewing this is that the *immigrant education ethic* is a type of socio-cultural indoctrination of Jamaicans and other Afro-Caribbeans, which causes us to aspire to higher education as an equalizer and tool of liberation (hooks, 1994).

Thus, we strongly believe that we are the empirical evidence of the success of such an absolute sense of culturally-oriented educational ethical obligation, in that our parents came to this country with limited or no higher education. And in one generation, we, along with siblings and other first generation children in our families, are now physicians, lawyers, veterinarians, and academic scholars. Consequently, in the critical race theoretical tradition, institutions of higher education can more effectively engineer the recruitment and retention of Black immigrant students by acknowledging the real differences and avoiding the conflation of race and ethnicity in the creation of strategic interventions. Doing so will facilitate the intentional design of learning environments, which may better support the self-actualization, matriculation, and success of Black immigrant students. Moreover, we argue that a disaggregation of race and ethnicity, in examining the motivations and influences on the experiences of Black students in higher education, allows for the nuances in the familial, geopolitical, and sociocultural experiences of the Black diaspora, thereby increasing the validity of data on the origins of educational attainment and achievement of Black students in American institutions of higher education.

Unfolding New Possibilities within the Fiery Melting Pot: The Disaggregation of Race and Ethnicity

Unfolding Race and Ethnicity

Most relevant to the backgrounds of the authors, adult Afro-Caribbean immigrant learners (Erisman & Looney, 2007) and moreover, Caribbean women (Alfred, 2003), are already of

critical masses on the nation's campuses. Case in point, immigrant students comprise approximately 12 percent of the U.S. undergraduate population (Erisman & Looney, 2007) and Black immigrants now surpass African American natives' enrollment at the most selective and elite colleges, in percentages double to our share in the population (Massey et al., 2007).

Despite the significant acculturation, socio-economic and educational advancement of second and third generations of various racial and ethnic groups, as a whole extant and prospective immigrant college students face significant barriers and challenges, while their plights continue to only receive marginal attention in the higher education canon. For example, U.S. Black populations have lower levels of educational attainment (Erisman & Looney, 2007) than Asians and Whites. Although both authors obtained a Ph.D., census education attainment data shows that Blacks actually earn less than one percent of all doctoral degrees awarded. Furthermore, only an approximate 1.52% of foreign-born persons earn doctoral degrees (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2013). Furthermore, NCES data reveal that Black immigrant families, and subsequently their children, suffer from lower socio-economics (as we did) and are non-traditional aged learners and many with only certificates or associate's degrees. Furthermore, beyond the bachelor's degree, increasingly Black immigrants have delayed entry to graduate study after the bachelor's (as we did) and are often serving as heads of households (as we were) during their degree studies (Erisman & Looney, 2007).

Recommendations for Future Research

An important consequence of disaggregating ethnic national origin from race is that it will allow us to construct better theoretical models to enhance education for all. Jamaican philosopher Marcus Garvey and national hero said, "Do not swallow wholly the education system of another group, except you have perfectly analyzed it and found it practical and useful to your group" (Martin, 1986, p. 97). In future scholarly educational investigations, researchers should delve deeper to uncover differences and commonalities when intersections of gender, national origin, and ethnocentric cultural identifications come together to make up the full range and chorus of Black student voices in U.S. postsecondary institutions. Accepting Garvey's charge, we must constantly interrogate pedagogy and determine how we can teach in a way that values multiple epistemologies and warmly nurtures our learner but demands the highest academic expectations.

It is reasonable to believe that, due to their native backgrounds, Black immigrant college students, in contrast to their African American peers, may differ in their incorporation experiences and perspectives on their role in higher education. Yet, most studies on immigrant academic achievement have been myopic in a focus on school-aged children (Kao & Tiendo, 1995; Ogbu, 1990). Erisman and Looney (2007) note that "the many immigrants who enter the country as adults are rarely discussed in the academic literature or policy debates about access to education" (p. 7). Thus, our main contention is that the omission of the potential influences of ethnic and national origin is a major shortcoming of much of the higher education research on the contemporary experiences of Black students in higher education (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Moreover, since the U.S. Census Bureau does not use the term "immigrant" in any of its published statistical data, conceptual critical racial theoretical frameworks using the federal classifications may be derived from conflated racial and ethnic quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, they are potentially steeped in a mono-racial axiology, and as a result, may only accurately profile and enrich the construction of native Blacks' ethnic and socio-political experience and cumulative response to decades of racism, oppression, microaggressions (Solorzano, Ceja &

Yosso, 2000) and more specifically, to racial stereotype threats (Steele & Aronson, 1995) in U.S. postsecondary education. Indeed Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito (1998), writing about deficits in the college student development literature, specifically referenced the prior omission of “national origin” (p. 37) and other subgroup characteristics as a previous shortcoming in the racial and identity development literature. Retrospectively, the authors acknowledged that “the psychological relationship of racial and ethnic members within their own group is a less studied aspect of diversity literature” (Evans et al. p. 72).

In the formulation of future race-related critical educational pedagogy (Ladson Billings, 1998), scholars must move beyond a monolithic lens of race, at least as it has traditionally been used, and begin to magnify and amplify the heterogeneity of ethnographic experiences across the diaspora of Black learners in the American higher education system. Born in Jamaica, we were first generation immigrants, whereas born in the United States, our daughters are now considered the second generation immigrants – native-born children of at least one immigrant parent. As such, we must affirm the pursuit of education across multiple immigrant generations, continuing to give strong guidance but offer to our children endless freedoms to learn as who they are. It is our own momma-type hope that they bring a fresh perspective to campus that will be embraced and that they will succeed in the fiery melting pot beyond our pedagogy of possibilities.

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Narratives of Foreign-Born International Teachers: Implications for Dialogic Leadership for Social Justice

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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In this study, the authors explore the narratives of twelve women from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom, Kenya, and Romania who were recruited to teach in U.S. schools. The authors ask the questions: (a) What “identity resources” do foreign-born international teachers utilize in order to make the transitional shift in their understanding of the sociocultural context of their teaching in the U.S.? (b) How can narratives of foreign-born international teachers inform inclusive leadership practices in schools? Teacher narratives are used to describe and define teachers’ professional identities and lived experiences. This study offers implications for educational leaders.

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The presence of foreign-born international teachers in urban and suburban schools has increased over the past few years as a result of international teacher recruitment programs (Francis, 2005; Hutchinson, 2006). Barber (2003) estimated that about 15,000 foreign-born international teachers were employed in the U.S. in 2002, and over three-quarters worked in public schools. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT, 2009) indicated that the number of foreign-born international teachers had risen to an estimated 17,000 by 2007.

Teacher recruitment programs seek international foreign-born teachers in order to alleviate shortages in critical content areas (Darling-Hammond, 1999), reduce class sizes (Hutchison, 2006), and diversify the teaching force with experienced qualified educators (Bascia, 1996; Flores, Keehn, & Perez, 2002). Other researchers argue that foreign-born international teachers bring a wealth of knowledge from their own sociocultural locations that can improve the quality of education American students receive (Ross, 2003). Community activists suggest that international foreign-born minority teachers, particularly from the Caribbean, provide models of Black achievement for Black students and can identify with the increasing number of Caribbean immigrant students in public schools today (Baker, 2002; English, 2001; Green-Evans, 2005; Goffe, 2001). Although there are benefits to having foreign-born international teachers, current recruitment initiatives overlook potential concerns.

First, there is the assumption that foreign-born international teachers can easily transition from one country to the next (Peeler & Jane, 2005) and can transfer the necessary skills to their new location to effectively teach students from different cultural backgrounds (McAllister, 2002). Moreover, because the literature offers little data on the experiences of newly recruited foreign-born international teachers (Fee, 2011; Francis, 2005; Manswell-Butty, 2003; Ross, 2003), few assertions can be made regarding their successes in U.S. urban schools, the perspectives that guide their practice, or how they develop relationships with students in American contexts. In this paper, we use the term foreign-born international teachers because the term immigrant legally denotes a person who has a permanent residency in the U.S. In contrast, the teachers who were recruited were accepted into the country on a three-year work visa. They share similar experiences with immigrant women who leave their home countries to seek better work and living opportunities in the U.S.

Background and Objectives

By 2007, AFT indicated that there were 33 international recruiting firms operating in the U.S. These international recruiting agencies, such as the Visiting International Faculty (VIF) and the Teachers Placement Group (TPG), are paid a service fee to help school districts alleviate shortages. In some instances, individuals seeking employment in the U.S. are also required to pay a fee depending on each agency's agreement. At least 22 state education agencies were designated as exchange visitor program sponsors for international teachers. States such as New York, Alabama, California, Kentucky, and North Carolina were among those that actively recruited teachers through these programs. Selected candidates were offered three-year teaching contracts on temporary cultural exchange J-1 visas, and opportunities to enroll in master's degree programs paid for by some of the participating school districts.

In this paper, we address the identity resources that the foreign-born international teachers utilized as they made their transitional shift in their understanding of the sociocultural context of their teaching in the U.S, and locate this inquiry within the personal, professional, and situated dimensions of teacher identity (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006). We also discuss the

stages of acculturation to examine the ways foreign-born international teachers' transition to living and working in a new context. We then explore the manner in which teachers exhibit social justice teaching in their practices through a caring pedagogy, and consider how these teachers used their identity resources to aid in their development of this pedagogical teaching lens. We conclude with implications for dialogic leadership and how school leaders can support and assist teachers through their transitional phases of working in the U.S. context.

The Personal, Professional, and Situated Dimensions of Identity

Teacher identities are defined as teachers' sense of self in the classroom and within the sociocultural context of the school and the larger community (Day & Kington, 2008; Day, Kington, Storbart & Sammons, 2006). Teacher identities are formed within multiple contexts and are shaped by their knowledge, dispositions, values, beliefs, interests, and orientations toward educational change (Drake, Spillane & Hufferd-Ackles, 2001; Spillane, 2000). Additionally, a teacher's sense of self is formed in relation to others and shifts with years of experience in various contexts. A person's identity is continuously evolving, changing, and shifting as one makes meaning of new experiences that are intertwined with prior constructs of the self. In this light, we define identity resources as the experiences that facilitated foreign-born international teachers' process of becoming better educators of diverse learners in the American context. These identity resources were drawn from the personal, professional, and situated dimensions of their identity.

The personal dimension of identity is "located in the life outside [of] school and is linked to family and social roles" (Day & Kington, 2008, p. 11). For the foreign-born international teachers, the personal dimension of identity exemplified why their relocation was challenging. Some left stable and successful teaching positions, while others forfeited retirement packages. They sold their homes, furniture, and cars; and left behind aging parents, close families, friends, colleagues, and students with whom they had developed close relationships. However, for all of these teachers, the move was worth the life adjustments, as it provided the benefit of living in the U.S. while gaining international teaching experience.

The professional dimension of teachers' identity entails "the social and political expectations of what a good teacher is and the educational ideals of the teacher. This professional dimension is open to the influence of long term policy and social trends as to what constitutes a good teacher or classroom practitioner" (Day & Kington, 2008, p. 11). In this dimension, foreign-born international teachers experienced a changing sense of self as they expanded their professional identities and questioned what it would take to be effective and successful teachers in a new country. "The situated dimension is located in a specific context and is affected by local conditions such as school pupil behavior, leadership, support and feedback" (Day & Kington, 2008, p. 11). In this dimension, foreign-born international teachers are faced with the challenges of learning to teach within school cultural norms and expectations, while developing cross-cultural relationships with students, colleagues, and school administrators.

The personal, professional, and situated dimensions are parts of an intertwined "unavoidable relationship" (Day et al., 2006 p. 603) that encompasses a teacher's sense of self in the classroom and larger community. Teachers draw their identity resources from all three dimensions as they make meaning of their new experiences in U.S. contexts.

Methodology

We utilized the foreign-born international teachers' "stories of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) as data to explore the identity resources that facilitated teachers' navigation in their new school sites. Narrative inquiry, which is the study of experience as story is "first and foremost is a way of thinking about experiences" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477). Human beings make meaning out of experiences through narratives (Polkinghorne, 1988). Hence, "stories become the means by which we make sense of our past, our present and our future, even as the stories themselves gradually 'fuse' with new stories as new experiences occur" (McLean, 1999, p. 78). In educational practice, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) view narrative as a way to understand the interconnections among knowledge, context, and identity. Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) point out that "through storytelling, teachers engage in narrative 'theorizing' and, based on that, teachers may further discover and shape their professional identity resulting in new or different stories" (p. 121).

Narratives of teachers can be used to capture the "teacher voice" and, in so doing, distinguish their perspectives from other voices, such as educational reform initiatives that speak to who a teacher is (Britzman, 2003; Diamond, 1993). Additionally, narratives are an avenue for teachers to gain their "narrative authority" as opposed to the dominant "institutional narratives" of who teachers are and what they do (Craig, 2001; Olson, 1995). They offer an opportunity for teachers to author themselves and thus open spaces to develop new understandings of the stories they live and tell about the profession. In this regard, foreign-born international teachers are offered an opportunity to tell, retell, and reconstruct their stories of teaching.

This paper combines two original studies that sought to explore teachers' experiences, the pedagogical approaches they brought to teaching in U.S., and their successes and challenges teaching in their new school contexts (Beck, 2010; Nganga, 2011). We used a purposeful sample of 12 foreign-born teachers who were hired by an outside recruitment agency. Nganga's (2011) study consisted of eight female high school teachers from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Kenya, Romania, and the United Kingdom. Beck's (2010) study consisted of four female teachers from Barbados. All twelve teachers held less than five years of teaching experience in the U.S.; they taught grade levels K-12 and in varied content areas that included math, art, social studies, language arts, biology, earth science, and English as a second language (ESL). Their prior teaching experiences in their home countries ranged from 5 to 20 years and at the time of the interviews were in their second to fifth years of teaching in the U.S. Both studies utilized two or three recorded semi-structured interviews lasting 45 minutes to one hour. In order to build trusting relationships with participants, both authors conducted interviews in teachers' homes, classrooms, and coffee shops, and on a few occasions during lunch or dinner.

For this study, the authors reanalyzed both sets of data for emergent themes on teachers' social justice and caring practices, and sought to answer two questions: (a) What "identity resources" do foreign-born international teachers utilize in order to make the transitional shift in their understanding of the sociocultural context of their teaching in the U.S.? (b) How can narratives of foreign-born international teachers inform inclusive instructional leadership practices in urban settings?

Foreign-born International Teachers Shifting Identities

For the first two years I felt invisible in my school, nobody talked to me, it was just hi, [and] hello. Nobody would talk to me at lunch, nobody would go, like, “Hi, do you need anything” . . . nothing, nothing. It was pretty hard. But I had my kids, and that was enough to find my place... (Vera)

We utilized Pedersen’s (1995) five stages of acculturation to describe foreign-born international teachers’ transitional shifts and growth in their professional, personal, and situated teacher dimensions. These shifts also allowed us to see the identity resources they developed and used as lenses to frame their advocacy and sociopolitical work in U.S. schools.

The teachers in this study knew little about their teaching assignments before arriving in the U.S. They were excited about their new appointments and held romanticized notions of what the international teaching experience would entail. Some believed in America as the land of freedom and opportunity and subscribed to the “American dream” ideology. Their initial months in the U.S. were marked by Pederson’s (1995) first stage of acculturation, also known as the “honeymoon” phase, where teachers were excited about their new appointment and curious about living in the U.S. This phase, however, was brief, as the teachers had only a short time (for some only a few days, and some a month) to deal with personal logistics such as finding a place to live, buying a car, attaining a driver’s license, and establishing a bank account. They were also required to attend school orientations (a month or a week, depending on location), where they learned the logistics of grading, attendance, and record keeping, familiarized themselves with various school rules and policies, and prepared their classrooms for the start of school.

In the second stage, foreign-born international teachers experienced “disintegration of old familiar cues” and felt “overwhelmed about the new culture’s requirements” (Pedersen, 1995, p. 3). During this stage, the teachers felt a sense of inadequacy and replaced their romanticized ideals with a shocking reality that teaching in the U.S. was nothing like they expected. They found teaching and managing student behavior difficult, and some regarded students as rude, unruly, and disrespectful. One teacher noted:

The first day that I went back home, I was tired in every cell of my body. You know, back to my hotel because we stayed at Extended Stay for about 2 or 3 months. I had never been so tired because I had to stand all day, talk all day and you had to say the same thing over and over, it was amazing because I had never seen children so out of order, so it was like a mental drain, a physical drain, psychological drain and I was wondering what have I got myself into. And then it was like a shock, like this is America, what’s wrong with these kids. I mean ... what’s going on here? This is not the America I expected to come in ... so that was the shock. (Dr. Best)

Their personal, professional, and situated aspects of who they were was challenged as they strived to settle in, deal with the unfamiliarity of teaching dynamics, and build relationships with students and colleagues.

Stage three consists of “reintegration of new cues and an increased ability to function in the new culture” (Pedersen, 1995, p. 3). At this stage, the newcomers may face feelings of anger and resentment. The teachers in this study all reflected on their teaching experiences back home with nostalgia and encountered various levels of homesickness. During this stage some chose to

return home, seeing managing teaching in the U.S. as not worth the stress. Our participants made reference to some of their colleagues who had chosen to leave. Those who decided to stay made conscious efforts to learn the culture and to identify ways to meet their students' needs.

During stage four, teachers' "continued process of reintegration towards gradual autonomy" (Pedersen, 1995, p. 3) entailed developing the ability to distinguish between the good and bad aspects of their home cultures and the new culture. The foreign-born international teachers were able to appreciate some of the teaching styles in both contexts and continued to make comparisons. They experienced a relative comfort level in developing relationships with students and began to expand on their understanding of teaching students with different needs. One teacher noted:

Now I'm more conscious of diversity, and I find ways to get through to the [inclusion] students. At home those students fall through the cracks because at home they don't have the training that the teachers here get. Here there is ESS and ECE, where the special education children have their own classes. They don't have anything like that at home... so I have learned to cater to the diverse needs of children. Before, I wasn't really conscious of it. It wasn't a big thing for me.

In stage five, the final stage, there is a sense of "reciprocal interdependence where the person has ideally achieved bi-culturality" (Pedersen, 1995, p. 3) and has developed a sense of comfort living between two worlds. During this stage, the teachers began to gain a political clarity concerning their teaching contexts. It is important to note that each teacher in our study moved through each stage differently based on the manner in which they internalized and made meaning of their experiences. Regression could occur when a teacher, having seemingly reached a stage-four understanding of living and working in the U.S., had a life experience that would cause her to question her understanding of the structural systems or the social norms in the U.S. In spite of acculturation phases, institutional racism may be continuously experienced and can affect one's regression. The sting of being treated as "less than" never really goes away, regardless of one's achieved bicultural identity or understanding of the social structure. In addition, a person in the stage five acculturation phase may still experience homesickness and reflect on nostalgic experiences of teaching back home. These stages are fluid and illustrate the manner in which teachers advanced in their understanding of the personal, professional, and situated dimensions of their identities.

This acculturation process also demonstrates that foreign-born international teachers did not start out as social justice educators. In fact, they were shocked to discover that systems of poverty, racism, and oppression existed in a world superpower such as the United States. For instance, Nancy, a teacher from Argentina, shared how unprepared she was to discuss race discrimination in her class:

I was shocked about discrimination. That was something I didn't understand why it was still on, this question of racism and all that stuff. I didn't understand. I thought it was better, you know, dead and buried, and it was kind of a shock to me to find out it was not. Especially because, I mean, I know those things happened before but . . . So it was kind of weird for me at first.

Because classism, poverty, and structural inequities are represented differently in an Argentinean context, she was not prepared to teach how historical racial conflict and structural institutions continued to shape and impact the experiences of people of color in the U.S. Those teachers from Africa or the Caribbean had comparable difficulties, since race is not a social construct that shapes the experiences of people in places where the majority of the population is Black. For these teachers, “Blackness” was a new construct and a racial identity they developed while living in the U.S. These teachers used their new identities to frame their understanding of race relations and injustice and in developing a social and political teaching lens.

Not all teachers developed a stage-five bicultural identity that resulted in teaching from a social justice lens. Regardless of their racial backgrounds, few developed a sophisticated understanding of the complex structural systems of inequity in the U.S. context. Each teacher utilized her identity resources differently and made meaning of her daily experiences in relation to her personal, professional and situated dimensions. For instance, the teachers from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Romania, felt ‘othered’ by the teaching faculty due to their accents, and were disregarded as competent educators. Their experiences within their teaching contexts provided them with a critical understanding of how students who are English language learners are unfairly treated by the teaching staff. As a result, these teachers’ experiences informed their perspectives on how to advocate for students amongst their colleagues, and saw the importance of mentoring students through the challenges of being a language minority. For these teachers, their social justice pedagogy was developed over time and crafted from their own identity resources, reflective practices, and internalized meaning of the importance of preparing students for academic and social competency.

In the section below, we explore the practices of five teachers who demonstrated a significant level of political clarity that exemplified a social justice pedagogy in two overarching ways: (a) advocacy as an ethic of care and (b) social competency through the lens of a foreigner. We illustrate what this lens looks like, how their approach was derived from their own experiences as racial and language minority female teachers, and how they constructed an understanding of their larger purpose and role in U.S. schools.

Advocacy as an Ethic of Care

Ware (2006) suggests that caring teachers (a) acknowledge and incorporate students’ racial and cultural identity into their teaching, (b) encourage students to grow personally, and (c) hold high expectations for student learning, and (d) believe in students’ academic and personal success. Care is also established when teachers feel a sense of responsibility for and connectedness to their students (Foster, 1991). Care becomes an act of social justice when it involves resistance to social structures (Cooper, 2007). In this light, the teachers in our study exhibited care from a stance of advocacy for their students.

Vera and Perla were bilingual teachers from Romania and Brazil. They were disheartened by the deficit models and demeaning language their colleagues used to describe Hispanic and other immigrant students. Both teachers felt a particular connection to Hispanic students because they too spoke English as a second language and experienced similar differential treatments based on their accents. Both used their own experiences as a lens to develop an equitable pedagogy for all students. Describing her experience, Vera noted:

I saw lots of discrimination against them, a lot of prejudice and disrespect like they can't think or speak or write because they are Hispanic. Really!! Have you asked them? Do they know that? I saw a lot of discrimination and prejudice from other teachers, so one of my teaching philosophies is justice and equality for everybody. It does not matter where they come from it's our job to teach them and do our best to teach them.

Vera felt responsible for Hispanic students, and saw the need to “keep an eye on them,” including those she was not currently teaching. Without realizing it, she became actively engaged in one of the largest historical battles for equitable learning spaces for English-language learners as she observed the way “the decisions that were made in the country and the school did not help or support ESL students.” She became an advocate for students by working alongside the ESL director to ensure funding for the school’s ESL program.

Gwenn, a teacher from the United Kingdom, enacted an ethic of care through mentoring students individually. The demographics of Gwenn’s school included 43% White, 41% Black, 10% Asian, and 5% Hispanic. In Gwenn’s school, 35% of the students qualified for free or reduced-priced lunch.

She had previously taught in an inner city school in the U.K. and was familiar with teaching students from underprivileged backgrounds. Gwenn saw the importance of encouraging these students to graduate and shared this in her story:

A lot of kids don't think that they can achieve and they are told at home they can't do it . . . you know, they are told that they can't graduate. I had one kid . . . I told her two years ago, [that should would graduate]....she graduated last year. And when I told her she was really having a hard time and we would often sit and chat. Nobody in her family had graduated, her parents didn't see the point of her graduating . . . and she was like, she really wanted to graduate, she was like “no one is gonna be there for me.” I said I will be there. I'll be there, what are you talking about? And then last year, you know, I had the breakdown and everything last year and that time she came to me just before graduation. She said, “Ms. Gwenn. I have a really important question to ask you.” I said, “What's that?” She said, ‘You are gonna be there, are you? You said you are gonna be there.’ I said, “Sure, of course I will be there, I will be there. I said, I told you I'd be there.”

From Gwenn’s story, we learn about the forms of relationships she developed with students and about her willingness to be a cheerleader and champion for students’ success. Even though she was a White teacher from England who did not share a common ethnic, language, or cultural background with her students, she was able to connect with them using a caring pedagogy that encompassed nurturing, love, and support. She also developed an understanding of how larger social and cultural structures created challenges and barriers for poor students to succeed, and she made a conscious effort to empower students to move beyond the status quo to achieve great heights.

Gwenn and Vera drew from their identity resources and from their understanding that their roles as educators required building relationships with students and understanding their needs within and outside the classroom. They enacted a political lens of advocacy for student success and saw the importance moving beyond the immediate structure of the classroom (and contractual call of duty) to support students. They realized that even in this new context, students needed mentors, advocates, and cheerleaders who championed their success.

Teaching Social Competency through the Lens of a Foreigner

Perla, Dr. Best, and Paula learned that successful teaching in the U.S. required a holistic pedagogy that transcended the borders of the standard curriculum. Perla is from Brazil and Dr. Best and Paula are from Barbados. Dr. Best and Paula always considered themselves as “simply” Barbadian, and for the first time had to adopt a racialized identity as Black immigrant women while on American soil. All three women spoke about the treatments they received in the U.S. based on their accents and skin color and how they used this lens to inform their pedagogy.

For instance, Perla spoke on how she was treated based on her accent and how she used this to motivate her Hispanic students. She noted:

I think that boosting their confidence is really important for my kids. You know, they feel pity for themselves, [they say] “I cannot speak English, I’m not this, and I’m not American.” [And I would say] “I’m not either, welcome to the club. I was not born speaking English, I had to study really hard, but it’s possible. I am gonna help you.” So sharing, I think, my background with them helps a lot because I feel we connect a little bit more and it just shows them that okay, look, you are at an advantage in this because they speak English.

She also encouraged students to embrace their bilingual identities by adding:

You are gonna speak English and Spanish, or English and Chinese, or English and French. See, you’re gonna be a bilingual person, isn’t that great? So just little things that I feel like the kids need, because I think it’s all about, okay, if you feel good about yourself at school, learning has a better chance of happening. I think that’s pretty much how I try to work the kids, and sharing my own experience.

From this stance, she enacted an activist pedagogy that allowed her to connect her experiences with those of her immigrant students. She shared her story as a speaker of English as a second language, and pushed students to see their own unique qualities.

Dr. Best also discussed how she used her positioning to help instill lessons of self-confidence and positive self-images for her students:

I can show them what a stereotype is and I can challenge it every day, and I think as a Black person that is my duty. I’ve taken that as my duty, because I cannot teach these kids self-respect, and self-efficacy, and self-confidence [without teaching about stereotypes]. If the self that they have is a demeaning self, a class clown concept, [or] ‘I’m only good with basketball’, [or] ‘I am supposed to be the perpetual joker’, you know, if they live up to everything that the stereotype says, it doesn’t make sense teaching them anything. So I have to show them that this is not what you are. In order for your people to survive and still be around in 2008, there had to be a strength of character among your people and therefore you have to find that strength in yourself. So you can be more than the basketball player, if you want to be a basketball player you still need to know that if you smash your knee there should be something else you can do...

Dr. Best's teaching enacted a political activist lens that took an overt political stance against social images of Black young men as basketball players and comedians, and helped them reclaim and tap into their inner strength and larger resources found in the Black community. She did this by reminding students of their historical origins, and re-instilled their sense of pride by calling them to draw on the strength of their ancestors to succeed and achieve academic success. Dr. Best goes against deficit teaching approaches that solely recounts slavery as the historical origin of blacks in America. Instead, her teaching in her teaching, she infused empowering messages that students needed so as they can participate in society as socially competent, self-confident individuals.

Paula's teaching sought to raise students' consciousness about the experiences of immigrants. Her approach was informed by her experiences and positioning as a Barbadian woman and provided a counter-narrative to the discourse represented in the social studies textbook and from the teaching perspectives of her White colleagues. She noted:

Being of a different ethnicity, I can teach them through the eyes of an immigrant because I'm not an American. I can talk to them about my experiences, I can talk to them about things that people have said to me at the supermarket, or when I talk to them and the way they look at me, or [what] people may say to me because my accent is different. When I first came here they would say to me do you speak English, which is something that my Mexican students and my other students [can identify with]. I have students from Africa, from different parts, they can relate to that because they feel it too. The people say the same thing to them, so therefore they can relate a lot to what I'm saying pertaining to being an immigrant... So therefore I have the unique opportunity to teach my children to see the other side and to view things from the other side and to see another perspective that they never thought about before.

Paula drew from her own experiences of racial intolerance in the South and created a space for her immigrant students to identify and speak out about their similar experiences. Her pedagogy was also driven by a political lens that pushed students to think critically about how people are treated and to defy the cycles of racist and stereotypical behavior against immigrants. She helped students, particularly those from Africa and Mexico, to reflect on their own experiences as immigrants, and share their common experiences with the class. This teaching practice offered a space for students to make meaning of their experiences, find a sense of agency, and advance in their own acculturation transitions. This approach also served as a teaching moment for other students to understand their classmates' experiences of transitioning into U.S. schools.

Perla, Paula and Dr. Best embraced an overt political agenda that utilized anti-racist and anti-oppression discussions and transcended the scope and focus of the curriculum (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002). They had developed a level of competency that enabled them to recognize the need to raise students' consciousness of instances of injustice and how race shaped the realities of their classmates and other people of color.

All five teachers (Gwenn, Vera, Perla, Dr. Best, and Paula) developed an understanding of complex American social structures. They all enacted a caring activist pedagogy that was built on close relationships, candid discussions, and a willingness to teach through a social activist lens. Their pedagogy was also built on a sense of responsibility and commitment towards their students and drew from their own desires to enact positive change in their school community. This level of consciousness, however, developed over time as the teachers came to learn and understand the

many faces of poverty and discrimination in the U.S. and how systems work to systematically oppress immigrants, poor students and linguistic and racial minority students. It is through this lens that they accepted personal responsibility to not only teach their subject content but also to advocate for students. They also used their classrooms as platforms for exploring larger societal injustices and provide students with the social competences needed to succeed in the classroom and in society.

Implications for Dialogic Leadership

Things have changed because I have changed and I know how to play the game now, the hidden rules. Nobody tells you about these rules; they expect you to figure them out by yourself. Nobody tells you anything and if you don't know them you don't get to play. So now, after four years, I kind of got them and I know the game and I have friends at school now, we come and visit, we got to lunch together, we text and e-mail, we are really friends. And that's what I wanted from the very beginning. (Vera)

Dialogic school leaders can ease the transitional shift of foreign-born international teachers by building inclusive communities that promote dialogue, authentic relationships, and reciprocal learning. School leaders who are committed to building inclusive communities create a culture of dialogic practice that enhances a healthy understanding of difference by allowing teachers to acquire common realms of understanding. Shields and Edwards (2005) point out that dialogue is “a way for us to understand something or someone who is in some way different than ourselves, who has a different perspective, alternative lens, [or] varied history” (p. 15). In this light, it is important for school leaders to build communities where foreign-born international teachers have the opportunity to build relationships with colleagues in spaces where “people come together to acknowledge the intrinsic worth of each member of the community in ... creative, and empowering interactions” (Shields & Edwards, 2005, p. 7). This will allow international teachers the opportunity to feel a part of a school community as they develop meaningful connections with their colleagues and, in turn, develop a sense of belonging to the school community.

Dialogic leadership promotes cross-cultural dialogues where members in the community (students, teachers, parents, and administrators) are offered the opportunity to meaningfully engage in mutual learning (Ryan, 2007). When interaction occurs within communities with complex histories and cultures, multiple voices are shared in the construction of meaning. In such spaces foreign-born international teachers and the local teachers could have opportunities to discuss their philosophies on teaching, the exchange of ideas, and the pedagogical strategies that they have found to be beneficial to all students. Shields (2009) points out that “as educational leaders, we must be present through initiating and facilitating the dialogue that permits all voices to be heard” (p. 111). Furthermore, Shields (2004) adds that dialogue is an avenue to eliminate “pathologies of silence” and an opportunity for members of a community to not only acknowledge social injustices but also take action. In this respect, school leaders can then become committed to serving as *identity resources* for foreign-born international teachers in their transition in American school settings and in their development as social justice educators.

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Tilt and Pivot: Immigrant Transgressions through Autoethnography

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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This paper presents an autoethnographic performance from an immigrant Vietnamese teacher and scholar that grew up in America. Through personal narrative, the author reflects on her history using vignettes that connect and address immigrant exclusion, reinscriptions of oppression, and her development as an agent for social justice. Feminist standpoint theory is used as a lens to examine the alternate realities formed through her personal narratives. Stories from the past, told through a critical lens in the present, elicit emergent discourses that resist the selves formed through dominant ideologies and oppressive discourse; thus, the author rewrites her self in self-reflection. She suggests that in addition to the feminist standpoint theory's partial perspectives, autoethnographers must also tell their inner emotions with regard to their social and cultural construction from other perspectives in order to invite critical, transformative reflection from their audience.

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Tilt and pivot, like a woman on glass heels. She sways to the left of the light, bathed in the flicker of other people. She sways to the right of the dark, and moves inside. In and out, right, left - her body cannot stay still, for her feet must not stray from the line. As the glass shatters and tears her skin apart, she leaves behind tiny, perfect footprints, made from her blood. Life is averaged. She walks on, and the audience claps politely.

In the privacy of my office, I sat in front of my computer and I logged myself into Second Life. Second Life is a virtual 3D environment where people from all over the world can embody characters, called avatars, to interact socially while creating customized digital spaces and communities to suit their imaginations. In Second Life, people come to learn, meet other people, role-play, make games, practice religion and even conduct business. I came to find praxis (Freire, 2012).

From the safe vantage point of the real world, I maneuvered my digital composite, an Asian blue-haired avatar, across Internet space and time to sit on a metal stool overlooking the parched Burn2 playa. For today, I was one of three autoethnographic performers at Burn2 - a virtual event that paralleled the annual Burning Man art festival held in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. In addition to installations of 3D virtual art, Burn2 also included virtual performances of music, dance, poetry and other acts. As a graduate student, I had come across Spry's (2001) paper on performing autoethnography, and the idea of publicly sharing my stories as a method of praxis that countered hegemonic discourses appealed to me. Prior to this day, I had carefully picked vignettes of my life to share with the purpose of transcendence through the awareness of difference. My difference. A handful of avatars sat around us on the cracked virtual earth, eager to listen to our stories and curious as to what our performance was all about.

Although I had been an instructor for over 11 years, and had been in front of all kinds of classrooms, I felt the nervous flutter of butterflies in my stomach. Unlike classroom teaching, I would be exposing my wounds to strangers – revealing the figurative glass shards that had cut my soul growing up as a Vietnamese immigrant-turned-agent for positive social change. I prepared slides that contained my words, along with images to enhance their meanings. Sitting next to my avatar were two other colleagues who came to perform after me. I drew upon our collective strength as I turned on my microphone, and began to speak.

Stories on the Playa

An Invitation

Autoethnographic performance is a purposeful self-reflection that critically uncovers the construction of self - who we are and what we are becoming. Our purpose is to engage the audience in soul-searching by sharing spoken word and stories intended to make people think, reflect and change in positive ways.

We invite and challenge you to look at the world through different perspectives. If you can do this, we believe you will walk away more enlightened than when we began. Thank you for coming along with us on this journey!

Wanna Be White Girl

I was the only Asian girl in a white school. Too smart for the other kids, too poor to wear their expensive clothes, and too innocent to know how to speak up, I constantly felt like I did not belong. When I didn't allow Barbara, a fellow classmate, to look at the answers to my notebook, she stared at me with contempt and said, "One day, I will be your supervisor, and you'll do everything I say, or else I won't pay you. I will be your boss." She would speak to the other kids and tell them how poor I was. How my pants, the ones my mother had sewn for me, were outdated. She would make fun of the way I walked, and what I ate because it was different. The other kids would whisper, laugh behind my back, and agree with Barbara and her observations.

"Look at that little Japanese girl! She wears pants like my grandma!" Mocking laughter behind my back followed their whispered taunts. I am Vietnamese, by the way.

I broke my mother's heart when I told her that I would no longer wear the clothes she had sewn for me. I told her that I wished that I was white with blue eyes, because everyone notices that the Asian girl sticks out. Through a storm of tears, she replied, "If I boiled you in water, your flesh would turn white. Would you like that?"

I didn't realize at the time, how much my parents sacrificed financially to get me my \$50 Guess jeans. Yet, even though I changed my clothes to look like the other kids, dropped my grades and grew silent so that my "miss know-it-all" voice wouldn't stick out, it didn't stop the whispers. Hard money could not buy acceptance. Barbara's mean face still haunts me, sometimes. In my darkness, when I'm feeling most alone and outcast, I can hear her saying, "You will never be like us."

I had to pause when I spoke about my mother. As I told my story, I was caught off guard from the pain that hit me like a fist to my heart. I stopped speaking for a moment as tears streamed down my cheeks. Although my audience couldn't see my avatar cry, they heard my voice waver. I had not expected that my public performance would elicit such a personal response from me. At that moment, I was no longer telling a story. Instead, it became my confession to an audience that would witness and absolve my sin.

I realized also, that somehow, I needed to apologize to my mother for the pain I had caused her. My tears did not come from the hurt of being isolated and picked out. My tears came from the pain that I knew I had caused to my mother – from the wound that I inflicted on her. It was a wound that I had not been aware of until the moment of my confession. For the first time, I understood what it might have felt like to raise her only Vietnamese daughter in a foreign world. To try and melt into the melting pot, I had to lose my Vietnamese identity in order to assimilate. Unlike her, my only ties to my Vietnamese culture consisted of stories that my parents would tell of my family and my native country. I now understood her tears - her daughter had no roots, and in denying the clothes that her mother had made for her, this daughter became ashamed of her culture and of her origins. She sacrificed her cultural identity, and a piece of her mother's heart, in order to be an American. The problem though, and I learned this when I discarded my mother's clothes and wore my jeans to middle school, is that I could never be White, no matter what I did. The melting pot doesn't melt and assimilate us. Instead, we're like torn pieces of

bread floating in fondue and covered with American cheese. We are not one or the other, but just a soggy mess of both.

Role Model Warrior

They called me a rookie when I started my teaching career. In fact, throughout my training, my science department referred to the tough classes, classes that were not college prep and lower track, as a “battlefield,” and that I had to “learn to fight in the trenches.” Our ways of speaking reflected that there was a war going on between “us,” the teachers, and “them,” the students - and that our strategic teaching tactics would eventually cause our students to surrender and be educated.

I remember how awful I felt, the first time I wrote a detention slip to kick a student out of my class. I was a rookie cop that had “shot” my first person. Although I cannot remember what the student did, I remember how horrible the absolute silence felt that followed his departure. “It’s always worse the first time, but then you get used to it,” my advising teacher told me. I was congratulated for my “first fallen” when I shared the story with my colleagues in class.

“They deserved it, and you warned them at first. You were very fair,” a neighboring teacher said as news of my “first” spread quickly throughout the whole department.

Another veteran teacher comforted me by saying, “If you don’t do it, and you let them slide, eventually, they will run all over you, and run you down. You must set an example that everyone must follow. Divide the rebellion, and conquer. It is for the greater good.”

I carried that message into the first few years of my teaching career. I used to say, “Discipline builds the tracks for the education train.” My fellow teachers were right; after kicking out my second student, I became desensitized. In my classroom, my word was final, and I was jury and judge - handing out “just” sentences for infractions that violated my marshal law. Advisors and fellow teachers often complimented me on how well behaved my students were, and how much they learned in my controlled classroom. I was an exceptional teacher in their eyes.

At the end of the school year, I received a small letter, hand written by a former student. In it, she said, “Mrs. V., you were my role model. I never had a science teacher that was both Asian and a woman. Thanks to you, I’ve decided to go into science as my career.” Role model. Although I had considered myself as a scientist and a fellow law abiding citizen that emulated good community and disciplinary practices in my classroom, I had never considered my cultural identity and my gender as relevant, role model material. It made me realize that I was being watched for more than what I just did. Even the little things to me, like who I was and what I looked like, mattered to someone. A light bulb went off in my head, and it made me realize how oblivious I truly was to who my students were, and what I was doing to them.

M. Other

"Tonight, I'm going to the hospital to give birth to my dead baby." she said, and her hardened façade broke. All I could do was hold my student as closely as I could while sobs wracked her body, and the world tore her apart. Sixteen year olds aren't supposed to give birth to dead babies.

Oh, and in case you were wondering? The baby dad, the one that punched her in the stomach? She became engaged to him several weeks later. When she shared the news of her engagement with me, I asked her, "What happens when he gets violent, and tries to beat you?"

Her response was really well thought out. She said, "Oh, he only does that when he's drunk. I'll just leave the house until he's sober again."

Feminist Standpoint Theory

The nature of my autoethnography drew upon feminist standpoint theory (Hartstock, 1983; Hekman, 1997). In her definition of standpoint, Hartstock (1983) explained, "the adoption of a standpoint exposes the real relations among human beings as inhuman, points beyond the present, and carries a historically liberatory role" (p. 285). A standpoint is a positioning from a particular perspective with the intention to reveal and expose unseen aspects between humans and their world. Feminist standpoint theory assumes that this positioning generates a partial knowledge, framed by material life, whose discursive constitution counters hegemonic discourses (Hekman, 1997). By engaging in these counter-discourses, we form versions of alternate realities that diverge from the dominant ideology. Moreover, Hekman (1997) added, "women occupy many different standpoints and thus inhabit many realities" (p. 349).

Hence, my autoethnographic performance allowed me to create an alternate reality - my recollections of the past through present eyes - in order to uncover and reexamine events from a critical context. In the writing of this autoethnography, I set out to answer three questions: (a) How has cultural difference shaped my identity, and what assumptions do I make that are unique to my position? (b) Where are the sources of my oppression and pain, and how do I uncover them, address them, and begin the healing process? (c) How do I see my past through the eyes of who I wished to become?

When I sat on the virtual stage in Second Life, I spoke from the standpoints of a young, Vietnamese immigrant, an authoritative teacher, and an uncertain graduate student-becoming-agent-of-social-change. The retelling of my experiences was intended to also examine the discourses of the past using discourses of the present; thus, I used autoethnographic performance to establish continuity between my three standpoints in order to stop the reinscription of oppressive hegemony prevalent in our ideological discourses (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Gavey, 1997; Hartstock, 1983; hooks, 1994). In the following sections, I used Ellis and Bochner's (2000) autoethnographic method to reflect and analyze my experience.

Building Bridges Between Past, Present and Future Selves

Performance was a way to relive an event at a different point in our history (Sarup, 1993) - and in

the reliving and retelling, our present narratives rewrite our history and re-create ourselves (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). I was no longer the girl who wanted to be white, nor was I the warring teacher, battling the ignorance of my students. Instead, I had crossed the line, and moved my experiences that had been kept inside and in the dark, to the outside, where they could be exposed, reflected upon, and remembered (Feng, 2000; Morrison, 1987). As an autoethnographic performer, I walked the discourse tightrope that delineated the outside from the inside, laying that trail of blood and soul to create the person I was becoming.

Who was I in the past? I was a little Vietnamese girl whose cultural roots had been slashed away because of the Vietnam War. I grew up in a foreign country that had shamed me for being Vietnamese, and had urged me to erase my skin with the promise that I would gain acceptance through assimilation. Instead, I found that I walked a sharp line - I could speak, act and dress like a white United States American, but I would always be Vietnamese and different - never truly belonging to either world (Ling, 1990). The promise of the great American melting pot was a lie. Whichever way I swayed, in whatever context, the motion would still cut and cause me to bleed. Once my outside was white washed, people found fewer things about me to ridicule and laugh about - but it was at the cost of my identity and self-expression. Inside, I am still foreign - my upbringing, my stories, my history are not the same as yours. I grew up wanting to belong, and not belonging. Yet, I thrived despite this, because my parents pushed me to maintain my grades, go to college, and be successful. My bleeding cuts were covered up by hard work and a bright future.

This upbringing tainted the way I taught. I carried the same attitude that most immigrant Vietnamese did - that America was the land of opportunity, and if you worked hard enough, you would succeed. Hence, I inadvertently became the same oppressive agent that had hurt me in the past - isolating and excluding students that were “not like me,” because of their lack of motivation or their poor work ethic. For the “greater good” of the class, I kicked them out and labeled them as “disruptive” when they interrupted my lessons. I had little empathy for them, because I felt that their laziness was an insult to my own hard work and efforts. How dare *they*, the natives to this land from generations past, take educational opportunities for granted, when I had to flee my native country for it? Their birthright had been my struggle.

This exclusioning was justified because of my heartfelt belief that all my students were entirely capable of succeeding, and that I was an omniscient, colorblind teacher that could teach anyone as long as they had the desire and motivation to learn. My preservice teacher training “in the trenches” with the “tough” students had shown me that without the iron hand of discipline and absolute classroom domination over my students, they would never learn. They could not, because I needed to be the one to teach them, and to legitimize their education.

When I left high school teaching to become a program chair for a career college, I began to understand what “lazy” actually was: It was the mother that rushed out in the middle of her evening class, because she received a phone call that the police were at her house. She had been leaving her children unsupervised in the evenings, so that she could attend school while continuing to work at her day jobs, and her neighbors reported on her neglect.

Another student, whom I had berated for falling asleep in class, told me of how she worked three jobs - a total of 12-14 hours a day. Between that and her homework, she got very little sleep. “To think that I could actually have ONE job that pays as much as all three,” she explained, when I asked her why she was putting herself through all this. “I’m just counting the weeks until I’m through, so that I can live the dream.”

My colleague and I found out that the reason one of his students had stopped attending

school was because her boyfriend would lock her in the house. If she tried to leave, he would beat her. By preventing her from receiving an education, she would never be independent from him, and thus, could not set herself free.

Then there was the young teen whose story I shared at Burn2. She learned of her pregnancy when she had been hospitalized for three weeks after being beaten severely by a family member. Shortly after giving birth to her stillborn baby, I drove her home from an after school event held by my university. We had a long conversation in the car, which was how I found out that she had planned to marry the baby dad that had hit her while she had been pregnant. She seemed so puzzled when I tried to tell her over and over again, “No one should ever hit you. You should not let anyone hurt you like this. Especially him. They don’t deserve you.”

I had hoped she would say, “You’re right. No one deserves to be treated so poorly.” However, all I heard were excuses for why she would continue to be with the man that hit her. “He loves me,” she would say.

Over the course of the year, I would watch her float from one abusive relationship to another. The last time I held her when she cried was when she told me that her father never wanted her to visit him in prison again. Feeling abandoned, she couldn’t understand why her father would do such a thing, and I couldn’t understand it, either.

After that, I would often escort her out of the classroom, because she would have hysterical fits, or she would say cruel and mean things to the other students. My heart would break during these times, because I didn’t know how to reach or comfort her anymore. It was as if she had formed an impenetrable wall that had buffered her heart and justified her actions.

These students taught me that my mantra of, “If you work hard enough, you will succeed,” might work for some people, but not others - at least, not without help. It brings to bear the words by hooks (1994), who said, “students want us to see them as whole human beings with complex lives and experiences rather than simply as seekers of compartmentalized bits of knowledge” (p. 15). When I saw my students as whole humans, I knew being an instructor was not enough to help them. It was the beginning of my journey toward being an agent of social change – I wanted to change the world.

I arrived in graduate school carrying the guilt of ignorance in the teaching of people who were not like me. To become an agent of social change, the first change we must make is within ourselves (hooks, 1994), and I spent my first year lost in what that meant. I found part of my answers in works by Freire (2012), Cixous (1976), and hooks (1994), who all mention self-actualization, developing awareness, and the rewriting of ourselves as a step toward empowering our students. The retelling of my stories during my autoethnographic performance and now here, in this paper, has given me the opportunity to uncover wounds, and to examine the ways in which I did my own wounding through the dominant ideologies from my past. The tightrope that I balanced on - the words strung together in my retelling, became my resistance - a place to reclaim myself.

Halfway There

After my performance on the playa, I received messages from people who would say, “I was the white girl, but I was excluded because of my disability.” Or, “Your stories really touched me, and I could relate to being the other.” Autoethnographic performance is supposed to disturb and challenge audience members into their own critical reflections (Spry, 2001), but I do not believe that I accomplished this. My audience at Burn2 took comfort in empathizing with my

victimizations, and not discomfort in being the ones that may have been responsible for it. In my stories, I tried to show two sides of me - that I was a victim in the racist socialization of immigrant cultures, and that I was also the oppressor in a war against the ignorant “others.” I did not want the comfort of understanding, pity or approval reflected in my audience’s polite applause. Instead, I had wanted to make my audience think and be uncomfortable - I wanted them to claim their own oppressive natures, and to call them out. Otherwise, the patterns of oppression will repeat themselves, and we inadvertently reinscribe oppression on those we view as others (Lewis & Roger, 1986).

In feminist standpoint theory, our stories represent partial truths that are situated and discursively constituted (Hekman, 1997). While we must continue to share our voices, we must also consider how the voices of others co-construct our lived experiences. Ellis (1991) pointed out that narratives which present a “severed, edited version of emotion” (p. 44) can miss the social constructedness of the account itself. In other words, autoethnography requires the telling of one’s inner emotions as well as their social and cultural construction. Hence, because my performance may have been too partial from my own standpoints, and I did not take into account the “outside” cultural perspectives of other standpoints, I may have missed the critical engagement that I had expected of my audience. It would have taken (and we need to take) the incorporation, telling and listening of the stories from diverse perspectives originating in the hearts and souls of others who are *not like me* in order to arrive at more holistic and valuable knowledge truths that included everyone. Partial truths become less partial when we can speak the discourses of our hearts and souls both partially and inclusively in a way for others to empathize, transgress and to critically reflect.

In graduate school, one of my courses involved heavy discussions about our own personal perspectives on education. It was a very diverse class that included students from all over the country and all over the world, with very different educational backgrounds. After the end of one of our discussions, my classmate exclaimed, “I’ve decided that the United States is NOT a great American melting pot! We’re more like a salad - with lettuce, vegetables, nuts, and fruit. Our discourses are like the dressings that harmonize all our flavors, but we remain separate entities. Our flavor is stronger and improved when we are together, and everyone contributes.”

Life is averaged.

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Intersectionality of Native American and Deaf Women: Cross-Cultural Parallels in Historical Oppression and Identity Formation on Leadership Development.

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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The purpose of this article is to explore the lived leadership development experiences of American Indian Deaf women. Through a phenomenological-narrative study, five participants representing a range of ages, educational backgrounds and tribal affiliations discussed how their identities as women, Native Americans, and members of a cultural and linguistic Deaf community evolved despite the oppressive views and perspectives of mainstream society.

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Introduction

Since colonial times, discussions of American Indian leadership have been primarily through the viewpoints of patriarchal, predominantly White males (Tsosie, 1988). Often these discussions paint a picture of male chiefs presiding over their councils, dispensing grandfatherly advice (Portman & Garret, 2005). Over the past two decades, a number of studies have been published on the leadership styles of American Indian and Alaska Native women, and their separate, unique, yet shared role in the leadership of their tribes (Barkdull, 2009; Fitzgerald, 2010; Metoyer, 2010; Muller, 1998; Napier, 1995; Portman & Garret, 2005).

While studies have increasingly explored the leadership perspectives of American Indians, very little has been published on how leadership develops among American Indian and Alaska Native Deaf men and women, including isolated incidents where these individuals have served as council members or leaders in their communities (Paris & Wood, 2002).

The paucity of data pertaining to the leadership of American Indian and Alaska Native Deaf women is compounded by the fact that there appears to be little data specifically estimating the number of Native Americans, who are Deaf and female. In fact, demographic data on Native Americans who are Deaf have been largely overlooked, and is usually generalized to people with all ranges of hearing loss, not focusing exclusively on Native Americans who are Deaf and are primarily American Sign Language (ASL) users.

The most recent annual national survey compiled by Gallaudet Research Institute (GRI) shows approximately 0.7% of Deaf and hard of hearing children who attend K-12 classes in residential school settings were identified as American Indian or Alaska Native during the 2009-2010 school year (Gallaudet Regional Institute, 2011). The Gallaudet report, however, is not inclusive of all Native Americans who are Deaf, since it is dependent upon reporting by all schools who serve Deaf and hard of hearing students and does not consider the number of Deaf students who might be enrolled in tribal schools.

Statistical information on the number of Deaf individuals continues to be elusive and primarily estimated overall, these estimates can be between 8 to 15 percent of the population (NIDCD, 2012), but include all ranges of hearing loss and do not pinpoint those who primarily identify as cultural members. Members of the Deaf community consider themselves a cultural entity, rather than medically disabled (Padden & Humphries, 1988; Nomeland & Nomeland, 2011). ASL has been formally as a distinct language, and is offered as a foreign language in high schools and colleges. Deaf individuals whose first language or preferred language is ASL consider themselves similar to other cultural groups, with a rich historical ties around language, identity and pride, group values, and a cultural norms established by the community that is steeped in the belief that primary usage of ASL defines their community. This is in contrast to the often medical, or pathological, viewpoint that deafness is something that should be cured or eradicated through medical procedures. As a result of their identification as a cultural entity, Deaf is used with an uppercase, much like Native American is used.

There is a very strong correlation between what is perceived as hearing loss, and the tribal community. In 2004, the University of Arkansas (UARK) Research and Training Center produced a monograph on improving rehabilitation service provision for American Indians and Alaska Natives who are Deaf. After reviewing several studies that indicated hearing loss was higher among American Indians and Alaska Natives than the general population, the monograph estimated that 180,000 American Indians and Alaska Natives with a mild to profound hearing loss (Miller, 2004). The higher prevalence of hearing loss in American Indians and Alaska Natives

appears to be further corroborated by a NCHS 2006 survey (Pleis & Lethbridge-Cejku, 2007), which reported that 25.3% of Native Americans over the age of 18 self-report a hearing loss ranging from mild to profound. In addition, it has been reported that American Indian children under the age of five have up to three times the rate of otitis media than the general population (Hunter, Davey, Kotz, & Daly, 2007).

These resources for demographic information related to hearing loss do not distinguish the number of Native Americans who are male or female. Without specific numbers, it is difficult to determine the number of Native American Deaf women and adolescent girls. In fact, there seems to be very few research studies that provide an opportunity for American Indian and Alaska Native women who are also part of the Deaf community to share their experiences.

Literature Review

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is defined as the way multiple aspects of identity may combine in social constructs of reality (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010). The influence of multiple identifications may often mask the influence of single identity characteristics (Stewart & McDermott, 2004). The central point of intersectionality is that people may have many identities that are traditionally oppressed and no one single identity carries more significance than the other—all identities may experience equal amounts of discrimination.

Intersectionality was introduced in the late 1980s to focus attention on the both the differences and similarities of oppression and discrimination across social justice issues such as race, gender and disabilities. The examination of the dynamics of difference and sameness “has played a major role in facilitating consideration of gender, race, and other axes of power in a wide range of political discussions and academic disciplines” (Sumi, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013, p. 787).

Historically, racism, feminism and Critical Race Theory have been the forefront of early intersectionality theory and moved towards addressing the marginalization of other communities (Sumi, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013). Disability studies scholars caution that omitting the discourse of disability as a significant aspect of intersectionality may be detrimental to the multiple points of oppression that occur towards individuals who have many differences that may include race, gender, and disability (Ervelles & Minear, 2010). Disability experiences are often absent from feminist studies and as a result, feminist disability studies of theory and pedagogy encourage the consideration of how race, class, sexuality, religion, and nationality can intersect (Kroll, 2009).

Leadership

Much of the existing literature addresses the impact of Colonial America on the perceptions of Native American women and their loss of political power. While it is acknowledged that each tribe is distinct, historically, women have led spiritual, political, educational, and economical decision-making in many tribes (Lajimodiere, 2011; Mihesuah, 2003). They served as clan mothers who preserved culture, language and history, and oversaw the educational and social needs of the community. In some tribes, they even served as warriors (also known as “beloved

women” in Cherokee tribes), fighting in wars alongside their brothers, uncles and husbands (Lajimodiere, 2011; Mihesuah, 2003; Perdue, 1998).

Native American men and women had separate, but powerfully equivalent, roles in overseeing the well-being of their people (Portman & Garret, 2005; Prindeville, 2000; Prindeville, 2004; Muller, 1998). When non-native settlers began to insert their worldviews on tribal influences, bringing about a change in the tribes to government-required elected tribal councils and land allocations that were given to Native American men, women lost a considerable amount of influence within their own governments (Barkdull, 2009; Lajimodiere, 2011; Napier, 1995; Mihesuah, 2003; Portman & Garret, 2005; Prindeville, 2000; Prindeville, 2004). Today, however, there is a growing number of tribal leaders who are women, and they continue to focus on the preservation of history, allocation of economic resources and the educational and social needs of the children.

Currently, there is a dearth of empirical studies about the concept and experiences of Deaf leaders. Most publications focus on biographical life stories of individuals who have been identified in the community as leaders through their accomplishments (Baynton, Gannon, & Bergey, 2007; Moore & Panara, 2006; Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). Several articles have been written addressing the lack of Deaf leadership in educational administrative positions, particularly for people of color (Anderson & Miller, 2004; Andrews & Covell, 2006).

In a study on shared traits in leadership programs for the Deaf, Kamm-Larew and Lamkin (2008) found that these programs valued Empowerment (75%), Advocacy (50%) and Decision Making Skills (37%). An interesting aspect of this study was that little emphasis was reported on the traits of Honesty (0%), Integrity (12.5%) and Social Justice (12.5%) (Kamm-Larew & Lamkin, 2008). More empirical studies encompassing concepts and definitions of leadership are necessary to understand and document a philosophy of leadership, as it presently exists within the Deaf community.

Historical Parallels

There are three distinct areas in which both Native Americans and Deaf community members share historical parallels. Both communities hold their historical experiences close, passing on information to generations to ensure that the experiences have not been forgotten. These shared historical experiences include educational oppressions, which include suppression of language and culture, mainstream societal misconceptions, and visual-gestural communications.

Educational oppressions. One of the darkest historical periods within the Native American experience was the establishment of Indian boarding schools. In his 1959 book entitled *Indians and Other Americans: Two Ways of Life Meet*, co-author D’Arcy McNickle wrote of the era of large off-reservation boarding schools. This began with the establishment of the United States Indian Training and Industrial School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and was emulated in institutions in Chemawa, Oregon; Genoa, Nebraska; Lawrence, Kansas (Haskell Institute); and Chilocco, Indian Territory (Fey & McNickle, 1959). These schools were conceptualized by Richard Henry Pratt, who pushed the policy of “‘killing’ the Indian to save the ‘man’” (Smoak, 2008, p. 304). Modeled on a manual labor concept, with instruction provided part-time and maintenance labor for the remainder of the time (Fey & McNickle, 1959).

A product of the boarding school, McNickle was removed from his home and sent to the Indian boarding school in Oregon (Child, 1998). When he ran away from the train station where

he was to be transported to the school, his parents were arrested for kidnapping (Child, 1998). In describing the conditions around the boarding schools, Fey and McNickle (1959) wrote:

To this basic pattern were added military discipline and the complete regimentation of the child's waking hours. Moreover, the schools were dedicated to the ultimate eradication of all traits of Indian culture. The location of the schools at distances far removed from the reservations from which children were selected was deliberate policy. Children were often no more than five or six years old when they arrived at these schools. If the child could be taken young enough and moved far enough away from the influences of family and tribe, the odds against his ever again becoming a part of his environment were considered remote. (p. 111)

In a similar account, Child (1998), wrote about Indian boarding schools from 1900-1940. She described her own grandmother's experiences at the boarding school, stating that for many females, an "outing" program was established to send these children to work as a domestic servant for white families (Child, 1998, p. 5).

In 1928, Lewis Meriam, a medical doctor for the Institute for Government Research, investigated the deplorable conditions of Indian boarding schools (Child, 1998; Fey & McNickle, 1959). The report detailed conditions of children who were barely fed and inadequately clothed, and made to do hard labor at long hours. Children were stripped of their outward Native appearance (removal of cultural apparel, with their hair cut extremely short or styled after popular European trends). They were not allowed to use their tribal language, and punished when caught using non-English verbiage.

This parallels the experiences of Deaf children. During the late 1800s, a debate surrounding the use of ASL in K-12 classrooms formed in America as well as internationally. Proponents of ASL maintained that Deaf children should be taught through the use of ASL, while opponents advocated for the exclusive use of speech, or oralism, in the education of Deaf children (Winefield, 1987).

This communication debate culminated in a worldwide event, which is often referred to as the "Milan Congress" (Baynton, Gannon, Bergey 2007). In 1880, during the International Conference of Instructors for the Deaf in Milan, Italy, a group of educators of Deaf children voted to endorse Oralism as the sole communication method for classroom education (Baynton, Gannon, Bergey 2007; Winefield, 1987). With its successful passage of oralism as the only communication method for Deaf people, for almost 100 years, ASL was suppressed in educational institutions and socially, until pioneering linguists such as William Stokoe brought recognition to ASL as an authentic language during the 1960s (Baynton, Gannon, Bergey, 2007). Horror stories emerged as Deaf adults recounted past experiences in "oral only" schools. Children who were caught using sign language often were punished physically, or endured public humiliation for not using speech (Nomeland & Nomeland, 2011).

Societal misconceptions. In addition to battling assimilation practices, Native Americans have also had to fight against viewpoints of their individual and cultural representations. Since the advent of film, they have been cast in a variety of characters that include the villainous "warlike group that lurked in the darkness thirsting for the blood of innocent settlers or the calm, wise, dignified elder sitting on the mesa dispensing his wisdom in poetic aphorisms" (Deloria, 2003, p. 23).

Alternating between the “ignorant savage” and the “stoic but good Indian”, a romanticized viewpoint of Indians emerged and in some cases created a host of “wannabes” who idealize Native American culture and mysticism (Büken, 2002). Over the years, government reparations have also created myths that range from the perspective that all Indians live in teepees on reservations and subsist on government handouts abound (Ownings, 2011). Particularly damaging misconceptions seem to be targeted at Native American women. These perceptions range from the noble Pocahontas-like “princess” or an unintelligent, savage-like “squaw” (Tsosie, 1988). The portrait of the Land O’ Lakes maiden is glaring example of the overt themes of sensuality accorded to Native women (Büken, 2002). Even the visual representations of Sacajawea show a “shapely Indian princess with perfect Caucasian features, dressed in a tight-fitting red tunic, spearing fish with a bow and arrow from a birchbark canoe gliding across a mountain-rimmed, moonlit lake” (Valaskikis, 2005, p. 125). These perspectives, written by mainstream writers or depicted in films, make it difficult for Native American women to be taken seriously as leaders.

Deaf individuals have also had their share of societal misconceptions assigned to their intelligence and mannerisms. Aside from the frequent and offensive use of “hearing impaired” and “deaf mute” and “deaf and dumb” throughout the news media, there is largely a discomfort expressed by mainstream members of society when meeting a person with a disability (Farnell & Smith, 1999). Perceptions of deaf individuals often veer from seeing the individual as a helpless victim to assigning overly positive attributes for performing everyday, ordinary tasks.

Visual-gestural communications. A commonality between Deaf and Native American communities is their use of visual-gestural language (Davis & McKay-Cody, 2010; Davis, 2011; Paris & Wood, 2002). Native Americans used a visual-gestural, or sign language, commonly referred to as Indian Sign Language (ISL).

American Indian Sign Language (AISL), Native American Sign Language (NASL), or Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) (Alford, 2002; Davis & McKay-Cody, 2010; Farnell, 1995). Such visual languages occurred for centuries and for a variety of reasons. Intersecting language with meeting the social needs of their community, visual-gestural language was often used to ensure that Deaf and hard of hearing members of their tribes had communication, and secondarily to communicate with other tribes that did not share a common language (Alford, 2002).

Sign language use in America has been documented among White inhabitants of Martha’s Vineyard in Massachusetts as early as 1600 (Van Cleve & Crouch, 1989). Approximately one-fourth of the islanders on Martha’s Vineyard were hereditarily Deaf or hard of hearing, with much intermarriage between Deaf and hearing families (Baynton, Gannon & Bergey 2007). Laurent Clerc, a Deaf French man, came to America at the beginning of the 19th century to establish and teach at the first American school for the Deaf, adding elements of French Sign Language to what has since become modern American Sign Language (ASL) (Baynton, Gannon & Bergey 2007; Nomeland & Nomeland, 2011; Van Cleve, 1999).

While Native American Signed Languages have waned in usage within tribes as English evolved as the dominant spoken language, many Native American Deaf individuals use a blend of ASL and American Indian Sign Language (AISL), which is typically derived from PISL. Recently, studies have been conducted regarding the potential contribution of PISL to earlier forms of ASL (Davis, 2011).

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

A phenomenological-narrative qualitative study was conducted to explore how women who navigate between two cultures that have been historically oppressed have established their identities as leaders, despite having very little access to role models that demonstrated what leadership for bicultural women should encompass. This study documented commonalities and themes evident among the participants' lived experiences as Deaf, American Indian women who are considered leaders within the Native American Deaf community. The research questions that guided the qualitative study included:

1. How do American Indian Deaf women define leadership?
2. What factors influenced the leadership development of American Indian Deaf women?
3. What barriers to leadership do American Indian Deaf women encounter?
4. What opportunities to leadership do American Indian Deaf women encounter?
5. What impact on their communities do American Indian Deaf women perceive as a result of their leadership?
6. What recommendations do American Indian Deaf women make for increasing leadership development for women in their communities?

In addition to the research questions, there were guided questions that prompted each participant in addressing their lived experiences as leaders. A pilot study was conducted to ensure that the questions and the research was authenticated by members of the Native American, Deaf and Native American Deaf communities, as well as other qualitative researchers experienced in working with these populations.

Selection and Background of the Participants

The five participants selected for this study came from diverse backgrounds and leadership experiences. Each woman was affiliated with a different tribe. It is important to note that all of the women are American Indians. No Alaska Natives participated, thus the experiences of this community are not represented. Because the Native American Deaf community is small, the identities of participants were held confidential, with tribal affiliations removed.

Selection of the participants was based on recommendations from the Native American Deaf community. The researcher contacted 35 men and women from this community through e-mails, videophone and in person to ask for names of Native American Deaf women that were identified as leaders. It was left to the community to determine their definition of what. A total of seven women were named, with some of the individuals receiving multiple recommendations.

As a Deaf woman of Native American descent, the researcher interacted with many of the individuals that were recommended throughout her experiences as a biographer collecting stories on Native American Deaf experiences for two books that were subsequently published (Paris & Drosbaugh, 1999; Paris & Wood, 2002). Through these interactions with the community, the researcher had developed rapport with the community and the participants.

It is important to understand the background of each participant and their self-identity to both communities. Summarized below are the demographics relevant to hearing loss, tribal backgrounds and leadership roles of the participants.

Participant #1

Participant #1 grew up with ASL as her primary communication. Currently in her 70s, and a member of an East Coast tribe, she became deaf as a result of illness before she was two years of age. Her parents placed her in a residential school for the deaf several hours away from the reservation; she went home only during holidays and for the summer.

While Participant #1 grew up using ASL with other Deaf children, she felt disconnected from her Deaf peers. She also felt estranged from her tribal identity. Her understanding of her identity as a Native American came through the lens of her Deaf peers. The negative stereotypes of Native Americans in the media, and the fact that there were few resources available at school to educate Participant #1 and her classmates regarding Native Americans, resulted in discrimination throughout her childhood.

Participant #1 did not embrace her identity as a Native American woman until she was in her mid-50s. Communication was sparse, since no one in the family was fluent in ASL. One day, her sister gave her a book about her father, who was a renown civil rights activist for his tribe. It was then that she discovered the extent of her ties to her tribal community.

Participant #1 embraced her Native American roots and became immersed in the art-making traditions of her tribe. Later, she was appointed as an Elder in a national Native American Deaf organization, providing support, wisdom and encouragement to Deaf individuals seeking cultural information about their Indigenous heritage. As an elder, she was seen to be very influential among her Deaf Native American peers.

Participant #2

Born Deaf and a member of an East Coast tribe straddling the United States and Canada, Participant #2 holds a variety of roles in the Native American Deaf, Deaf, and Native American communities. She serves as president of a non-profit organization for the Deaf, and a council member of a national, non-profit organization for Native American Deaf individuals. In her tribe, she consults with parents whose children are Deaf, teaching sign language courses and providing support and wisdom on educational options for tribal Deaf children.

While born on a reservation, Participant #2 spent most of her K-12 years in the dorms of a residential school for the Deaf. After high school, She chose to go back to her tribe and marry a hearing tribal member who is now deceased. Currently in her 50s, she remains on the reservation surrounded by her children, grandchildren, and extended family members.

Participant #2 did not fully understand her role in the tribal community until she was in her late 30s. Her grandmother was Deaf and did not receive access to cultural information. As a result, she was not able to pass this on to her children. The lack of signed communication between Julie and her parents further constricted historical information regarding her heritage. It was not until she participated in activities conducted by Native American Deaf individuals that she learned more about her tribal traditions. Today, she is an advocate for tribal Deaf children, ensuring an avenue for passing on information about tribal traditions.

Participant #3

Born Deaf to a mother whose tribe comes from the Western and Mid-Western regions, and a father of Canadian French descent, Participant #3 was not born on a reservation, nor has she

experienced reservation life. Her father was in the military and moved frequently throughout her childhood. In her 50s, Participant #3 is the executive director of a national organization for Native Americans who are Deaf.

Participant #3 was not exposed to the Deaf community until she was an adult. She grew up attending public schools and relying on speech reading to communicate. Feeling isolated from hearing and Deaf people and not understanding how she fit in with the Deaf and Native American communities, she recalls feeling anger and mistrust. It was not until early adulthood that she interacted with both communities. A spiritual leader took her under his wing and taught her many of the traditions of her tribe. She also took ASL classes and began to participate in Deaf Community events, absorbing the ease of communication with peers.

Participant #4

The fourth participant, whose heritage includes Mid-Western and Plains tribes, is a Deaf American Indian female in her late 30s. She affiliates mostly with her mother's Mid-Western tribe. Participant #4 is the director of a business that has clientele nationwide.

Participant #4 lost her hearing through illness prior to preschool. After briefly attending a day school for Deaf children, she was placed in public school. This was difficult for her because she did not have an interpreter. Later, she had access to sign language services and her school experience improved, although she was the only Native American student in her school and felt isolated as a result.

Considering herself an "Urban Indian," Participant #4 did not grow up on a reservation. Her family maintained cultural ties, through pow wows four times a year. During her college years, Participant #4 met a number of other Deaf students and was able to fully integrate into the community. As a result, she began taking on leadership roles within the Deaf community, including the presidency of a non-profit organization for Deaf individuals. Today, Participant #4 feels fully acculturated into both communities, although she has a special affinity with her Native American roots.

Participant #5

The final participant, who became Deaf from a fever at two years of age, is in her early 60s and is enrolled in a Southern tribe. She can trace her roots in her tribe to over two hundred years. Currently retired and leading a non-profit advocacy agency for people with disabilities, Participant #5 used to direct outreach services for educational institutions that served Deaf and hard of hearing children.

Participant #5 was the only deaf child attending a tribal school. Her school was ill equipped to provide necessary resources to teach her. As a result, she was illiterate until she was eleven years old. It was decided by her parents and the school that she needed to transfer to a school for the Deaf in order to receive educational benefits that had been denied to her previously. It was a culture shock for Participant #5 who had not interacted with White peers previously, particularly peers using a language (ASL) that she had never been exposed to.

Despite experiencing oppression in the school for the deaf by instructors and classmates, it took only two years for Participant #5 to become literate at the appropriate grade level. Because of the outward hostility displayed toward her Native background, she was determined succeed in post-secondary education, and she eventually completed her bachelor's and master's degrees. She

has held a number of leadership positions throughout her career. Today, Participant #5 considers herself fully immersed in both Native American and Deaf communities.

Data Collection

The primary mode for data collection occurred through videophone interviews with the Deaf Native women. Since the data collected for the study was self-reported by the participants, all of the interviews were recorded for transcription from ASL to English and analysis. In addition to videotaped interviews, some of the women brought artifacts that they felt important to the data collection during the final interviews that were conducted in their home or home environments of choice. Participant #5 shared several books about her tribe's history and culture, as well as newsletter articles she wrote and newspaper accounts of her activities. Participant #1 shared her awards of recognition from her tribal community and articles about her volunteerism. Participant #3 showed and explained the clothing and cultural artifacts that she and her children used for dancing in powwows.

Data Analysis

Both phenomenological and narrative approaches in qualitative research structure the analysis of data through the "restorying" of interview information, often through chronological themes (narrative) and categorizing the significant statements, textural and structural descriptions into themes (phenomenological) (Creswell, 2007).

Each videophone recording was transcribed from ASL to written English. The total amount of time spent transcribing all video recordings was 96.75 hours. Additional time was spent, as needed, clarifying the translations, particularly the choice of English words, to each participant who reviewed the written translations and approved the final versions.

Once the translations member checked and approved, Creswell's (2007) Data Analysis Spiral was used to review and code for appropriate themes. Using this method, the researcher analyzes in a circular, rather than a linear form using four major components: data management, reading and memoing, describing, classifying, interpreting and finally, visualizing and representing the data.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) encourage the rewriting of stories through the analysis of three elements: interaction, continuity and situation. Using these concepts, the researcher drafted the stories in a structured order, using descriptions and quoting the participants meticulously and bracketing out the data that potentially identified them. The participants were involved in their own stories, reviewing final versions and encouraged to make changes as needed until they were satisfied with the final result.

An analysis of the findings concluded the process, linking together the common themes in the study. Overall, there were twenty-two themes that were found throughout the stories of these women regarding their shared lived experiences regarding leadership development. However, for the purpose of this article, only six thematic topics that shared the most commonalities and addressed intersectionality of oppression across gender, disability and race, as well as cross-cultural experiences while developing leadership attributes are addressed in this article. These themes are: Service and Support, Resiliency and Self-Reliance, Evolving Identities, Job Discrimination, and Oppression and Internalized Oppression.

Service and support. Serving their communities was a frequently cited trait that all five participants felt should be part of the leadership of Deaf American Indian women. For Participant #1, this theme encompassed the traits of nurturing Deaf American Indians through compassion and caring for them during emotional crises. She patterned this leadership trait after seeing how the Clan Mothers in her tribe worked to provide nourishment to their tribal members. Participant #5 echoed this sentiment when she said, “Generosity is a strong characteristic among these women. They always give food and support to their tribe, and anyone who came to their home.” For Participant #2, service and support meant providing her Deaf club members with resources and access to meetings so that “they can have a place to socialize.” She provided support to her siblings as well, ensuring that they are cared for, even though they are all adults. Participant #3 and #4 believed in serving Deaf American Indians in order to increase educational awareness and services. “I see the areas that many members were lacking opportunities that I saw with hearing Indians and Deaf culture members,” said Participant #4. She was particularly concerned about ensuring that there are services for Deaf Native Americans who have been mentally, emotionally, or physically abused.

Participant #3 also felt that service included giving of oneself for the betterment of the tribe was a trait common among American Indian women. “Their heart is open and they are willing to give sacrifices to help the people in their needs,” she said. “A leader is someone who serves people and helps them reach a goal for the common good.”

Resiliency and self-sufficiency. All five participants demonstrated skills of resiliency and self-sufficiency, overcoming severe obstacles that were not limited simply having multiple minority identities of being women, Native American and Deaf. Participant #1 and #2 learned responsibility early while growing up, each incorporating a different aspect of self-reliance. For Participant #2, caring for siblings and cousins gave her an understanding of how to raise children when she became older. She also learned to sew as a means to having clothes for school, and this later became a business venture for her. She also overcame persistent verbal and physical abuse at the hands of her spouse. Participant #1 learned to garden, can, and cook, ensuring that she was able to feed herself and her family. Such self-sufficiency translated into her future employment skills, despite the fact that she was often discriminated against when trying to find sufficient work.

Participant #4 learned to become independent and explored the world through her childhood backyard. She also developed an ability to watch a task and imitate it later, providing her with additional skills to become a skilled problem-solver.

Participants #3, 4 and 5 all had to overcome hardships in their childhood. For Participant #4, she had to overcome an “abusive and dysfunctional” childhood, and the stress of being a single, teenaged mother. Participant #3 had to endure the pressures of a mainstreamed environment without an interpreter, and the emotional toil of being a child of an alcoholic parent. Participant #5, who was severely delayed in reading and writing due to a lack of resources for Deaf students at her tribal school, had to overcome the stigma of illiteracy, and raced to catch up with her classmates in second and third grade.

Evolving identities. All five participants discussed the influence of their identities on leadership development. Access to both Deaf and Native American communities influenced each participant in diverse ways. For Participant #2, she felt more established in the Deaf community, with her early exposure to Deaf individuals at a residential school for the Deaf. She did not understand her identity as an American Indian until much later, and felt that her access to tribal events was limited. While the Deaf community influenced her leadership perspectives, she has

become more involved with the Native American community through Deaf Native American events, and states that she is gravitating towards the less competitive and individualistic leadership style of Native American women. Participant #2 stated that she was more comfortable with the Deaf community only because communication is accessible, but as her tribe becomes educated about the needs of Deaf tribal members, she has had increased access to interpreters. This has allowed her access to the perspectives of her tribal community.

Despite being the daughter of a famous Native American activist, the identity of Participant #1 was established first with the Deaf community through the residential school for the deaf. She did not incorporate her American Indian traditions until after she retired. However, Participant #1 felt that she had evolved her identity more as an “Indian”, and has reduced some of her activities with the Deaf community. “When I am with my tribe, I am inspired by the other Indians,” she said.

Participant #3 was exposed first to her tribal culture, although she felt that her family assimilated to many mainstream values due to the fact that they were “Urban Indians.” During college, she evolved her identity to include that of a Deaf Native American, taking on some characteristics temporarily until she felt uncomfortable with them. Today she sees herself as “Indian first” but also acknowledges her Deaf identity.

Participant #4 was exposed to Native American culture through her grandparents. It was not until she was in her late 30’s that she became involved with the Deaf community. She has evolved her identity to encompass both communities, but feels more aligned with Native American traditions. She has embraced AISL as a means to communicate with her tribal members, mentors, and Deaf Native Americans.

Participant #5 was the only participant who felt that she was equally Deaf and Native American. “I feel that I incorporated both cultures into one. I am Native Deaf. It’s hard to separate the two. Indian is part of my heredity, while I have been Deaf since age two, so I don’t know any difference.”

Four women discussed the different influences that both communities had as they developed their identities and their leadership skills. Each had opinions about the different leadership styles of Deaf and American Indian communities. Participant #2 noted that women were “more powerful” in the Native American communities and “encourage you to learn, and support you.” She felt that Deaf leaders were more critical of Deaf women, especially when they admitted that they did not have a specific skill or knowledge. “They look down on me and my self-esteem is impacted.”

Participant #1 said that she felt more support from Native Americans, particularly their care of senior citizens. Participant #3 pointed out that the cultural value system differed between the two cultures, and that there appeared to be more respect in the Native American community, with ties to families that are “very close-knit and raise each other.” Participant #5 saw parallels between the cohesiveness of both communities, but noted that there was more individualization in the Deaf Community. She felt that Deaf leaders “want to take credit for themselves more often” while Native American women promote each other more often. Despite the differences, Participant #5 believed that she could “get and give support in the Deaf community.”

Job discrimination. The five women in this study all felt that they were discriminated against because of all three of their identities—women, Deaf and Native American. Participant #4 was particularly vocal about the discrimination that occurred despite a stellar resume with vast experience for the positions she sought working with animals. After she was not offered a job, after displaying initial enthusiasm to interview her after a review of her resume, Zabrina sought

information about why she was not offered the position and was informed it was due to safety reasons around her deafness. “I was good enough to do the job as a volunteer, so why couldn’t I be trusted to do this for employment? It was the same job,” she said.

Participant #1 experienced discrimination at her former workplace when she tried to apply for a position in a different department. “They didn’t want to interview me. They told me it was because I was Deaf and because of my tribal background.” Even in tribal communities, the women felt that there was discrimination. For Participant #2, it was because she was a Deaf, female and from a specific clan. For Participant #4, she was denied employment in her family business because she was a woman and because she was Deaf.

Oppression and internalized oppression. Participants #3, 4 and 5 all stated that television and other forms of media provide misinformation about these Native Americans that are harmful. Participant #4 commented that there are “a lot of labels, such as the term savages.” Participant #5 discussed societal expectations of “what Indians should look like.” She has faced a variety of misconceptions. “I still encounter people who think all Indians live in teepees or wampams.” These expectations appeared to feed oppressive viewpoints of her. She experienced discriminatory remarks by her in-laws when she was dating her White husband, while they openly discouraged him from having a relationship with her. Participant #5 was also repressed by several teachers during elementary and high school. One teacher told her that she “would not amount to anything.”

Participant #1 grew up going to movies where Native Americans were depicted negatively. Her Deaf classmates who viewed the same films used this as an opportunity to mock her. “Oh, they really poked fun at me and insulted me, telling me that Indians were mean and killed white people.” Not understanding that Native Americans were being stereotyped in these films, she accepted the insults as truth, not realizing that they were distortions until later.

Internalized oppression refers to the act of accepting and reproducing oppression from the dominant culture (Pyke, 2010) and can assume many forms. Participant #2 and #3 have each shared examples of situations where they felt oppressed by a member of their own community. Participant #3 stated that she felt oppressed by Deaf individuals because “I come from an oral background.” Participant #2 on the other hand, felt oppressed by her late husband, another tribal member. When she tried to work with him on his business, he refused to let her be involved. “I think he thought I was stupid,” she said. She also felt that he was not supportive of her when she tried to establish her own business. “My husband made me feel that perhaps I could not be successful.” Participant #3 also cited prior oppression by her Deaf, Mexican-American husband, but stated that this was due to his cultural upbringing. “In my experience, Mexican culture tends to not focus on the accomplishments of their women, and so having me be successful is a little bit different than what his upbringing is when it comes to females.”

Discussion

A key component that links the two cultures are their values of storytelling as a means of passing on their culture to the next generation, and their usage of visual languages. Storytellers are considered key leaders of both communities and the richer the storytelling, the more revered they are. The combined value of storytelling greatly influenced how the narratives were obtained and constructed—with natural storytellers, the information that is given is rich in detail.

American Indian Sign Language (ASL) was established centuries before American Sign Language was formalized. In some cases, tribal sign languages (depending on the tribe and

whether the language is still active) are used with their deaf American Indian/Alaska Native members. Yet there is evidence that these two cultures have intersected. For example, PISL, shared by both deaf and hearing members of tribes, has been studied for its contributions to American Sign Language, the language of the Deaf Community. Research has shown a correlation between older Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) and early ASL, with up to 30% of PISL found in (Davis, 2011).

The parallels of shared oppressive experiences between the two communities have had a tremendous impact on how Native American Deaf women intersect with American Indian/Alaska Native, Deaf and mainstream society's values as they develop their own identities. Each of the five participants developed their identity as members of both communities, as well members of a gender that has been historically suppressed in most societies.

Yet despite these parallels, there are conflicting and sometimes contradicting viewpoints between Native American and Deaf cultures that also shaped the perspectives of these women. While both communities are collectivists as a whole, participants frequently referred to the importance of spirituality that has overwhelmingly guided the leadership viewpoints of one community, but has been largely bereft from the other.

Further, the concept of leadership in itself was conflictive to the participants. Their upbringing as Native Americans compelled them to shy away from self-identification as leaders, and instead stated that their roles fulfilled a need in their communities. Yet the Deaf community pride and promotion of their members in any leadership capacity conflicts with the participants' reticence to label themselves as leaders.

All of the participants arrived at their current positions within their communities despite hardships. They experienced teenaged pregnancy, spousal abuse, poverty, illiteracy, employment discrimination and criminal offenses. Yet they also demonstrated resiliency and hope. When these women accepted and embraced their bilingual and bicultural experiences, and their identities as racial, gender and linguistic minorities, they were able to transcend their previous misconceptions, passed down through the dominant majority and sometimes within their own communities, realize their strengths, and move into roles that enriched the lives of others.

Concluding Remarks

The shared stories of the participants demonstrate the real need to increase focus on the provision of opportunities for Native American Deaf women to find their place within both communities through the guidance of role models. The stark reality demonstrated through these stories were that not one of the participants recalled growing up under the influence of women like themselves—Native American, Deaf and female. As young girls and adolescents, they could not visualize how their future might be within their communities because they had no other individuals like themselves to look up to. They became the role models they never had. Through their poignant parts of their narratives, and the honor they bestowed on the researcher and readers by intimately sharing their experiences, they provide hope for the next generations. Their voices will finally be “heard.”

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