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UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP & PEDAGOGY ON BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS IN HIGH POVERTY COMMUNITIES OF NYC

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UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP & PEDAGOGY ON BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS IN HIGH POVERTY COMMUNITIES OF NYC

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP & PEDAGOGY ON BLACK
AND HISPANIC STUDENTS IN HIGH POVERTY COMMUNITIES OF NYC

Carlos I. Falcón

Disenfranchised and marginalized groups of students are not being met with the same level of academic success as their counterparts in other parts of the city. Specifically, the achievement gap among Black and Hispanic students in New York City urban high schools, has not improved to culturally acceptable norms. Despite gains in achievement across all races, there continues to be an achievement gap among different ethnic groups, particularly for Black and Hispanic students. The purpose of this quantitative study tested the theory of Stratified Urban Education which compared the theoretical constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunities to Learn against the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic high school students of low SES communities in NYC schools. Each of the constructs was derived from both teacher and student responses to a series of questions on the 2017-2018 NYC survey. Study participants included teachers and students from schools that had an ENI index of $\geq 90\%$. The primary framework that was used to guide this study was based on the Five Essential Supports for School Improvement as defined by Anthony Bryk, Penny Sebring, Elaine Allensworth, Stuart Luppescu, and John Easton (2010). This study was able to produce findings utilizing SEM which employs the partial least squares PLS method as a means to quantity the theory of *Stratified Urban Education* against the constructs of *Urban Leadership*, *Urban Pedagogy*, and *Urban Opportunity to Learn*.

Findings from this study may promote school administrators' understanding of the particular characteristics of a leader that may have the greatest impact on teachers, and ultimately on the academic achievement of the students that are taught.

DEDICATION

Through the ups and downs along with the good and bad, there is one entity whose omnipresence never let me give up; thank you GOD. For it is you who guided me through the complexities of this endeavor and helped me navigate my own thoughts on how to best tackle this. I'm forever humbled by your graciousness and love!

To my former and future students. I am who I am as a result of the interactions I had with you all, both as a teacher and administrator. I dedicated my life to positively impacting others as an educator in the same way that I was impacted. I hope that I have served you in a meaningful way.

Mi querida familia. Let this be a testament that anything is possible with the support from the people in your life that love you the most. Lord knows there are way too many of you guys to list, but you know who you are. Thank you for all your support and encouragement throughout all the years of my studies. A mi querida madre, Migdalia, te amo más que nadie. Gracias por darme todas las oportunidades para llegar a este momento profundo en mi vida. Weeepaaa! To my sister Dalia, and two brothers Edwin and Eric, I love you! I had a great childhood and I love the fact that you all were part of it and continue to be a part of it today. To my nieces and nephews, tío loves you, besos. To Aisha, your birth was undoubtedly one of the most impactful moments in my life that facilitated the change to eventual maturation that you see today; I remember it like it was yesterday. I always knew that you were looking and never wanted to let you down. Times change, along with circumstances, but my love for you never will. To Bill, Jean, Nicole, Kayla and all the other members of my second family, again, you know who you are:

You have always treated me like family, and I love you all very much. Thank you for supporting, believing, and guiding me through so many obstacles in life.

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Jaylyn and Amaya, my two daughters. I could write a whole dissertation just on you two. You have, and continue to, bring me the most joy out of anything in this world. Simply looking at you two is enough to make my day. I know I missed many moments together with you two writing this dissertation, and from this day forward, it's our time! I'm very much looking forward to making profound memories. As you get older, please remember that your character as a person is the thing that will ultimately define you. These subsequent statements are ones that I have referred to on so many occasions. They have helped me through so many things and I hope that they too will help you if you ever need them.

- Do you want to sleep, or do you want to succeed?
- The person that says they can, and they person that says they can't, are both usually right.
- Choose your attitude.
- They may be smarter than me, but they won't out work me.
- Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future.

- We are too blessed to be stressed.

- The quality of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.

- Integrity is what you do when nobody is looking.

- It's always a GR8DAY4AGR8DAY

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To the teachers and administrators I have worked with, or currently work with, you know who you are; THANK YOU! Iron sharpens iron. THANK YOU! Being around you in one capacity or another has undoubtedly contributed to the person I am today. I always tell my students to surround themselves with like-minded people as they will undoubtedly promote your own growth. May we continue to positively impact the lives of our students and be the reason that they enter into our buildings or classes. They may not always remember what we say, but they'll always remember how we make them feel.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The role of a principal in any educational setting is of paramount importance when speaking of a school's effectiveness which is ultimately measured by their students' success. It is the responsibility of the principal to create an environment that is conducive to learning for all students (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Principals are meant to be leaders that are responsible for the oversight and management of a school and its everyday nuances for the betterment of their students' development. The leadership behaviors of principals have been a major focus of education research because of policy makers and their expectations that principals provide the foundation for organizational effectiveness (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). A principal's ability to successfully develop and foster meaningful and trustworthy relationships with teachers is a significant part to their success. A principal, as an effective leader, is someone who realizes "people are the heart of any organization, particularly a school, and it is only through changing people-nurturing and challenging them, helping them grow and develop, creating a culture in which they all learn-that an organization can flourish" (Hoerr, 2005, pg. 7). Consequently, a thorough understanding of a principal as the leader of their respective building is fundamental to understand in order to proactively create a platform in which the relationship between the principal and multiple stakeholders can flourish for the sake of the students. Leadership is about relationships.

Throughout American history, there have been many legislative initiatives that have attempted to rectify the social issue of underachieving schools. In January 1964, as a way to consciously address the phenomenon of disparities in education among different

groups, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the *war on poverty.* This particular piece of legislation introduced initiatives that were specifically designed to improve multiple social issues, one of them being education, specifically for individuals that found themselves living in poverty. Title I is a program created by the U.S. government as part of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965, which "provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, para. 1). Title I was President Johnson's program which aimed at improving the academic achievement of disadvantaged communities, specifically at the elementary and secondary level (The Council of Economic Advisors, 2014).

There have been many attempts by the U.S. government to address the achievement gap among different groups of students. The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), *A Nation at Risk* (1983), the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2001), and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), were all proactive efforts, on behalf of the U.S. government, to address the social issue of poor academic achievement of underachieving schools. However, there still exists a significant gap in student achievement. Students who come from communities that are considered to be low socioeconomic status (SES) are still not attaining the levels of academic success that other schools are which are not considered low SES communities.

Improving student achievement is always the ultimate goal for any educator who has a passion for what they do daily with students, particularly for the principal of a building. The topic of high student achievement, many will argue, can be attained with

the implementation of actions such as amendments to the common-core curriculum, an overhaul of teacher tenure laws, professional development on both formative and summative assessments, pedagogical practices in the classroom, higher level questions by teachers, and even bullying legislation. With that said, the foremost issue that most people can agree on is that an increase in student achievement is the ultimate goal. Additionally, there are an abundance of factors that have both a direct and indirect impact on student achievement. Topics such as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, teacher-student ratio, parental and community involvement, funding, opportunity to learn for students, and class size are additional factors that should be taken under careful consideration, and meticulously scrutinized when implementing a plan to proactively impact student achievement.

In *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lesson from Chicago,* Bryk et.al (2010) discussed the findings from their study on school improvement. Their particular study was aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the reasons in which some schools improved dramatically in terms of achievement, while similar schools failed. The Consortium on Chicago School Research found that the way in which schools are organized, along with how they interact with their communities can make a significant difference with respect to student achievement. The study identified a comprehensive set of practices and conditions that led to a higher probability of student achievement, including *instructional guidance*, *parent community ties*, *professional capacity*, *student-centered learning environment*, and *school leadership*. This research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship or association between effective school leadership as defined by the NYC DOE, its impact on teachers, and how that relationship

may adversely affect students' achievement, specifically on the graduation rates of secondary Black and Hispanic students in an urban school setting.

Problem Statement

The achievement gap among different groups of students, particularly Black and Hispanic students in New York City urban high schools, has not improved to culturally acceptable norms. Students who attend more affluent schools in other parts of the city are seeing greater gains academically. Despite efforts by the federal government to consciously implement legislation for underachieving groups with actions such as the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), *A Nation at Risk* (1983), *No Child Left Behind Act* (2001), and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015) to rectify this social issue, gains in achievement for Title I schools remain minimal in comparison to schools that do not share the designation as Title I. Data show that 72% of African Americans and 70% of Hispanic students are demonstrating academic success as compared to their peers' rates of 84% for Whites, and 88% for Asians (NYC Department of Education, 2018). Boykins & Noguera (2013) postulate that retention rates, graduation rates, and standardized test scores continue to demonstrate a vicious cycle of reproduction by race and economics. With this understanding, principals who want to be effective, as measured by their students' academic success, should ideally embrace their efforts as a moral obligation for the betterment of all students. Fullan (2003) states:

> *You don't have to go very far into the question of the role of public schools in a democracy before discovering that moral purpose is at the heart of the matter. The best case for public education has always been that it is a common good. Everyone, ultimately, has a stake in the caliber of schools, and education is*

everyone's business. The quality of the public education system relates directly to the quality of life that people enjoy (whether as parents, employers, or citizens), with a strong public education system as the cornerstone of a civil, prosperous, and democratic society (p. 3).

Despite gains in achievement across all races, there continues to be an achievement gap among different ethnic groups. The overall 4-Year Graduation Rate in New York City has grown by 7.5 percentage points since 2014, and 1.7 percentage points since 2017 for all students. Table 1.1 presents the Graduation Rate across all New York City Boroughs by Ethnicity since 2014.

Table 1.1

New York City High School Graduation Gains by Ethnicity.

	2014 August	2015 August	2016 August	2017 August	2018 August	Since 2017	Since 2014
Asian	82.6	85	85.8	87.5	88.1	+0.6 pts	+0.6 pts
Black	63.8	65.4	68.7	70	72.1	+2.1 pts	+8.3pts
Hispanic	61.4	64	67.3	68.3	70	+1.6 pts	+8.5 pts
White	80.7	82	82.3	83.2	84.2	+1.0 pts	+3.6 pts
All Students	68.4	70.5	73	75.9	75.9	+1.7 pts	+7.5 pts

As a building leader, does the principal have an influence over the achievement gap that is present in an area such as New York City? This study acknowledges the fact that teachers undoubtedly have the most direct impact on student achievement. However, the ability of the teachers to provide that instruction may very much depend on the strength of other supports such as effective school leadership. As the achievement gap between schools and districts continues to widen despite a series of legislative efforts by the U.S. government, it is critical to analyze the specific factors that may influence the

closing of such gaps. Effective school leadership is one such component that needs to be scrutinized in further detail.

There are limited to no studies that the researcher has found which specifically analyze the leadership practices of principals, how that may impact teachers, and how that relationship may have an adverse impact on the graduation rates of secondary Black and Hispanic students from low SES communities in New York City. Additionally, if a positive association is found with respect to effective leadership, it is not known what specific leadership traits are most conducive to promote change, and ultimately improve student achievement.

Research on the association between distinct leadership styles and their impact on student achievement is contradictory (Witziers et al. 2003, Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Studies in previous years have explored how academic achievement is adversely affected by school leadership, but have produced conflicting findings (Kythreothis, Pashiardis, & Kyriakides, 2010). Some studies have found that a positive correlation exists between leadership styles and student achievement, especially at the classroom level, but not at the school or district levels (Kythreothis, Pashiardis, & Kyriakides, 2010). Furthermore, other studies have found that certain school leaders and their respective leadership style adversely impacts student achievement (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009; Silins & Mulford, 2002; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty 2003). Lastly, additional studies found that school leaders and their individual styles have a positive association with student outcomes (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009; Silins & Mulford, 2002; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty 2003). Understandably, it is quite possible that "a principal can impact the lives of anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand

students during a year" (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011, p. 2). Conversely, there are numerous studies that have been conducted by researchers who claim that a principal has a very small impact, if any, on student achievement. Cotton (2003) reports that "principal leadership does not affect student outcome in a direct way, but leadership does affect student outcomes through the principal's interactions with teachers" (p. 32). Although minor, increasing student achievement may be impacted by a noteworthy effect from the administrator (Barker, 2007). Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Irving, Widdowson, and Dixon (2010) argue against the positive impact that leadership has on student achievement. Furthermore, a study by Hallinger and Heck (1998) found that the principal in a school has a very small and indirect effect on student achievement. Consequently, Leithwood & Jantzi (2006) state that additional studies are necessary in order to identify the specific strategies that can increase the development of effective leaders.

Purpose of Study

Many educators have come to the general consensus that the foundation of a successful learning environment ultimately falls upon the administrators of a building (Nicholson, 2003). Therefore, the primary concern of any effective building administrator, particularly a principal, should be to raise the standards of student achievement. Schools, now more than ever, are being held accountable for their students' academic growth with legislation that has the authority to implement a multitude of sanctions that could be detrimental to student achievement, and consequently, social advancement. As a result of this, multiple researchers are looking for the factors that can speak to the success of schools, particularly those that demonstrate high student achievement (Gutierrez, 2006).

The purpose of this quantitative study will be to test the theory of Stratified Urban Education which will compare the theoretical constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunities to Learn against the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic high school students of low SES communities in NYC schools. The independent variables will be defined as the collective answers of both teachers and students on individual questions that originated from a survey that was administered by the NYC DOE during the 2017-2018 academic school year. Teachers who participated in the survey were asked questions regarding the principal of their respective building, meanwhile the students were asked questions of the teachers in their high school. Collectively, the questions asked of teachers regarding their principal entailed items on respect, management, trust, tracking of data, awareness, and the instructional planning of their principal, made up the construct of Urban Leadership. Moreover, the students were asked questions of their teachers about concepts such as small group instruction, feedback, culturally relevant pedagogy, and awareness which made up the construct of Urban Pedagogical Practices. Lastly, students were also asked questions about their teachers with respect to topics such as respect, confidant, safety, and educational programs which made up the final construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn.

The present study will add to existing literature on the impact of school leadership in low socioeconomic schools (SES) as a factor towards positively impacting student achievement. Furthermore, the study will illustrate if school leadership by the principal has a positive impact on teachers and their pedagogical delivery practices. This dissertation also seeks to address a larger global issue of equity among all students and the opportunities that are provided for them to learn in a meaningful way. Equity can be

an ambiguous word that connotes a different meaning for different people, specifically for the students in this study. Equity, as it relates to this study, is defined as a student's opportunity to have equal access to resources that are specific to his or her respective needs; what one student may need may not necessarily be what another student needs, yet access to said resources can ultimately lead to his or her own success.

In a democratic society, all constituents benefit from the educational advancement and social achievement of its community members. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the potential barriers that disadvantaged and marginalized groups face and the manner in which conscious efforts can be made by institutions to level the playing field, would be of interest for all members of society. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015*)* is the most recent piece of federal legislation on educational reform that intends to consciously address disparities in achievement among different ethnic groups. Furthermore, St. John's is a Vincentian university, inspired by St. Vincent de Paul's compassion and zeal for service. The university strives to provide excellent education for all people, especially those lacking economic, physical, or social advantages. This study will assist in shedding light on an issue that has long been postulated, yet unfortunately left in the dark without sufficient illumination.

Conceptual Framework

The primary framework that will be used to guide this study is based on the Five Essential Supports for School Improvement as defined by Anthony Bryk, Penny Sebring, Elaine Allensworth, Stuart Luppescu, and John Easton (2010). "Beginning in 1990, the Consortium of Chicago School Research initiated an intensive longitudinal study of the internal workings and external community conditions that distinguished improving

elementary schools from those that failed to improve" (Bryk, 2010, p. 23). Through research, the authors were able to identify five organizational features of schools that interact with life inside classrooms and are essential to advancing student achievement (Bryk, 2010). The organizational features that were identified were *instructional guidance*, *parent community ties*, *professional capacity*, *student-centered learning environment*, and *school leadership*.

According to the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE), the Framework for Great Schools was implemented as a way to advance educational attainment by preparing every New York public school graduate to compete in the 21st century workplace. Figure 1.1 represents the conceptual framework utilized by NYC schools. The framework relies profoundly on the interconnectedness of six essential elements that can advance the overall goal of student achievement: rigorous instruction, supportive environment, collaborative teachers, effective school leadership, strong family-community ties, and trust as the essential component that adheres them all together.

According to Bryk (2010), schools are complex organizations that consist of a series of interacting sub-systems that each involve a mix of both human and social factors which consequently shape the activities that occur and the meaning that each individual attributes to said events. "These social interactions are bounded by various rules, roles, and prevailing practices that, in combination with technical resources, constitute schools as formal organizations" (p. 26).

Figure 1.1

Conceptual Framework for Great Schools.
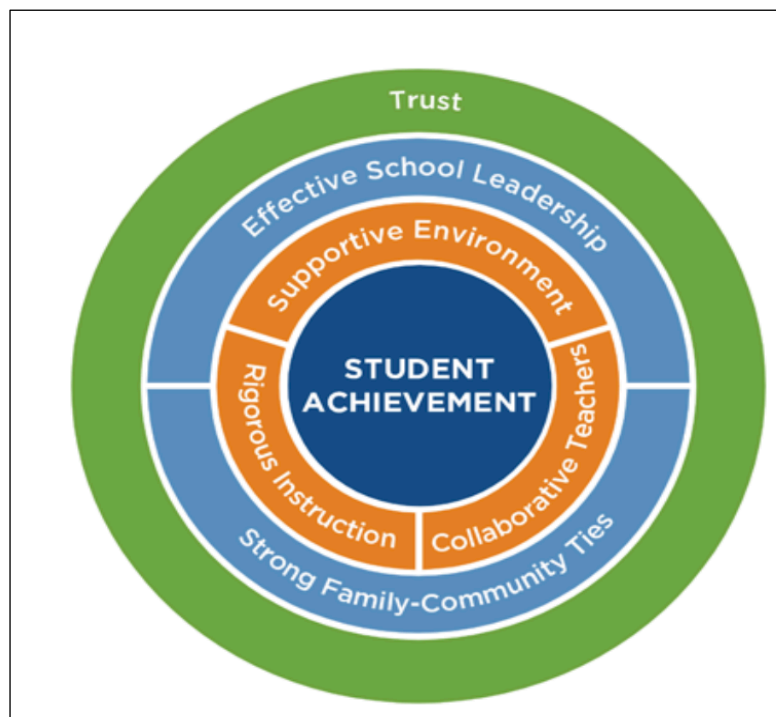
Table 1.2

The Framework for Great Schools Elements, Indicators, and Measures for Predicting Growth.

Element	Indicator	What "Good" looks like
Rigorous Instruction	Course clarity Quality of student discussion English and Math instruction	High standards are set in every classroom; with a focus on customized, inclusive, and motivating instruction, as well as active student engagement developing critical thinking skills
Supportive Environment	Safety and order Social emotional learning Academic support and press	A school culture where students feel safe, supported, and challenged by their teachers and peers; and are engaged in ambitious intellectual activity

Collaborative Teachers	Culturally responsive pedagogy Professional development School Commitment Professional community	Teachers committed to success and driven to improve in their classroom and across the school; school leadership pays deliberate attention to professional growth; culture of continuous improvement and developing a school-based professional community
Effective School Leadership	Inclusive/facilitative leadership Instructional leadership	Principals leading change at the community level, nurturing the leadership development of others, and providing guidance over time to sustain a coherent instructional program
Strong Family Community Ties	Parent involvement School-community partnerships	School leadership drawing on the resources within the building and from the local community; encouraging partnerships with families, local business, community organizations, and city agencies.
Trust	Family-staff trust Central trust Student-teacher trust Staff trust	Across all relationships, there is respect, personal regard, assumed competence, and integrity; and all parties value and respect each other

Note. From http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/620F30E4-1FA2-4ABC-9667-66529530290C/0/FrameworkforGreatSchoolsOverview.pdf

Significance of the Study

The aforementioned data suggest that, upon the examination of graduation rates in NYC schools, the differences in student achievement continue to be of particular concern for Black and Hispanic students despite state and federal mandates. Educators are expected to thrive in this assessment-driven environment in order to meet the academic and developmental needs of their students, and the leadership style of the principal is expected to be the key ingredient for school-level success (Fullan, 2001). A majority of the people who decided to be educators, did it for the "right reasons." Whether it was to

help a student the way that they were once helped, or because they wanted to be a part of something much bigger than themselves, the emergent theme that is consistent across all rationales is simple; helping others! America as a society has culturally accepted the fact that there is a war on poverty which has resulted in it being a nation at risk. Consequently, we have decided that no child shall be left behind, and every student shall succeed, irrespective of their background. The American public education system is continuously under scrutiny as a way to guarantee high student achievement, which many people believe is the key to improving society (Nicholson, 2003).

There are no known studies that the researcher has found that have been conducted with respect to whether or not a relationship exists between effective school leadership and teachers' pedagogical practices, while assessing the extent to which that relationship impacts student achievement in low SES communities of NYC schools. Findings from this study will provide school administrators with a thorough understanding of the particular characteristics of a leader that have the greatest impact on teachers, and ultimately on the academic achievement of the students they instruct on a daily basis. Moreover, findings from this study may have the potential to influence administrators to be self-reflective of their own leadership style, and how they too can potentially impact student achievement. With this self-awareness, administrators will be in a proactive position to consciously implement future practices and specific traits of leadership for the benefit of future school reform.

Findings from this study may also assist district leaders in hiring effective principals by being able to accurately identify the specific leadership attributes that have the highest probability on student achievement. Moreover, these findings may have the

potential to advance current policy practices for certain schools and their conscious

efforts to strategically assign their most effective principals to the highest needs schools.

Lastly, findings from this study may provide critical and useful information to teachers

about the academic and social emotional needs, along with the pedagogical practices that

are most conducive to facilitate learning for Black and Hispanic students in urban

schools.

Research Question

1. To what extent does the theory of Stratified Urban Education explain the

    relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogical

    Practices, and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and

    Hispanic students in high ENI (Economic Need Index) communities of NYC?

Definition of Terms

This study incorporates a series of terms that are primarily associated with

practitioners in the field of education. It is likely that some of the terms utilized may be

unfamiliar to individuals outside of the field of education. Consequently, the researcher

has provided the subsequent list of words and definitions so that the reader can have a

thorough understanding of the terms as they are frequently used throughout the study.

- *Principal:* The head or lead administrator of a school building that is responsible
    for all staff and students.
- *Leader:* An individual who understands the positive influence they can have over
    others with respect to specific organizational goals.
- *Leadership:* The conscious act of positively influencing others to behave or act a
    certain way with a specific organizational goal.

- *Transactional Leadership:* Also known as managerial leadership, focuses primarily on supervision, organization, and group performance (Eliyana, 2010).

- *Transformational Leadership:* Transformational leaders are visionaries, role-models, and facilitators who prepare their employees to work in a dynamic environment (Hawkins, 2009).

- *Effective School Leadership:* One of the six elements in the Framework for Great Schools used by the New York State Department of Education (NYS DOE). Parents, teachers, and support staff were asked questions about their principal which provided the rating of effective school leadership for that particular school.

- *Student Achievement:* The academic success of students based the school's overall graduation rate.

- *Socioeconomic Status (SES):* A family's economic and social position in relation to others based on factors such as income, education, and profession(s).

- *School Culture:* The shared attitudes, values, beliefs, customs, and traditions that the individuals of a school consider to be a significant part of their collective identity.

- *PLS:* Partial least squares; A statistical method similar to regression analysis whereby a linear regression is found by projecting predicted variables and observable variables.

- *SEM:* Structural equation modeling; A statistical multivariate analysis technique that is utilized as a means to analyze the structural relationships within a construct.

- *High School:* School with grades 9, 9-10, 9-11, 9-12, 10-12, 11-12, 12 (NYC

  DOE, 2019)

- *New York State Report Card:* A yearly report that is generated by New York State

  that provides specific data on a district's and building's profile, along with data on

  student performance.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCH

Chapter two presents a contextual framework that is meant to provide insight into how multiple factors play an interdisciplinary role in the fundamental goal of every effective educator; student achievement. Specifically, this chapter is designed to depict the different ways the achievement gap can potentially decrease by having a thorough understanding of the ways in which leaders lead, teachers teach, and lastly, how students learn best so that the ultimate goal of attaining a high school diploma is achieved. The subsequent literature serves to shed light on the overall question to this study: *To what extent does administrative leadership adversely impact higher student achievement in low SES communities?*

Beginning with the end in mind, graduation is the primary goal for both the institutions that issue the diplomas, and the matriculated students that are the recipients of them. Schools that graduate a high percentage of students who are college and career ready, are perceived as prestigious, effective, and ultimately doing their due diligence with respect to the fundamental purpose of their existence; helping students. Achievement is best accomplished by providing students with an opportunity to learn in an environment that is conducive to learning. There are multiple ways in which effective teachers can appropriately utilize culturally relevant pedagogy as a means to facilitate their students' learning, particularly in low SES communities that are rich in culture and diversity. Additionally, the way in which teachers manage their classroom can further speak to the reasons why some students achieve academic success while others do not.

The structure of schools as academic institutions is such that multiple entities are designed to work together collaboratively in an efficient manner so that their end goal of student achievement is met. In *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lesson from Chicago,* Bryk et.al (2010) discussed the findings from their study on school improvement. The study identified a comprehensive set of practices and conditions that led to a higher probability of student achievement, including *instructional guidance*, *parent community ties*, *professional capacity*, *student-centered learning environment*, and *school leadership*.

As a result of this study and the findings, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) designed what they call the *Framework for Great Schools* as a way to advance educational attainment by preparing New York public school graduates to compete in the 21st century workplace. The framework relies primarily on the interconnectedness of six essential elements that can advance the overall goal of student achievement: *rigorous instruction*, *supportive environment*, *collaborative teachers*, *effective school leadership*, *strong family-community ties*, and *trust* as the essential component that adheres them all together.

Achievement Gap

The achievement gap between different groups of students continues to be of concern for American schools. Often times, educators exhaust a great deal of time and energy trying to eliminate the gap. According to Rothstein (2008), "The achievement gap represents a difference in the average achievement of students from disadvantaged and middle-class families" (p. 8). Current research regarding the achievement gap in low SES communities between minority students and their more affluent white peers is

saturated with information about their academic failures, rather than meaningful information on how to effectively mitigate and address the process that is going to ultimately lead to their success. Because of a confluence of factors that interact with both racial and ethnic achievement gaps, answering the question confidently about how to adequately decrease said gap in low SES communities has proven to be exceedingly difficult. Disparities in educational opportunities, attainment, and achievement continue to exist among diverse student populations within the United States (Nielsen, 2013). Regardless of the fact that there was a decrease in achievement gaps in the 1970s and 1980s, and once again after the turn of the century (Barton & Coley, 2010), the gap remains unacceptably large among school districts and in metropolitan areas (Reardon, Kalogrides, & Shores, 2016). It has been widely documented that students of color from low-income families continue to lag behind their more affluent white peers with respect to all indicators of academic success including standardized test scores, grade point averages, high school graduation rates, enrollment in advanced courses, and college admission data (Zhao, 2016). Low-income minority students, beginning from the time they enter grade school through their postsecondary education, lose more educational ground and excel less frequently than their higher income peers (Ford, 2011).

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (U.S. Department of Education, 2015), by the time low-income minority students finish the fourth grade, they are two years behind their wealthier predominantly white peers in both reading and math. Despite the conscious efforts and investments of educators, policy makers, and politicians to undo the systems in schools that steadily deny low-income minority students equal access to quality education, minimal progress has been made toward

educational equity across racial and ethnic lines, and disparities continue to grow between low- and high-income students (Zhao, 2016).

National Interventions

The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), *A Nation at Risk* (1983), the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2001), and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), were all conscious efforts, on behalf of the U.S. government, to address the social issue of poor academic achievement of underachieving schools. In January 1964, as a way to consciously address the phenomenon of disparities in education attainment among different groups, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the *war on poverty.* This particular piece of legislation introduced initiatives that were specifically designed to improve multiple social issues, one of them being education, particularly for people who were living in poverty. Title I is a program created by the U.S. government as part of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965, which "provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, para. 1). Title 1 was President Johnson's program which aimed at improving the academic achievement of disadvantaged communities, specifically at the elementary and secondary level (The Council of Economic Advisors, 2014).

In 2001, under the leadership of then President George W. Bush, congress signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) bill. The time in which the bill was officially signed and adopted was considered to be one of the most impactful educational reform policies of the 21st century. President Bush said, "We have a genuine national crisis. More and

more, we are divided into two nations. One that reads, and one that doesn't. One that dreams, and one that doesn't" (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). There were multiple components to the NCLB act which made it a distinct piece of educational legislation that promoted optimism and shifted pedagogical philosophy significantly from past practice. First, the law required that all states submit a plan that included annual assessments in the content areas of both reading and math in grades 3-8, and at a minimum, one assessment in grades 10-12. An assessment in the content area of science was subsequently added in 2007-2008. Additionally, the bill also required individual states to establish their own respective definition of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) that was to be based on Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs). Moreover, states were also required to determine progress targets accompanied with a comprehensive review of the headway of each individual school and district receiving any funds that were associated with Title I. Schools and districts that failed to meet the aforementioned criteria were subjected to punitive punishments as a result of their non-compliance.

NCLB also offered states, school districts, and schools greater flexibility with respect to how they allocated their funds upon the federal government's determination that accountability requirements were successfully met. It afforded autonomy to allocate funds appropriately as per their individual needs to continue to attain and enrich learning for all students. Furthermore, states were assured a noteworthy increase in federal funding for continued school improvement from one- half percent of Title I funds under the ESEA, to 2% under NCLB and increasing to 4% in 2004. They were also offered an additional $500 million for local school improvement grants (U.S. DOE, 2002). Another key component of NCLB was its emphasis on more choices for the parents of children

from disadvantaged backgrounds (U.S. DOE, 2002). Parents who felt that the school in which their child attended did not meet their individual needs as a result of the school being labeled as underperforming, had the option to send their child to a different school that would have met their respective necessities. The last major component to the NCLB bill was its emphasis on the teachers' use of teaching methods that have been proven to work (U.S. DOE, 2002). Research has shown that the pedagogical philosophy adopted by teachers, which consequently helps to determine their instructional delivery methods and procedures, can speak to the academic achievement of their students or lack thereof. All of the school improvement plans for Title I schools that were created along with the instructionally based teacher strategies were required to be grounded in scientifically based research (U.S. DOE, 2002).

The most current federal legislation on education that was strategically designed to assist in remediating the achievement gap is known as the Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is a modified version on NCLB with reflective changes. "Signed on December 10, 2015, by President Barack Obama and, in great part, replacing the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (H.R.1), the new Act is best known for eliminating some of the "high-stakes" testing requirements and for turning back most decision-making authority to the states and local agencies" (Foxhall, 2016, p. 15). The current law does away with (AYP) and reestablished the state's autonomy allowing them to establish and implement their own accountability system to identify struggling schools (Foxhall, 2016). Under NCLB, targeted interventions for particular deficiencies are required for schools that rank in the lowest scoring five percent. Particular attention is being payed to certain subgroups: each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged and not

economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities as compared to children without disabilities, English proficiency status, gender, and migrant status (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). "Although not strong enough to tip the balance, ESSA does provide states with a valuable new tool. School reports will now be incorporating one or more non-academic indicators that can help bring attention to the nation's broader educational purposes" (Mathis & Trujillo, 2016, p. 47).

In sum, unlike previous ESEA reauthorizations, ESSA has redistributed a great deal of authority back to the states by: a) ensuring that each state sets a high set of college and career standards, b) enables individual states to maintain accountability by allocating resources to schools most in need of improvement, c) empowers states along with local education agencies to utilize meaningful evidenced-based interventions, d) encourages states to preserve their annual assessments as an informing mechanism that does not overshadow both teaching and learning, e) increases community access to quality preschool programs for more children, and f) secures new resources to identify and investigate promising educational practices and to replicate proven strategies that enhance students' educational outcomes (Sharp, 2016).

"While many significant changes are included, ESSA is still a primarily test-based accountability system, with states required to "identify a category of schools for comprehensive support and improvement" and then intervene after three years. The law specifies a set of academic indicators, each of which must be given "substantial weight" in the accountability system" (Penuel, Meyer, & Valladares, 2016, p. 79). With this understanding, the extent to which teachers in the classroom serve as the catalysts to facilitate the development of each student academically, is of paramount importance to

say the least. Teachers as the facilitators of knowledge and critical thinking have the imperative task of educating all students, despite their backgrounds and accessibility to resources and support outside of the educational setting that can speak intelligently to their advancements. The nuances of the 21st century classroom are quite unique and distinct from what they were in previous years. Students today enter the classroom with a myriad of conditions and circumstances that affect the achievements they gain. According to Morgan (2014), "Instruction seems to be more important today than ever because the United States today has become more diverse than ever and will continue to be composed of students with different needs" (p. 37). Teachers today encompass the role of a guidance counselor, psychologist, confidant, and social worker along with the responsibility of delivering instruction effectively. The ability of a teacher to foster and develop relationships with students while simultaneously promoting academic achievement is tremendously difficult, yet feasible if given the proper training and resources.

Pedagogy

Good teaching practices are determined by the philosophy, mindset, and behaviors that teachers consciously utilize so that their students can better internalize a series of concepts and skills. A definition from LeoNora &Gelbrich (1999) states that "your educational philosophy is your beliefs about why, what and how you teach, whom you teach, and about the nature of learning. It is a set of principles that guides professional action through the events and issues teachers face daily" (p. 1). The extent to which teachers have the ability to effectively meet the multiple needs of students of the 21st century so that they are not only college and career ready, but also prepared after

high school to become contributing members of a democratic society, is contingent on a

variety of conditions. According to Warner (2016) excellence in teaching "is highly

interactive and cooperative, building a community of learners working toward common

purposes through caring and trusting relationships. It is reflective and flexible, constantly

changing and adapting to new contexts and learners" (p. 25). The teacher's delivery style

that is built on their personal educational philosophy is ultimately going to determine

their ability to convey quality instruction for the sake of positively impacting their

students' achievement.

One of the objectives of effective instruction would consist of the implementation

of multiple strategies within the classroom to assist students to achieve mastery, while

maximizing the student engagement (Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001; Schmoker,

2006). With that said, understanding the multiple learning styles within a classroom can

be extremely difficult. Depending on the number of students within a class, and their

individual and collective needs, impacts the manner in which the teacher is able to

effectively deliver instruction and promote learning. It would be easy to point to one

particular teaching style and declare it to be the answer to all questions that a teacher may

have in the classroom. However, education is not that easy, and the ability of a teacher to

modify their delivery based on the needs of his or her students can make all the difference

in the world. Cohen and Brawer (2003) state that, "Information on the effects of

instruction is always hard to obtain because of the number of variables that must be

controlled in any study: the entering abilities of the students, the criterion tests and

instructional procedures used, and the level of the course or learning unit, to name only a

few" (p. 189). Jerald (2006) states that one instructional strategy may not necessarily

serve the needs of all the students within a classroom and their individual needs.

"Thoughtful teachers employ a variety of strategies to ensure that students develop basic skills and can apply those skills to complex tasks grounded in real-world challenges" (p. 4). Consequently, multiple instructional approaches have the highest probability of casting the broadest net to capture a majority of the students that can be found in a 21st century classroom.

Student Engagement

Teachers depend heavily on their ability to create meaningful lessons and differentiate their instruction in such a way that it leads to student engagement where learning is a highly probable outcome. Given the multiple personalities and unique skillsets of the diverse students that can be found in any given class, during any given day, engaging students meaningfully is an ever-elusive goal, but one that is essential if student achievement is the desired outcome. With this understanding, student engagement is difficult to define, and varies significantly depending on who you converse with. Educators generally equate on-task behavior with academic engagement, as well as the students' effort, hard work, focus, attention, interest, and willing participation (Skinner & Pitzer, 2013). Danielson (2013) states that what students are doing and saying in response to the teacher is the best indicator of student engagement. Student engagement is much more than a child being on-task or even immersed in a task, rather, student engagement consists of academic, cognitive, along with behavioral characteristics (Eccles & Wang, 2013; Finn & Zimmer, 2013).

The goal for any effective educator is to have students that are actively engaged so that both the content and skills that are being taught will serve them in a meaningful

way for many years to come. Schunk and Mullen (2013) state that, "students engaged in learning have a sense of self-efficacy for learning. They hold positive outcome expectations and value their learning" (p. 225). Another study conducted by Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) found that campuses in which the faculty use "active and collaborative learning techniques, engage students in experiences, emphasize higher-order cognitive activities in the classroom, interact with students, challenge students academically, and value enriching educational experiences had students who perceived higher levels of engagement" (p. 153).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The increase in the diversity within K-12 schools has adversely impacted both the teaching and learning that happens within schools in the United States, particularly for schools that are located in urban areas such as NYC. Districts and schools that are located in low SES communities have historically had a healthy representation of rich cultures as a result of the ethnic melting pot that has been created throughout a series of generations by different immigrant groups. Gibson and Rojas (2006) argue that students from rural areas continue to migrate to urban schools to pursue college degrees along with various employment opportunities. The diversity within America has grown significantly over the past several decades; different groups of people have come from various parts of the world for multiple reasons, particularly to be educated. To what extent have public educational institutions taken a conscious approach to address this cultural change in a meaningful way for the betterment of the education they are trying to provide for the students and communities that they ultimately serve? Some would argue that there have been minimal efforts in that regard. The failure to acknowledge the role

that culture plays in education at both the university and K-12 levels may be part of the reason an achievement gap currently exists between students from culturally diverse backgrounds (Irvine, 1990, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Research has demonstrated that teachers' classroom practices tend to have the greatest impact of all school-based factors (Lingard & Mills, 2007).

Gloria Ladson Billings (1994) devised the term culturally relevant pedagogy as a way to describe "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 17). The term is used as a way to consciously emphasize a pedagogy that is inclusive of the students' lived experiences and cultural backgrounds within the content of a course. Essentially, "a culturally relevant pedagogy is designed to problematize teaching and encourage teachers to ask about the nature of student-teacher relationships, the curriculum, schooling, and society" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 52). With respect to student achievement, Ladson-Billings (1994) argues that teachers who purposefully practice culturally relevant methods of instruction must examine three critical conceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy and its practice: 1) how they conceive themselves and their students; 2) how they conceive their social interactions with others; 3) how they conceive knowledge construction. When teachers have a thorough understanding of the aforementioned, the likelihood that they will be able to effectively engage their students in a meaningful will lead to long term knowledge retention. Knowing what student engagement looks like and understanding the instructional benefits is one thing, but the mindful creation of unique lesson plans and the successful implementation of those plans into action within the classroom is extremely difficult. In

order to achieve this goal, research has shown that when teachers are mindful of the cultural nuances of particular student groups, and when they purposefully incorporate pedagogy that is culturally relevant, they significantly increase the likelihood that their students will be actively engaged in the lesson.

Brown-Jeffy & Cooper (2011) argue that when teachers consciously integrate the cultural experiences, values, and understandings into the teaching and learning environment, it will improve student achievement. In order to be a good teacher, it is important to understand and also acknowledge the crucial role that culture plays in the teaching learning process (Sheets, 2009). Effective teaching and learning take place "in a culturally supportive, learner-centered context, where students' strengths are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement" (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007, p. 141). Liggett (2008) postulates that teachers must acknowledge the fact that their identity has "cultural orientations that shape the ways in which they think about values, beliefs, communication style (modes of politeness/formality), historical perspectives, art, music, family, rituals (graduation, sport team rallies), rites of passages (notable birthdays), and other social group activities" (p. 397). As it stands, this cultural engagement will consequently increase the likelihood that the students will internalize the teacher's objective for the lesson in which the students will ideally internalize the content or the skill that was associated with it.

Leadership

The focus on educational leaders and leadership is an important concept to comprehend in order to have a thorough understanding of the most appropriate steps that have to be taken in order to positively impact student achievement. The principals of

schools should be the lead change agent (Shawver, 2009). Often times, administrators are given the title of a leader without earning it through their hard work, grit, and determination. Principals can be administrators, or they can be leaders; the distinction comes in the latter's ability to positively influence the teachers that s/he works with. It is not uncommon to see administrators placed into their positions solely based on the amount of experience they have in the role, but this does not necessarily mean that they are the most qualified. The title of leader is one that should be earned, not given arbitrarily. Drucker (1990) stated, "Leaders are given the gift of leadership by those who choose or agree to follow" (p. 37). Northouse (2010) defined leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). A successful leader focuses on setting direction, developing people, and redesigning the organization (Leithwood et. al, 2004). Leadership is thus, a disposition, not a position.

The ultimate responsibility of any effective school principal is to ensure that every student, despite their background, is met with academic and social/emotional success. Effective principals are able to see the bigger picture, understand the many constraints that can potentially hold them back, and are insightful on how to motivate their staff and personnel. An effective leader knows the best ways to work collaboratively alongside different teams to come to a consensus on how to best implement a vision that positively impacts education. They do this while considering what is in the best interest of every student and follow it through with fidelity. Consequently, they try and establish a collegial school where the focus is always on "studying teaching and learning, setting common priorities, making decisions about internal changes and resource allocations, and assessing effects on students learning" (Glickman, 2010, p. 156).

Principals who are effective administrators are influential leaders in the eyes of the teachers that work alongside them for the sake of student achievement. According to Clifford (2010), "The practice of school leadership requires principals to make critical determinations about school capacity and find ways to institute and inspire improvement in teaching and learning" (p. 2). As a result of the fact that education is a business that is comprised of multiple people in an array of capacities working and interacting with each other on a daily basis, the particular leadership style that an administrator utilizes, consciously or not, can potentially make all the difference in the world for the sake of student achievement. Two of the most common types of leadership styles that can be seen in schools are either transactional or transformational. Burns (1978) distinguished the difference between the two.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership offers the employee either rewards or punishments which are based on their performance (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). According to Bass (1990, 1997) transactional leadership incorporates the social exchange between the leader to subordinate in order to clarify what the latter has to accomplish for the purposes of achieving a particular work-related task. The extent to which the task is completed or not depends on whether the subordinate is given a reward for their compliance or a negative consequence for their failure. The primary focus for a transactional leader is to conserve efficient management and comply with an organization's rules and policies (Bass & Avolio, 2004). In an educational setting, transactional leaders are often feared, and may not always be necessarily respected. However, that fear can come from a person's own insecurities with respect to their skill set, and the lack of respect may come from their

unwillingness to accept consequences as deemed appropriate by their immediate supervisor.

According to Bass (2008) Transactional leadership theory views effective leadership practice as an exchange of rewards or discipline which is contingent on the performance of followers. Transactional leaders guide their followers by the way in which they clarify their role and task requirements (Varol & Varol, 2012). Additionally, transactional leaders typically never get involved with subordinates unless a mistake, irregularity, deviation from the norm, or a complaint is made (Bass, 1985). As a result, transactional leaders typically do not motivate their employees, facilitate their personal growth or employ loyalty in the company (Bass, 1985). A transactional leader who is conscious of his or her surroundings will purposefully look for mistakes or irregularities in the subordinate's work. Transactional leadership can be seen in the vast majority of leadership models and has historically been described as "an exchange of effort for pay without a higher moral purpose" (Orduro, 2012, p. 10).

Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) is the researcher that is well known for his work on the characteristics of a transformational leader and describes this particular style as "the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower" (p. 69). Burns described the characteristics of transformational leadership to be that of a series of interactions between leaders and followers in order to achieve a higher level of morale and motivation. Thus, their effectiveness can be gauged by the extent to which they positively impact the behaviors of their employees to increase their productivity in

whatever capacity they work. Eyal & Roth (2011) stated that the transformational

leadership model surfaced in educational literature in the 1980's as a way to raise overall

job satisfaction and improve student achievement. "Transformational leaders' impact on

their followers was ascribed to their ability to nurture followers' needs, empower them,

and give them a sense of mission toward ethical and broad objectives that exceed their

own goals" (p. 82).

Transformational leadership is "the process whereby a person engages with

others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the

leader and the follower" (Northouse, 2010, p. 172). Orduro (2012) defined

transformational leadership as a "process that changes and transforms individuals so that

they look beyond themselves and toward a greater goal. It is characterized by the 'four

I's': individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and

idealized influence" (p. 10). According to Kouzes and Posner (2008), transformational

leadership is "the kind of leadership that gets people to infuse their energy into strategies"

(p. 122).

Emotional Intelligence

The primary distinction between good leaders and great leaders does not depend

on an individual's IQ argues Goleman (1998). Instead, ***great*** leaders have a high level of

emotional intelligence (EI) that decipher them from ***good*** leaders as a result of a series of

five "soft skills". The five skills are *self-awareness*, *self-regulation*, *motivation*, *empathy*,

trust, and *social skill*. Goleman (1998) argues that when these five skills are optimized, it

enables the best leaders to maximize their own performance, and also the performance of

their followers. In education, this has noteworthy implications as a result of the

leadership status that principals organically inherit. Emotional intelligence is considered to be an important factor of a successful leader (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the "ability to accurately identify and understand one's own emotional reactions and those of others" (Cherniss & Adler, 2000, p. 39). The ability of a principal to maximize the performance of the many followers within their building can potentially have significant implications for the many students within any given building. School leaders are required to interact with multiple people on a daily basis for a host of reason. Those interactions, in some form or another, encompass student achievement as the primary dependent variable. At any given moment, a school leader can potentially find themselves in an in-depth conversation with a teacher, student, parent, community member, school board member, or another administrator. The ability to effectively navigate said conversations can ultimately determine the effectiveness of that administrator or undermine their credibility as an educational leader. Goleman (1998) defines emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (p. 17).

Educational institutions consist of multiple people working alongside each other with one common goal in mind; student achievement. Because all people have thoughts, feelings, and emotions that impact the way they function, a better understanding of how emotional intelligence relates to leadership would be beneficial to understand. Leaders who demonstrate that they have high levels of emotional intelligence are in better positions to positively impact the organizations that they work in (Alexander & Murphy, 1999; Avolio & Bass, 2004). Moore (2009) postulates that individuals that have the

expertise in effectively managing emotions are perceived as having a high emotional intelligence. With respect to principals and their role in schools, "emotional intelligence is the single most important variable influencing personal achievement, career success, leadership, and life satisfaction" (Nelson & Low, 2011, p. 58). Kobe, Reiter-Palmon, and Rickers (2001) assert that highly effective leaders are able to respond appropriately using their leadership style as a result of their level of emotional intelligence. Cai (2011) found that school administrators that demonstrated a high level of emotional intelligence experienced more transformational movements in school climate because of the administrators' ability to get teachers to collaborate.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The literature presented in chapter two substantiates the notion that school leadership may have an impact on student achievement. Certain types of leaders and their respective styles, albeit transformative or transactional, may have an impact on teachers and their pedagogical philosophy or approach, which could in turn have an adverse effect on their students' achievement. The literature also suggests that there are certain pedagogical practices and emotional supports that can be consciously provided and strategically implemented for individual students by their respective teachers as a way to increase the likelihood of their academic success.

As a result, the current study will add to the existing literature on the relationship between school leadership, its impact on teachers, and how that relationship may adversely influence student achievement. Chapter three will specifically focus on the quantitative methodological approach that was utilized as a way to measure the theory of *Stratified Urban Education*, which compared the constructs of *Urban Leadership*, *Urban Pedagogy*, and *Urban Opportunities to Learn* against the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic high school students of low SES communities in NYC schools.

Research Design

The present quantitative study was grounded on the Framework for Great Schools by (Bryk et al., 2010). The design of the survey that is administered annually by the NYC DOE is meant to measure the six components of the Framework which are (a) Rigorous Instruction; (b) Collaborative Teachers; (c) Supportive Environment; (d) Effective School Leadership; I Strong Family-Community Ties; and lastly (f) Trust. The data are available

from the NYC DOE website and can be disaggregated by individual schools. The data

collection procedures and the analysis of this study were reviewed and approved by the

Institutional Review Board of the university prior to the implementation of any part of the

study. Figure 3.1 illustrates the conceptual model of the effects of Urban Leadership,

Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunity to Learn on graduation rates and highlights the

potential relationship evaluated in the current study.

Fundamentally, the researcher sought to gain a deeper understanding of the

potential relationship between graduation rates and three latent variables among teachers

and Black and Hispanic students of high ENI communities. Based on the literature

review, the researcher hypothesized that disparities in the graduation rates of said

students could potentially be explained by three separate constructs that make up the

theory of *Stratified Urban Education*. The researcher selected 14 separate items from the

NYC DOE survey that seemed logically related to the constructs proposed and subjected

them to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to be able to confidently identify the

underlying factor structure.

Figure 3.1

Conceptual Framework: Stratified Urban Education.

Stratified Urban Education
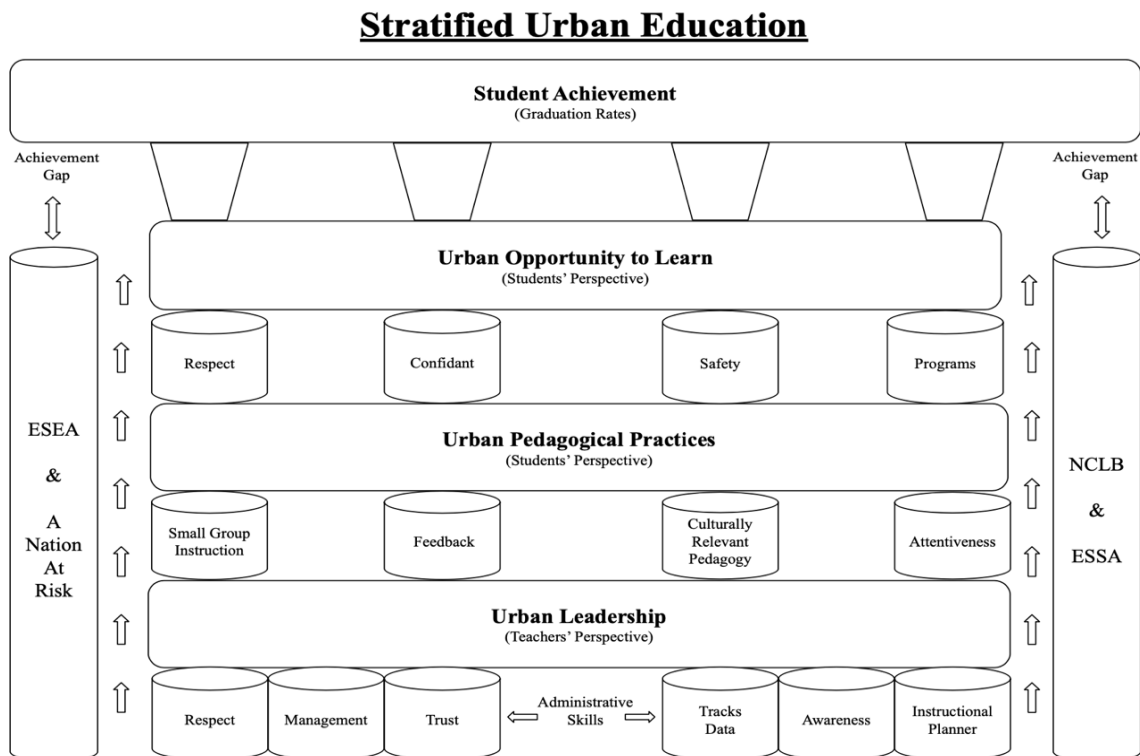
The construct of *Urban Leadership* was measured as a latent variable and was derived from teachers' responses of their principal to six questions. Teachers rated the questions on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree). The following questions were asked of the teachers which could speak to the respective leadership style of the principal:

- I feel respected by the principal/school leader at this school.

- The principal/school leader at this school is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly.

- I trust the principal/school leader at his or her word (to do what he or she says that he or she will do).

- The principal/school leader at this school carefully tracks student academic progress.

- The principal/school leader at this school knows what's going on in my classroom.

- The principal/school leader at this school participates in instructional planning with teams of teachers.

The construct of *Urban Pedagogy* was measured as a latent variable and was derived from students' responses of their teachers to four questions. Students rated one of the four questions on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = I don't know). The following question was asked of the students which could speak to the respective teaching style of the teacher:

- In general, my teachers make their lessons relevant to my everyday life experiences.

Additionally, under the construct of *Urban Pedagogy*, students rated three additional questions on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = none, 2 = A few, 3 = most, and 4 = All). The following questions were asked of the students which could further speak to the respective teaching style of the teacher:

- My teachers give me specific suggestions about how I can improve my work in class.

- In how many of your classes do you work in small groups?

- In how many of your classes at this school do YOU feel most students pay

  attention when they are supposed to?

Lastly, the construct of *Urban Opportunity to Learn* was measured as a latent

variable and was derived from students' responses of their teacher and school to four

questions. Students rated the questions on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly

disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree, and 5 = I don't know). The

following questions were asked of the students which could speak to the students'

perception of additional supports within the school that could create an opportunity to

learn:

- My teachers treat me with respect.

- There is at least one adult in the school that I can confide in.

- I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms and cafeteria of this school.

- This school offers a wide enough variety of programs, classes and activities to

  keep me interested in school.

These 3 constructs, and latent independent variables, were subsequently measured

against the dependent variable of graduation rates of schools that were considered to have

an Economic Need Index (ENI) of ≥ 90%. The NYC DOE uses the ENI index as a way to

determine the likelihood that students at a particular school are living in poverty. The

measurement is calculated by assigning the student a "1" if families are HRA-eligible,

living in temporary housing, or if a high school student has a home language that is not

English and entered the NYC DOE educational system for the first time within four years

(NYC DOE, 2019). Otherwise, the ENI index of a student is based upon the percentage

of families with school-age children whose income level is below the poverty line as

determined by the 5-Year Estimate of the American Community Survey. All of the data

that were utilized for this study originated from a survey that was administered by the

NYC DOE during the 2017-2018 academic school year.

The research design that was employed for this particular study utilized

descriptive statistics as one way to clarify any ambiguities that were present in the

comprehensive analysis of the variables measured. Descriptive statistics are also utilized

as a way to measure the multiple perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of a current

issue (Lodico et. al., 2010). Descriptive statistics facilitates in the description and

summarization of data within a given population and their behaviors in a relevant way

such that patterns may emerge which have the potential to facilitate a clear understanding

and interpretation of the data. Moreover, descriptive statistics utilizes both graphs and

charts as appropriate visuals to further explain a potential phenomenon amongst a set of

variables and its impact or association on the dependent variable.

This study also utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) which employs the

partial least squares (PLS) method as a means to quantity the theory of *Stratified Urban*

Education against the constructs of *Urban Leadership*, *Urban Pedagogy*, and *Urban*

Opportunity to Learn. This particular method has been extensively used in a variety of

fields such as information systems (Guo et al., 2011; Kock & Lynn, 2012), marketing

(Biong & Ulvnes, 2011), international business (Ketkar et al., 2012), nursing (Kim et al.,

2012), medicine (Berglund, Lytsy & Westerling, 2012), and global environmental change

(Brewer et al., 2012). Additionally, SEM uses various models to ascertain relationships

among both observed and unobserved variables in order to provide a quantitative analysis

of a hypothesized theoretical model (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). The WarpPLS

software was used to unambiguously categorize nonlinear functions by connecting pairs of latent variables in SEM models and calculate multivariate coefficients of association appropriately (Kock, 2019).

The primary purpose of using PLS software is to be able to make predictions. Sample size requirements are much different than covariance-based SEM analysis. Furthermore, PLS was appropriate for this study as a result of the sample size. While PLS has the ability to handle a large number of indicators, it works well with sample sizes that are smaller. This particular type of SEM analysis can be conducted when the assumptions of normal distribution and independence are not met by the data that is being used (Chin & Newsted, 1999 & Gefen et al., 2000). According to Chin & Newsted (1999) the use of PLS is adequate when:

- A researcher looks to make predictions.

- One is researching a relatively recent or changing model.

- The model being analyzed is relatively complex and includes a large number of indicators or latent variables.

- There is a need for formative indicators.

- Data does not meet the usual normality, independence and sample size requirements of other methods.

PLS can be used as a means to run a regression analysis or as a path model by conducting structural equation modeling using a partial least squares algorithm. The distinction with this particular software, and what makes it unique, is that it has the ability to identify non-linear relationships among the multiple latent variables that are present in a model. Moreover, the software is able to conduct a Warp PLS regression,

robust path analysis, or a standard PLS regression analysis. PLS is considered to be a variance-based SEM analytical technique where the algorithms that are used incorporate a mixture of both linear regression and covariance-based SEM; it consists of both an inner and an outer model. The inner model contains the relationships between the latent variables, while the outer model consists of the association amongst the manifest variables along with the latent variables. In other words, the distinction between the inner and the outer model, is that the latter refers to the ways in which each individual set of indicators relates to the latent variables. During analysis in PLS, the outer model is estimated first, then the inner model is estimated. The software is essentially running several multiple regressions at the same time so that predictions can be made. The association of the three constructs on the graduation rates examined in this study were investigated with the following research question and hypothesis in mind:

Research Question: To what extent does the theory of Stratified Urban Education explain the relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogical Practices, and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students in high ENI communities of NYC?

Research Hypothesis $_0$: The theory of Stratified Urban Education does not explain the relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogical Practices, and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students in high ENI communities of NYC?

Data Analysis: A (SEM) analysis will be conducted to assess the extent to which the constructs factor together along with the effect that each construct has on each other and the dependent variable.

Reliability and Validity / Trustworthiness of the Research Design

The reliability and validity of a study are important factors to consider when measuring the trustworthiness of a particular research design. This particular study comprised of data taken from the NYC DOE and the survey that was administered in 2018. The survey is specifically targeted as a way to measure the perceptions of parents, students, and teachers to gain of better understanding of proactive steps that can be taken in order to improve education and academic achievement for all students. Rockoff & Sperini conducted an analysis of the reliability and validity of the NYC DOE survey in 2008. Chronbach's alpha was utilized as a means to assess and measure the internal consistency of the survey. The internal consistency reliability is a measure that is frequently used in educational research (Litwin, 2003). Their study found very high levels of reliability with Chronbac's alpha levels of 0.9 for nearly every case after calculating the reliability score separately for each of the survey's four domain scores (Academics, Communication, Engagement, and Safety). They also found very high correlations across the four domain scores within each of the different subgroups, with coefficients of correlation ranges from 0.75 to 0.95 and similar levels of correlation for each of the three respondent groups (Rockoff & Sperini, 2008). The Chronbach's alpha is often the most appropriate test in measuring internal consistency of surveys and questionnaires in educational research (McMillian & Shumacher, 2006).

The internal validity of the instrument presented by Rockoff & Sperini was calculated by conducting a factor analysis on the average scores of the environmental group for all questions that were asked to each of the three different respondent groups. Results from their factor analysis did not support the notion that the four domains of Academic, Communication, Engagement, and Safety are distinct traits; rather, their study found one major factor which they interpreted as corresponding to an overall sense of school quality. By itself, this factor had the greatest explanatory power in the data as a result of nearly all the questions loading significantly onto that individual factor (Rockoff & Sperini, 2008).

As a result of the aforementioned, the Research Alliance and the NYC DOE began to work collaboratively on a comprehensive redesign of the NYC school survey in the summer and fall of 2014. Together, a Strategic Planning Team was created which consisted of various leaders from an array of NYC DOE divisions and researchers from the Research Alliance. In an attempt to increase the reliability and validity of the survey, measures were taken to increase the Intra-Class Correlation (ICC). The ICC is a measure that explains the degree to which a specific measure is accurately capturing specific school-wide characteristics. The measure ranges from 0 to 1; the higher the number, the more agreement there is within schools with regards to a particular measure. For the purposes of the NYC Survey, within-school agreement was considered to be high if the measure was greater than .20, and low if it was lower than .10, and moderate if the measure was between .10 and .20 (Merrill & Lafayette, 2018). With this understanding, the NYC DOE and the Research Alliance modified the survey and released the new version to the public in the academic school year 2015-2016.

A Chronbach's alpha analysis of the 2015-2016 survey showed strong results under the six elements of the Framework for Great Schools. The six elements are Effective Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Rigorous Instruction, and Trust. Data show that all the elements were reliable and were able to, for the most part, demonstrate face, criterion, and concurrent validity (Merrill & Lafayette, 2018). All of the elements demonstrated a Chronbach's alpha score above .70 which is considered to be a highly reliable score. Only four of the 32 measures did not have concurrent validity, and three of those measures did not demonstrate content validity either. Additionally, two additional measures had neither face nor content validity. Recommendations were made to the DOE and early analysis of the 2015-2016 survey show that the measures were improved (Merrill & Lafayette, 2018).

The Sample and Population

The sample for this study comprised of high schools, grades 9-12, that had an Economic Need Index of ≥ 90% from the New York City school system. Using public data that was found on the NYC DOE website, the demographic data of each school was disaggregated to identify schools that had an ENI index of ≥ 90%. Data was then disaggregated by Black and Hispanic students from additional data found on the NYC DOE website on the August graduation rates of the schools identified in order to retrieve the intended data for the purposes of this study.

Many schools had to be removed as a result of graduation data being categorized with a "s", which signifies that the data were "suppressed." According to the DOE, in order to comply with the Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)

regulations on public reporting of education outcomes, rows in the data set that contained fewer than five students were suppressed and were replaced with an "s". Furthermore, the DOE states that additional rows were replaced with an "s" if, either through addition or subtraction, said rows could reveal the underlying numbers that were redacted (NYC DOE, 2019). Consequently, the final data that was used consisted of 45 schools with a total of n= 14,655 students that filled out the School Survey. The average response rate of the students in the targeted schools was 78%. The exact number of teacher participants for this particular study is not known. The average response rate of the teachers who filled out the School Survey (Appendix D) from the targeted schools as identified by the ENI index was 87%.

Instruments

The NYS School Survey was developed and implemented as a result of the Framework for Great Schools (Bryk et. al., 2010). The present study utilized public data that was obtained from the NYC DOE website, which through their annual survey, is meant to assess the perceptions of parents, teachers, and students for the sake of school reform. This study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the theory of *Stratified Urban Education*, which postulates an interconnectedness of a teacher construct titled *Urban Leadership*, and two student constructs titled *Urban Pedagogy* and *Urban Opportunity to Learn*. For this study, only the perceptions of the students and the teachers were used from the 2018 survey.

The survey was strategically designed to measure six distinct components of the Framework for Great Schools. Chronbach's alpha analysis of the 2015-2016 survey show strong results under the six elements of the Framework for Great Schools. The six

elements are Effective Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Rigorous Instruction, and Trust. Data show that all the elements were reliable and were able to, for the most part, demonstrate face, criterion, and concurrent validity (Merrill & Lafayette, 2018). This study also utilized graduation data that can also be found on the NYC DOE website. The graduation data that was used represented the dependent variable to this study and was disaggregated appropriately to identify the targeted schools that met an ENI index of ≥ 90%. The data for graduation rates is also available on the NYC DOE website.

Procedures for Data Collection

In this study, both students' and teachers' perceptions were gathered using a Likert response scale style survey. Quantitative research contains closed-ended questions which are used to examine the relationship between variables that can be measured and analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009). The students' response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "I don't know", "none" to "all", "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", and "none of the time" to "most of the time." The teachers' response options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "I don't know", "none of the time" to "most of the time", "no influence" to "A great deal of influence", "very dissatisfied" to "I don't know", "strongly disagree" to "N/A", "none" to "all", and lastly, "none" to "I don't know." The survey was administered to teachers digitally, meanwhile students took the paper version. The survey was administered to a total of 1,014,400 people in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx; the respondents consisted of 434, 015 students, 73,205 teachers, and 507,180 families.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The researcher sought to gain a deeper understanding of the possible influence

that the three separate constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban

Opportunity to Learn had on the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students of low

ENI communities in NYC. Study participants included teachers and students from

schools that had an ENI index of ≥ 90%. The researcher utilized structural equation

modeling (SEM) as a means to analyze the data appropriately. Structural equation

modeling is considered to be a robust statistical technique that is utilized to both specify

and evaluate a hypothesized relationship between both observed and unobserved

variables while taking into account measurement error (Hair et al., 2006; Kline, 2011;

Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). As a means to conduct an analysis, the researcher used

SPSS 6.0. Additionally, WarpPLS 6.0 software was used which utilizes various

composite-based and factor methods, including the "warped" partial least squares (PLS)

method.

The following research question guided this study:

- To what extent does the theory of Stratified Urban Education explain the

  relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogical

  Practices, and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and

  Hispanic students in high ENI communities of NYC?

Table 4.1 lists the means, standard deviations (SD), and variance for each of the

variables that were included in this study. The means for items under the construct of

Urban Leadership ranged from 72.356 to 88.578 (SD = 11.76659 to 20.09254). The

means for items under the construct of Urban Pedagogy ranged from 69.2889 to 81.6667

(SD = 8.49587 to 12.00303). The means for items under the construct of Urban

Opportunity to Learn ranged from 78.6 to 90.3111 (SD = 5.68819 to 11.12409). The data

demonstrated that all of the study variables revealed a skewness level that was within the

acceptable range of -3 to 3 (Brown, 2006; Kline, 2011). Moreover, the levels of kurtosis

of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunity to Learn hovered around

zero, which according to Tabachnick & Fidell (2001), indicates that the constructs were

normally distributed.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Urban Leadership						
TeacherInstrucPlanner	45	28	100	72.3556	19.83587	393.462
TeacherAwareness	45	38	100	79.5111	19.01509	361.574
TeacherTracksData	45	52	100	88.5778	12.35367	152.613
TeacherTrust	45	38	100	79.8	17.09412	292.209
TeacherManagement	45	31	100	78.4889	20.09254	403.71
TeacherRespect	45	52	100	86.0444	11.76659	138.453
Urban Pedagogy						
SmallGroupInstruction	45	48	92	69.2889	10.28596	105.801
Attentiveness	45	47	93	70.8667	12.00303	144.073
Feedback	45	55	91	74.9556	8.49587	72.18
CRP	45	57	97	81.6667	9.64365	93
Urban Opportunity to Learn						
Student Respect	45	73	99	90.3111	5.68819	32.356
Confidant	45	70	93	81.2667	6.02797	36.336
Safety	45	64	96	84.6889	7.32313	53.628
Programs	45	55	96	78.6	11.12409	123.745
Graduation Rates	45	9	94	61.9333	20.49324	419.973

The data that the researcher collected was subsequently subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as a means to evaluate the structure of the latent constructs. The purpose of the CFA was to assess and gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which the constructs measured were able to demonstrate both validity and reliability. Vogt (1993) states that validity is defined as the degree to which a particular concept measures what it intends to measure, whilst reliability is a specific measurement of consistency.

The researcher selected 14 items that seemed logically related to each of the constructs. Table 4.2 provides the analysis for the individual factor loadings for items under each of the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunity to Learn. The researcher was able to compute a Cronbach's reliability coefficients assessment for each of the latent variables and subsequently examined each of the constructs for reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2006). As shown in Table 4.2, all items displayed factor loadings of 0.868 or higher; cross loadings for each of the constructs are highlighted bold. Beneath the construct of Urban Leadership, the principal's ability to track data had the lowest loading of .0896, meanwhile teachers' trust in the principal had the highest loading at .0976. Under the construct of Urban Pedagogy, small group instruction had the lowest factor loading at .0868, meanwhile student feedback demonstrated the highest loading at 0.969. Beneath the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn, students' feeling of their safety within the school had the lowest loading at 0.882, meanwhile respect had the highest loading at 0.920.

The results of the construct and construct reliability seem to appropriately suggest that the measured latent variables consisted of moderate to high internal consistency and construct reliability that was above the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) and

0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the results revealed that the constructs are highly

reliable and appropriate for this study, and taken as a whole, the justification was adequate

to conduct a SEM analysis to further assess the hypothesized theory of Stratified Urban

Education.

Table 4.2

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, Urban Opportunity
to Learn.*

	Graduate	Urban Leadership	Urban Pedagogy	Urban Opportunity to Learn
Urban Leadership				
Respect	0.111	0.898	-0.029	0.031
Management	0.016	0.949	0.009	-0.052
Trust	-0.013	0.976	-0.018	0.029
Tracks Data	0.141	0.896	0.035	0.060
Awareness	-0.133	0.933	-0.012	0.030
Instructional Planner	-0.116	0.911	0.016	-0.100
Urban Pedagogy				
Small Group Instruction	0.115	-0.128	0.868	0.194
Attentiveness	-0.144	0.069	0.927	0.012
Feedback	-0.029	0.047	0.969	-0.072
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	0.074	0.003	0.869	-0.134
Urban Opportunity to Learn				
Respect	-0.042	0.097	-0.087	0.920
Confidant	0.049	-0.186	0.107	0.891
Safety	0.002	0.099	0.052	0.882
Programs	-0.007	-0.02	-0.069	0.913

According to Campbell (2018) all SEM models depend heavily on the validity of the constructs that are being used as the reliability and validity represent the very foundation for further analysis. PLS-SEM is able to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (Gefen, Straub & Boudreau, 2000), but it does not calculate a goodness-of-fit test. Campbell (1960) suggested that there are two ways in which a study has the ability to demonstrate construct validity. The first way involves examining the manner in which there are high correlations with the other constructs of the study which should be theoretically related in some way. Different tests which are designed to measure validity should theoretically produce similar results, despite the fact that the software might be different. Campbell and Fiske (1959) consider this to be convergent validity. Comparably, constructs which are theoretically different should logically provide results which do not show a high or significant correlation; this is known as discriminant validity. Their article provides three alternative ways in which constructs could be viewed (dominance, sociability, achievement motivation) whilst offering three distinct ways to measure them (self-report, a projective technique, peer ratings). Convergent validity data was provided for constructs that were highly correlated, while discriminant validity data was provided for constructs that were not highly correlated.

In his article, Campbell (2018) illustrates how both discriminant and convergent validity can be measured using the WarpPLS 6.0 software. He states that convergent validity can be measured using the output tables that produce the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) along with the table that provides the significance of loadings. AVE is defined as the average communality in the blocks (Chin, 2010). "The threshold for convergent validity is AVE=.50 where the construct explains at a minimum of 50% of the

variance" (Campbell, 2018, pg. 6). Moreover, information on the discriminant validity can be provided by using the cross-loadings matrix, cross-latent constructs correlations matrix, and the cross-latent squared correlations matrix.

The researcher was able to evaluate both the convergent and discriminant validity for the items studied using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) analyses (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2006). The cross-loading matrix contains a loading score for each of the items under each of the different constructs. Table 4.3 shows the correlations among latent variables and errors of the constructs studied. The AVE analyses for all the study constructs in both samples revealed values above the 0.50 threshold (Fornell & Larcker 1981; Hair et al., 2006). All correlations that were assessed indicate a noteworthy loading of 0.909 to 0.927. Specifically, the construct of Urban Leadership revealed the highest loading among all constructs at 0.927. The construct of Urban Pedagogy revealed a loading of 0.909. Lastly, the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn revealed the lowest loading among all constructs at 0.901. As a result, the data is reliable in that it suggests that more than 90% of the variance in high school graduation rates can be explained by each of the three constructs. These analyses the researcher deemed to be valid as a result of Crocker and Algina (2006) stating that, "When selecting [an instrument] for a specific purpose, [the researcher] has a clear responsibility to ascertain that the [instrument] has validation evidence appropriate to the intended use in the local situation" (p. 218). Brown (2006) recommended that latent constructs of a study be evaluated as a way to confirm they measure what they are intended to measure in a reliable way. "Reliability refers to the precision or consistency of measurement; that is,

the overall proportion of true score variance to total observed variance of the measure"

(p. 337).

Table 4.3

Discriminant Validity; Square Roots of AVEs Shown on Diagonal.

	Graduate	Urban Leadership	Urban Pedagogy	Urban Opportunity to Learn
Graduate	1.000	-0.057	0.060	-0.028
Urban Leadership	-0.057	0.927	0.309	0.195
Urban Pedagogy	0.060	0.309	0.909	0.241
Urban Opportunity to Learn	-0.028	0.195	0.241	0.901

Table 4.4 shows the *p* values for the correlations under each of the constructs. The *p* values for each of the constructs ranged from 0.698 to 0.854. The construct of Urban Pedagogy revealed the lowest *p* value of 0.698. Urban leadership revealed a *p* value of 0.708, while Urban Opportunity to Learn revealed the highest *p* value of 0.854.

Table 4.4

P Values for Correlations of Constructs.

	Graduate	Urban Leadership	Urban Pedagogy	Urban Opportunity to Learn
Graduate	1.000	0.708	0.698	0.854
Urban Leadership	0.708	1.000	0.039	0.199
Urban Pedagogy	0.698	0.039	1.000	0.111
Urban Opportunity to Learn	0.854	0.199	0.111	1.000

For further analysis, the researcher interpreted the results of path coefficients to assess the extent to which there was a relationship, whether positive or negative, of the various constructs and their influence on graduation rates. Cohen and Cohen (1983)

stated that effect sizes can range anywhere from -1 to 1; -1 would signify that there is a

negative linear relationship between the independent variable(s) measured and the

dependent variable, meanwhile a 1 would signify that there is a positive linear

relationship between the independent variable(s) and the dependent variable. Moreover,

an effect size of 0.10 would be considered small, 0.30 would be considered medium, and

0.50 would be considered large (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). When the effect size is 0, this

signifies that there is no linear relationship amongst the variables.

Table 4.5 illustrates the respective effect sizes of each of the constructs ranging

from 0.008 to 0.226. Specifically, the lowest effect size was Urban leadership on

graduation rates at 0.008. Urban Opportunity to Learn illustrated an effect size of 0.044,

while Urban Pedagogy has the largest impact at 0.226. Urban Leadership demonstrated

an effect size of 0.100 on Urban Pedagogy and 0.109 on Urban Opportunity to Learn.

Lastly, Urban Opportunity to Learn demonstrated and effect size of 0.114 on the

construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn.

Table 4.5

Effect Sizes for Path Coefficients.

	Urban Leadership	Urban Pedagogy	Urban Opportunity to Learn
Graduate	0.008	0.226	0.044
Urban Leadership			
Urban Pedagogy	0.100		
Urban Opportunity to Learn	0.109	0.114	

The goal of the current study was to conceptualize and determine the potential

effects that the three separate constructs Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban

Opportunity to Learn had on graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students of high

economic need schools in the city of New York. The standardized path coefficients among all of the latent variables and graduation rates for the current hypothesized model are comprehensively illustrated in Figure 4.1. As shown below in Figure 4.1, the effect size of Urban Leadership on Urban Pedagogical Practices was positive at ($\beta = 0.32$, $p <$ .01), indicating that the variable had a significant positive linear association. Moreover, the effect size of Urban Leadership on Urban Opportunity to Learn was positive at ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < .001$), indicating that this variable also had a significant positive linear association. Urban Leadership had a positive association on the graduation rates of students but did not demonstrate significance at ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = 0.32$). The construct of Urban Pedagogy was then measured against the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn and also demonstrated a positive linear relationship that was significant at ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.01$), while also demonstrating a positive relationship with the dependent variable of graduation rates, which was also significant at ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < .01$). Lastly, the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn was measured against the dependent variable of graduation rates and demonstrated the only negative linear relationship in the model, that was also considered to be significant at ($\beta = - 0.23$, $p = 0.05$).

Figure 4.1

Structural Model with Standardized Path Coefficients and p Values.

$R^2 = 0.26$

Graduation
Rates

$\beta = -0.23$
$(P = 0.05)$

$\beta = 0.07$
$(P = 0.32)$

$\beta = 0.49$
$(P = < .01)$

Opportunity to
Learn

$R^2 = 0.22$

$\beta = 0.07$
$(P = 0.01)$

$\beta = 0.31$
$(P = 0.01)$

Leadership

Pedagogy

$\beta = 0.32$
$(P = < .01)$

$R^2 = 0.10$

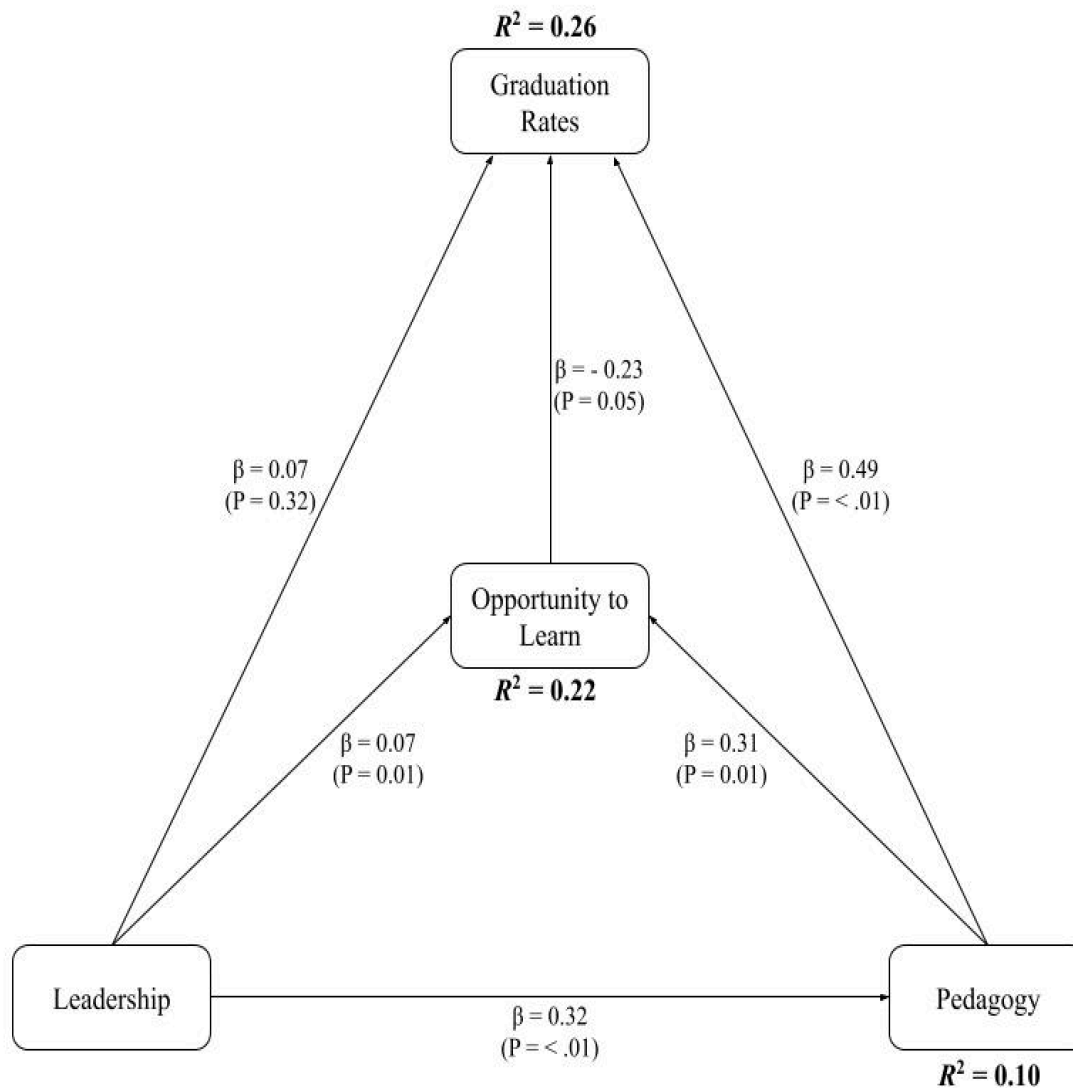Table 4.6 provides further clarification of the study and the hypothesized effects of the three constructs. The data show that the R^2 value for graduation rates is 0.262, which suggest that 26% of the of variation in graduation can be explained by the model. Urban Pedagogy displayed a R^2 value of 0.100, which can account for 10% of the variation in graduation rates, meanwhile Urban Opportunity to Learn displayed a R^2 of

0.224 which can account for 22% of the variance. The composite reliability readings for

each construct revealed high values of ≥ 0.945. Specifically, the construct of Urban

Leadership revealed the highest composite value at 0.974, followed by Urban Pedagogy

with a value of 0.950, and lastly Urban Opportunity to Learn revealed a composite value

of 0.945. Cronbach's alpha value also revealed significantly high values of ≥ 0.923.

Specifically, the construct of Urban Leadership revealed the highest composite value at

0.967, followed by Urban Pedagogy with a value of 0.929, and lastly Urban Opportunity

to Learn revealed a composite value of 0.923.

Table 4.6

Latent Variable Coefficients Assessments.

	Graduate	Urban Leadership	Urban Pedagogy	Urban Opportunity to Learn
R-squared	0.262		0.100	0.224
Adj. R-squared	0.208		0.079	0.187
Composite Reliability	1.000	0.974	0.950	0.945
Cronbach's Alpha	1.000	0.967	0.929	0.923
Average Variance Extracted	1.000	0.860	0.826	0.812

Hypothesis

The purpose of this chapter was to report the findings of analyses so that the

researcher could draw reasonable conclusions and inferences based on data. The

researcher administered the following steps for the data analysis: (1) conducted an

evaluation of the SEM assumptions, (2) conducted an confirmatory factor analysis

(CFA), (3) estimated and specified a measurement model, (4) evaluated both the validity

and reliability of the construct created, and (5) assessed the relationship among the

structures that were hypothesized. As a result of the data presented, the researcher rejects

the null hypothesis that theory of Stratified Urban education does not explain the

relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogical Practices,

and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students in

high ENI communities of NYC. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study along with a

discussion of the findings. Moreover, the researcher postulates some of the potential

implications that the current study may have on future research in the field, while also

discussing the implications for future practice of practitioners.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The researcher sought to gain a deeper understanding of the possible influence that the three separate constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban Pedagogy, and Urban Opportunity to Learn had on the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students of low ENI communities in NYC. Study participants included teachers and students from schools that had an ENI index of ≥ 90%.

Descriptive statistics for the construct of Urban Leadership demonstrate that teachers' perception of the principal's ability or willingness to track the academic progress of the students had the highest mean. This information suggests that the principals in these types of schools are conscious about the way in which data play a fundamental role in the decision making of both students and teachers with respect to instruction. Furthermore, the fact that teachers view their principal as a data tracker, leads the researcher to believe that teachers within these schools are mindful about what the data should ideally show so that it is indicative of the time, energy and efforts that they put into their craft. America is a data-driven society; decisions should be made based on information that is objective and which serve the best educational needs of the students. Data provide an objective interpretation of a particular phenomenon and puts leaders in a position to act accordingly based on evidence, not simply thoughts, feelings, and emotions which are subjective and entirely based on the manner in which an individual perceives their environment.

Conversely, teachers' perception and their personal views of the principal as an instructional planner had the lowest mean of the six factors within the construct of Urban

Leadership. According to the data, a majority of the teachers feel that their principal does not participate in the instructional planning of units or perhaps individual lessons that are delivered to students. Given the nuances of a principal's day and based on the researcher's personal experiences as a former teacher and currently as an administrator, this was not an alarming observation. Teachers tend to have a desire for autonomy with respect to instruction; this autonomy ultimately lends itself to teachers developing their own style which makes them unique and fosters a sense of commitment to the craft that they do. Moreover, the micromanagement of tasks such as instructional planning will more than likely create a divisiveness between the teacher and the administrator. It is probable that teachers will feel that they are not trusted by their administrator if they are not given the autonomy to make decisions independent of their direct oversight. This feeling has the potential to organically manifest itself into something that negatively impacts the students rather than helping them, to which it is highly likely that the principals of these schools are aware of.

The construct of Urban Pedagogy revealed that small group instruction had the lowest mean of the 4 factors at 69.2889. This rating was of particular concern to the researcher as small group instruction is a research-based approach that teachers customarily incorporate within their lessons for the sake of student achievement. Small group instruction has been proven to facilitate the learning of struggling students, while also differentiating content, rigor, and perhaps measurement standards for students that generally don't struggle. Because both learning and teaching are social concepts, ideally there should be meaningful interactions between the students and their teacher, and the students among each other. Small group instruction provides the opportunity for these

interactions to happen in a comfortable and meaningful way for all parties involved. When carefully structured, small group instruction ensures that the students within the groups are engaged cognitively, physically, psychologically, and emotionally in the construction of knowledge (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000). It is a way by which an instructor can differentiate for each of his or her students and their respective needs. Typically, small group instruction is introduced directly after a larger whole group approach has been delivered to the students. Once the overall lesson for the day has been introduced, and students have a general understanding of the goal for that lesson, they are "set free" to accomplish the task while the instructor facilitates the students' thought process. Furthermore, it is at that point where the teacher can continue to collect data to gauge their students' understanding that will ultimately guide instruction moving forward. The data from this study suggest that, as perceived by the students, they are not part of subgroups that should be specifically targeting individual weaknesses and strengths of students to help them along. In small group instruction, students learn best as a result of modeling and scaffolding that occurs in this setting (Fisher & Frey, 2007). Consequently, the pedagogical phenomenon that seems to be happening in these schools may be better understood by shedding light on instructional approaches that teachers can take, and administrators can facilitate for the sake of student learning and achievement.

Inversely, culturally relevant pedagogy revealed the highest factor loading of the items within the construct of Urban Pedagogy at 81.6667. The data suggests that a majority of the students felt that their teachers consistently taught or engaged them in lessons that were relevant to their everyday life experiences. This can have significant implications as it may lead to students' interest and promote participation within the

lesson. Ladson-Billings (1994) devised the term culturally relevant pedagogy as a way to describe "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 17). If achievement is one of the primary goals of academic institutions within the communities that were studied, culturally relevant pedagogy may certainly be beneficial to understand, promote, and use as a means to foster meaningful connections with students. Once those connections are made with the content, and the content is accompanied by rigor, meaningful learning is the direct result.

The construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn was the last construct of the hypothesized theoretical model titled Stratified Urban Education. The construct also consisted of four indicators, to which student respect had the highest mean at 90.3111. Students overwhelmingly felt that their teachers treated them with respect. Moreover, it is important to note that, of the 14 indicators measured within the three constructs, students' perception of their teachers towards them with regard to respect had the highest mean with the lowest standard deviation of all the indicators analyzed. This rating speaks to the students' comfort level and their willingness to come to a class where they feel respected and appreciated in a setting where they are not unethically targeted or unjustly treated. It is the researcher's personal belief that in order for learning to take place, students' basic needs have to be met first. Students must feel safe and respected within an environment before any learning can begin to happen.

Analysis of the factors within each of the constructs of Table 4.2 revealed significantly high loadings of 0.868 or higher. The results of the construct and construct reliability seem to suggest that the measured latent variables consisted of moderate to

high internal consistency and construct reliability levels which were above the acceptable

threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978) and 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Each of the

indicators within their respective constructs are valid in that they align nicely within each

of the proposed constructs and sufficiently present legitimacy to the rationale that was

used to justify their creation. That is, the questions that were asked of both the students

and the teachers, which were meant to measure leadership, pedagogy, and students'

opportunity to learn, did just that.

Discriminant validity data in Table 4.3 strongly suggests that the constructs,

individually speaking, are unique and distinct from each other. None of the AVE loadings

for each construct displayed values that were less than the loadings on a vertical or a

horizontal continuum. In other words, the AVE was highest when each construct was

measured against itself, as opposed to when it was measured against any of the other two

constructs. This data further prove that the constructs are strong and that they are superior

to any of the other constructs that they were being measured against. As a result of the

factors within the constructs being valid, and the constructs themselves being valid and

independent of each other, the subsequent path coefficient analysis speaks to the overall

question of this dissertation: To what extent does the theory of Stratified Urban

Education explain the relationship between the constructs of Urban Leadership, Urban

Pedagogical Practices, and Urban Opportunity to Learn and graduation rates of Black and

Hispanic students in high ENI communities of NYC?

Table 4.5 was able to demonstrate the effect size that each of the constructs had

on the graduation rates of the schools studied. The biggest effect size on graduation rates

was Urban Pedagogy, which had an effect size that was almost considered to be medium

at 0.226. This would suggest that small group instruction, the feedback that the teachers give to students, culturally relevant pedagogy, and the teacher's attentiveness to their students are all indicative of a student's success and are hence able to predict graduation rates. Under this construct, teachers would benefit from understanding which of the factors they feel they do well with and which they do not. The factors that they don't feel they do well with could be subsequently "worked on" to better assist both the individual and collective needs of the students within their class. The sampling of the current study consisted of 45 schools, with a total of n= 14,655 students. If the data would have been from each individual student within each of the schools, the effect size for each of the constructs may have been significantly different as the number could have potentially increased from 45 to ≥ 14,655.

Figure 4.1 was able to encapsulate the conceptual framework that was presented in Chapter 3. Data from this figure was able to demonstrate that all constructs have a significant impact on each other, aside from the construct of leadership on graduation rates. The principal and his or her respective leadership style had a positive relationship on graduation rates, however they did not significantly impact them at ($\beta = 0.07$, p = 0.32). Nonetheless, leadership was able to significantly impact the pedagogical practices that happen in each respective classroom at ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < .01$). It is also worth noting that the construct of Urban Pedagogy had a significant impact on graduation rates at ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < .01$). Hence, leadership impacts the pedagogical practices of teachers, which impact the graduation results of a school. Recall that students were asked to rate their teachers on the following questions / prompts:

- In general, my teachers make their lessons relevant to my everyday life experiences.

- My teachers give me specific suggestions about how I can improve my work in class.

- In how many of your classes do you work in small groups?

- In how many of your classes at this school do YOU feel most students pay attention when they are supposed to?

Principals of a building have the ability to, as a transformative leader, build on the capacity of the teachers in their buildings on each of the aforementioned questions / prompts. Professional development could be provided for them that can facilitate their understanding and reception towards the impact that each of the factors listed has on student achievement. Conscious efforts could be made by the principal to promote the self-efficacy of teachers and verse them on how to implement sound educational practices with fidelity. As a result of the construct being comprised of 5 different factors, efforts should be made to accurately identify what factors teachers are deficient in, either by self-assessment or administrative labeling, and remediate said deficiencies with proper supports. For example, professional development could be provided for teachers on items such as culturally relevant pedagogy, how to provide appropriate feedback to students that is both timely and meaningful, small group instruction, and student engagement. Such efforts could, as indicated by the data, prove to be extremely beneficial for the sake of student achievement.

The construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn was also positively impacted by the construct of Urban Leadership at ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < .001$). Recall that, under this construct, students were asked to rate their teachers on the following questions / prompts:

- My teachers treat me with respect.

- There is at least one adult in the school that I can confide in.

- I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and cafeteria of this school.

- This school offers a wide enough variety of programs, classes and activities to keep me interested in school.

Understandably, a principal can easily, both directly and adversely, impact the positive manner in which students chose to respond to these prompts. The respect that the students feel from their teachers could be attributed to the culture and the climate of the building to which the principal is responsible for both creating and maintaining. The researcher believes that happy people make effective people, and the extent to which a principal has the ability to make that a reality for the people who work in a building should never be underestimated. Leaders lead, and bosses direct. The principals in the buildings that are being met with success in this study, have more than likely internalized the former, rather than falling victim to the latter. Presumably, the principals in successful buildings maintain levels of staff morale that are high, which adversely impact the way teachers interact with students, and the feeling of respect on behalf of the students that surfaces as a result. Additionally, students overwhelmingly stated that they feel safe in the hallways which further speaks to systems within schools that the principal is responsible for creating and maintaining.

Lastly, principals are responsible for the fiscal allocation of resources as they see appropriate based on the individual and collective needs of their student population. The different programs that the school has to offer students, along with the classes and activities provided, depends on the fiscal allotment, and curriculum needs considered appropriate by the principal. The mean for programs, classes, and activities provided for students was the lowest among all the factors under the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn at 78.6. Additionally, it is worth noting that it also had the highest standard deviation at 11.12409 which speaks to the largest amount of variation with how students answered. There was a significant difference in how students perceived that question depending on their individual wants and needs with regard to programs, classes, and activities. The data does not show how different ethnic groups rated the prompt, which would be beneficial to further analyze to see which group felt that the programs of the school were accommodating to their wants. With this information, adjustments could then be made accordingly to serve the needs of the most at-risk students.

The construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn was the only construct that had a negative linear relationship anywhere in the framework that was also of significance at ($\beta = -0.23$, $p = .05$). Admittedly, the results were eye-opening as they were not expected and completely deviated from what the researcher believed to be true in terms of factors that would positively impact graduation rates. According to the results, when students feel respected, have a confidant within a school, feel safe, and have sufficient programs, classes, and activities, it has a negative correlation with graduation rates. To better understand this phenomenon, the researcher took a step back and referred to my own experiences both as a teacher and as an administrator of a Title I, low socio-economic

school district. The researcher reflected back to his interactions with students, parents, and community members. He thought about the students who dropped out and what their personalities and home life were like, and I also thought of the students who did well academically, and what their home life was like.

With that said, it is more probable than not that the teachers in these schools are very well aware of the trials and tribulations that arise from students who live in these types of communities. Often times, students who come from these types of communities are heavily focused on contributing, in whatever way they can, to the basic survival needs of themselves and their families. While school is important, the immediate basic needs of food and shelter often time takes precedent over school, irrespective of its well-known and understood long term benefit. Consequently, it is probable that Hispanic and Black students drop out of school in order to seek employment to better assist their families with some of the financial hardships that they endure. It is likely that the teachers in this study are aware of these students' trials and tribulations and to the fullest extent possible, by their genuine interactions with them, encourage them to stay matriculated. These conversations most likely contribute to the respect that the students feel of their teachers, which may have led them to respond the way that they did on the survey. When genuine conversations and interactions take place, a rapport between student and teacher is organically grown which promotes safety and the feeling that the students have a confidant within the building that they can trust and rely on.

Students that reside in high poverty neighborhoods have a higher probability of being exposed to violence and drugs outside of the school building. Drugs and violence have historically been associated with poverty, and schools have to unfortunately deal

with the ramifications of such detrimental conditions. Often times, said communities are infiltrated with gangs who solicit young teens to promote their organization's agenda. Coupled with the fact that gangs leverage a student's safety with becoming a member, along with their highly probable monetary needs, it's not difficult to fathom why students would choose to drop out. As stated, the students in this study rated the availability of programs, classes, and activities to keep them interested in school the lowest of the three factors within the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn at 78.6, with a standard deviation of 11.2409. It is possible that the students that are dropping out are not making a connection with anyone outside of their classroom which could come in the form of a program or activates offered by the school. Additionally, the classes that they are taking may not be conducive to keep them engaged in the lessons being taught. The data suggests that there is a significant number of students that either feel the programs, classes, or activities are appropriate for them, or that they are not; unfortunately, this study does not delineate between the two.

Relationship Between Results and Prior Research

Prior research conducted did not take under consideration both the direct and indirect ways leadership impacts both teachers and graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students of communities that had an ENI index of $\geq 90\%$. This study was able to produce findings utilizing SEM which employs the partial least squares PLS method as a means to quantify the theory of *Stratified Urban Education* against the constructs of *Urban Leadership*, *Urban Pedagogy*, and *Urban Opportunity to Learn*. Specifically, the relationship between school leadership, its impact on teachers, and how that relationship adversely influenced student achievement was analyzed. This approach allowed the

researcher to ascertain the relationships among both observed and unobserved variables in order to provide a quantitative analysis to the hypothesized theoretical model of Stratified Urban Education. The present study has added to existing literature on the impact of school leadership in low socioeconomic schools (SES) as a factor towards positively impacting student achievement. Furthermore, the study was able to illustrate how school leadership by the principal has a positive impact on teachers and their pedagogical practices, that ultimately positively impact student achievement.

The primary framework that was used to guide this study was based on the Five Essential Supports for School Improvement as defined by Anthony Bryk, Penny Sebring, Elaine Allensworth, Stuart Luppescu, and John Easton (2010). The Consortium on Chicago School Research found that the way in which schools are organized, along with how they interact with their communities can make a significant difference with respect to student achievement. The study identified a comprehensive set of practices and conditions that led to a higher probability of student achievement, including *instructional guidance*, *parent community ties*, *professional capacity*, *student-centered learning environment*, and *school leadership*. According to the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE), the Framework for Great Schools was implemented as a way to advance educational attainment by preparing every New York public school graduate to compete in the 21st century workplace. Data from this study was able to demonstrate how the framework is effective when both students and teachers rate the questions or prompts within each component of the framework positively.

Limitations of the Study

The reliability and validity of a study are important factors to consider when measuring the trustworthiness of a particular research design. The research design of this study consisted of the same limitations which can organically impact the use of secondary data. This particular study comprised of data taken from the NYC DOE in a survey that was administered in 2018. The survey was specifically designed to measure the perceptions of parents, students, and teachers to gain a better understanding of proactive steps that can be taken in order to improve education and academic achievement for all students. All of the responses from each of the participants were self-reported, and as such, there may have been several extraneous circumstances that influenced the participants to answer the manner that they did, which consequently led to the interpretation of the data the way that it was. For example, depending on when the survey was administered, such as the time of day, or day of the week, that time difference may have adversely impacted the way the respondents answered. Teachers and students alike may have answered differently if they were given the survey again at a different time in which the survey was originally administered. Data are not available to analyze the extent to which answers of respondents varied and whether or not the data changed as a result. Moreover, it is not known if any of the participants in this study felt pressured or were coerced in any way into answering the questions the way that they did.

The participants in this study consisted of teachers and students from high ENI schools of $\geq 90\%$. The results from this study were based on conditions that reflect the culture and demographics of teachers and students in schools within these particular types of neighborhoods. Consequently, the conclusions that were generated may not necessarily

be applicable in other settings that do not share the same characteristics. Both teachers and students from different regions, with a different culture and demographics, may have answered the questions differently as a result of the how they observed the environment around them.

Equally significant, much of the data on the graduation rates of Hispanic and Black students had to be removed, as stated in chapter 3, as a result of identifiable information being disclosed with respect to students' identity. The data that was missing may have produced different results to the current study. Moreover, the responses to the student questions included responses from students from all racial backgrounds, not just Black and Hispanic students, which were the primary subjects being studied. As a result of students not being able to be identified, the responses of all students within the target schools was utilized.

Implications for Future Research

As a result of this research being a quantitative study that strictly measured the perceptions of both teachers and students based on a survey with limited responses, future research could take a qualitative approach whereby additional questions could be solicited that could beseech further clarification to the answers of the original questions asked. This will put the future researcher in a position to quantify the respondents' answers whereby further analysis could be conducted to help gain a deeper understanding to the fundamental issue being solicited.

Furthermore, students' perception of the programs, activities, and classes offered by the schools, do not indicate which of the students graduated. It would be a noteworthy undertaking to further examine if the students who rated the programs of a school

positively, were the same students who graduated, and perhaps went on to post-secondary schools. Moreover, it is not known which of the three (programs, classes, or activities) the students were rating. It may be possible they were rating all three collectively or had one specific item in mind when responding. Future research would benefit from delineating which of the three had the biggest impact on students. Districts would then be in a position to plan accordingly and provide the appropriate resources for their students, based on their needs, within the communities that they live.

Implications for Future Practice

This study provided some useful information for both teachers and administrators about the perspectives of others and how that ultimately has an impact on their respective rating of effectiveness which is primarily based on graduation rates. Education as a whole is a very complex in that, as the study demonstrated, there are multiple factors that have to be taken into consideration in order to understand. Schooling and education are two distinct factors; we should never let schools get in the way of teaching. From a societal perspective, graduation rates and student achievement on standardized tests has been adopted as the ultimate measure to an institution's success. However, in the 21st century, our job as educators is to prepare students for jobs that we don't even know exist. The best way to do this is to facilitate students' ability to be analytical critical thinkers and collaborative problem solvers. In that regard, we as a society have habitually failed certain groups as evidenced by the data. As educators, we have embraced the notion that different students learn differently; hence the term differentiated instruction. The perpetuation of under achievement for disenfranchised and marginalized groups has gone on for too long. We as educators, and as members of the same democratic society that we

are trying to prepare our students for, should internalize the notion that we should see these disparities in achievement as our moral obligation to ensure that all students, despite their ethnic and demographic background, are met with the same level of success as their counterparts. It is then, and only then that we as a society have fulfilled the intent of laws such as ESEA, A Nation At Risk, NCLB, and ESSA.

With regard to what teachers and administrators can do to facilitate this achievement, the researcher offers the following approaches that can be taken in order to help remediate the achievement gap that has been pervasive for marginalized groups that come from low income communities. Data show that under the construct of Urban Pedagogy, the students felt that small group instruction was not taking place within the classroom. Research shows that small group instruction can have a significant impact on student achievement. The principal as the leader in the building has the authority to make decisions and allocate resources to make this a possibility. Systems should be created by administrators to help teachers make this a feasible option given the dynamics and complex nuances of a 21st century classroom. Professional development and school meetings should consist of building on teachers' self-efficacy and capacity to both create and implement meaningful lessons for students in a culturally relevant way. Opportunities should be provided for teachers to collaborate, plan and create differentiated lessons based on the various needs of their students.

The theoretical construct of this study demonstrated that the two most significant coefficient pathways were from leadership to pedagogy, and pedagogy to graduation. Continue to build on that. Principals should continue to inquire with teachers about ways to more frequently incorporate lessons within the classrooms that are culturally relevant

to their students. Moreover, small group instruction should take place in all of the classrooms. This small group instruction should take into consideration the individual needs of each student and provide them with the proper supports in order to be successful. Principals can facilitate this process by providing teachers with professional development to build on their capacity and self-efficacy. Furthermore, additional support can come in the form of constructive feedback that is normally given during formal observations within the classroom. Principals can provide the teacher with a comprehensive analysis of observations with objective data. Afterwards, the principal can ask the teachers a series of thought-provoking questions and facilitate their understanding of the most feasible way to convert their classroom and delivery for the betterment of student achievement.

With respect to the other two indicators of attentiveness and feedback under the construct of Urban Pedagogy, professional development could also be provided. Principals as effective leaders realize that the talent they seek, and the professionals needed to promote growth already exist within the building. That is, many teachers in these buildings already possess the skills that principals are trying to promote and instill in others. As a result, they empower those teachers who have such skills to guide discussions and build capacity, both within themselves and amongst other teachers. Effective principals in this regard take a transformative approach and create the systems to make this feasible. The researcher would recommend that principals continue to look at alternative ways to utilize the talent that is already in the building to promote the skills of others. This is a fiscally effective way to achieve greatness given the myriad of monetary demands that exist within public educational institutions of the 21st century.

The construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn revealed the only negative impact on graduation rates. This would suggest that even though students feel that they are respected by the teacher and see them as a confidant, along with the fact that they feel safe, and have appropriate programs to keep students engaged, they are not graduating. These are all significant supports that schools should ideally provide for all their students. However, there has to be a healthy balance between rigor that promotes and supports academic achievement, and the additional supports that were identified as indicators under the construct of Urban Opportunity to Learn. As stated, this study did not delineate between the manner in which different student groups answered. Principals and teachers, moving forward, could inquire with students on their perceived needs in regard to respect, confidant, safety, and programs. Efforts could then be made to strategically allocate efforts and resources to the targeted groups.

Conclusion

This study provided useful information for both teachers and administrators about the perspectives of others and how that ultimately has an impact on a school's rating of effectiveness, which is primarily based on its respective graduation rates. Education as a whole is very complex in that, as the study demonstrated, there are multiple factors that have to be taken into consideration in order to thoroughly understand how achievement is best attained for Black and Hispanic students of low SES communities. The interconnectedness of multiple leadership characteristics and pedagogical practices were disaggregated in order to better understand the social disparities in achievement which the data revealed. From a societal perspective, graduation rates and student achievement on standardized tests has been adopted as the ultimate measure to an institution's success.

However, in the 21st century, our job as educators is to prepare students for jobs that we don't even know exist. The best way to do this is to facilitate students' ability to be analytical critical thinkers and collaborative problem solvers. In that regard, we as a society have habitually failed certain groups as evidenced by the data. The perpetual under achievement for disenfranchised and marginalized groups has gone on for too long. We as educators should internalize the notion that we should see these disparities in achievement as our moral obligation to ensure that all students, despite their ethnic and demographic background, are met with the same level of success as their counterparts. It is then, and only then, that we as a society have fulfilled the intent of legislation such as ESEA, A Nation At Risk, NCLB, and ESSA, that was implemented to remediate said disparities to said population.

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APPENDIX A: NIH Certificates

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Carlos Falcon** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants."

Date of Completion: 09/09/2018

Certification Number: 2916142

NIH〉 National Institutes of Health
Office of Extramural Research

fhi360
THE SCIENCE OF IMPROVING LIVES

FHI 360

certifies that

Carlos

has completed the

RESEARCH ETHICS TRAINING CURRICULUM

October 17, 2019

Appendix B: IRB Approval

Date: 1-19-2020

IRB #: IRB-FY2020-233
Title: Transformative Leadership and its Impact on Black and Hispanic Students in Low SES Communities of NYC
Creation Date: 10-15-2019
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Carlos Falcon
Review Board: St John's University Institutional Review Board
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt

Key Study Contacts

Member	James Campbell	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	campbelj@stjohns.edu
Member	Carlos Falcon	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	carlos.falcon14@stjohns.edu
Member	Carlos Falcon	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	carlos.falcon14@stjohns.edu

Appendix C: NYC Student School Survey 2018

NYC Department of Education

NYC SCHOOL SURVEY
2018 Student Survey

Go GREEN! Please take this survey online! Go to www.nycschoolsurvey.org.

We want to know what YOU think about your school. This survey will give your school important information it can use to improve your education.

This survey is confidential. Your answers will be combined with those of other students at your school. No one at your school will ever see your individual answers. This is not a test and there are no wrong answers. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer, but we hope you will answer as many questions as you can.

When you have finished the survey, include only the answer sheet in the envelope provided and seal the envelope. You may remove your name from the envelope by peeling the label with your name off of the front of the envelope. Hand the sealed envelope with your completed answer sheet to your teacher.

1. How much do YOU agree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
a. This school offers a wide enough variety of programs, classes, and activities to keep me interested in school.	1	2	3	4	5
b. The programs, classes, and activities at this school encourage students to develop talent outside academics.	1	2	3	4	5
c. This school is kept clean.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Most students at this school treat each other with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
e. At this school, students with disabilities are included in all school activities (lunch, class trips, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
f. My teachers use examples of students' different cultures/ backgrounds/families in their lessons to make learning more meaningful for me.	1	2	3	4	5
g. I see people of many races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds represented in the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
h. In general, my teachers treat students from different cultures or backgrounds equally.	1	2	3	4	5
i. I feel that my teachers respect my culture/background.	1	2	3	4	5
j. In general, my teachers make their lessons relevant to my everyday life experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
k. In general, my teachers present positive images of people from a variety of races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5

2. In how many of your classes, this school year, do YOU feel the following statement is true?	None	A few	Most	All
a. I learn a lot from feedback on my work.	1	2	3	4
b. It's clear what I need to do to get a good grade.	1	2	3	4
c. The work we do in class is good preparation for our class tests.	1	2	3	4
d. The homework assignments help me learn the course material.	1	2	3	4
e. I know what my teacher wants me to learn in class.	1	2	3	4

3. In how many of your classes, this school year, do YOU feel the following statement is true? My teachers...	None	A few	Most	All
a. help me catch up if I am behind.	1	2	3	4
b. notice if I have trouble learning something.	1	2	3	4
c. give me specific suggestions about how I can improve my work in class.	1	2	3	4
d. explain things a different way if I don't understand something in class.	1	2	3	4
e. support me when I am upset.	1	2	3	4

4. How much do YOU agree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I'm learning a lot in my classes at this school to prepare me for the next level or grade.	1	2	3	4
b. There is at least one adult in the school that I can confide in.	1	2	3	4
c. My teachers will always listen to students' ideas.	1	2	3	4
d. My teachers always do what they say they will do.	1	2	3	4
e. My teachers treat me with respect.	1	2	3	4
f. When my teachers tell me not to do something, I know they have a good reason.	1	2	3	4
g. My classes at this school really make me think critically.	1	2	3	4
h. Discipline is applied fairly in my school.	1	2	3	4
i. School Safety Agents promote a safe and respectful environment at this school.	1	2	3	4

5. In how many of your classes...

	None	A few	Most	All
a. are you challenged?	1	2	3	4
b. do your teachers ask difficult questions on tests?	1	2	3	4
c. do your teachers ask difficult questions in class?	1	2	3	4
d. do you work in small groups?	1	2	3	4
e. do your teachers want students to become better thinkers, not just memorize things?	1	2	3	4

6. In how many of your classes at this school do YOU feel most students...

	None	A few	Most	All
a. listen carefully when the teacher gives directions?	1	2	3	4
b. follow the rules in class?	1	2	3	4
c. pay attention when they are supposed to?	1	2	3	4
d. work when they are supposed to?	1	2	3	4
e. behave well even when the teacher isn't watching?	1	2	3	4
f. feel it is important to come to school every day?	1	2	3	4
g. feel it is important to pay attention in class?	1	2	3	4
h. think doing homework is important?	1	2	3	4
i. try hard to get good grades?	1	2	3	4

7. How much do YOU agree with the following statements? I feel safe...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. outside around this school.	1	2	3	4
b. traveling between home and this school.	1	2	3	4
c. in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and cafeteria of this school.	1	2	3	4
d. in my classes at this school.	1	2	3	4

8. How often are the following things true?

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Most of the time
a. At this school students harass, bully, or intimidate other students.		2	3	4
b. At this school students harass, bully, or intimidate each other because of their race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, or citizenship/immigration status.	1	2	3	4
c. At this school students harass, bully, or intimidate each other because of their gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.	1	2	3	4
d. At this school students harass, bully, or intimidate each other because of other differences, like disability or weight.	1	2	3	4
e. At this school students get into physical fights.	1	2	3	4
f. At this school students drink alcohol, use illegal drugs, or abuse prescription drugs while at school.	1	2	3	4
g. At this school there is gang activity.	1	2	3	4

9. If you are a student in grades 6-8, ANSWER this question. If you are a student in grades 9-12, SKIP this question. How much do YOU agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. This school provides guidance for the application process for high school.	1	2	3	4
b. This school educates families about the application/enrollment process for high school.	1	2	3	4

10. If you are a student in grades 9-12, ANSWER this question. How much do YOU agree with the following statements? Adults at this school (including teachers, administrators, counselors, and the principal)...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. talk to me about what I plan to do after high school.	1	2	3	4
b. encourage me to continue my education after high school.	1	2	3	4
c. provide me with information about the college application process.	1	2	3	4
d. help me plan for how to meet my future career goals.	1	2	3	4

11. If you are a student in grades 9-12, ANSWER this question. How much do YOU agree with the following statements? Adults at this school (including teachers, administrators, counselors, and the principal)...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
a. help me consider which colleges to apply to.	1	2	3	4	5
b. show me options for how to pay for college (scholarship, grants, loans, work study programs, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5

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Appendix D: NYC Teacher School Survey 2018

NYC School Survey — 2018 Teacher Survey

Log In
Please login below

To take the survey online, you will need your Survey Access Code printed on the survey materials that have been provided to you by your school.

If you cannot find your survey materials, you can click here to lookup your survey access code or call the hotline at 1-877-819-2363.

Please note: this survey is anonymous. No one at the DOE will ever see your individual responses.

Survey Access Code:

Lost your access code?

BACK   LOG IN

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NYC 2018 School Survey

We want to know what YOU think about your school. This survey is anonymous. No one at the DOE will ever see your individual responses. Teacher responses will be combined with those of other teachers at your school to help the school understand and improve its learning environment. Responses from school support staff (i.e. paraprofessionals, parent coordinators, school psychologists, secretaries, and social workers) will be collected and reported at the citywide level in order to ensure the anonymity of the process. This survey is voluntary, but we hope you will answer as many questions as you can.

The goal of the NYC School Survey is to collect accurate information that school leaders can use to meaningfully gauge a school's capability to improve. Under the Survey's Code of Ethics, respondents may fill out the survey in a completely confidential manner without any influence over their responses from anyone. If you have concerns about how the survey is being administered at your school, please contact your school's Survey Coordinator or email surveys@schools.nyc.gov.

Please consider each survey question in the context of your school or program. If you work at a YABC, please consider your responses in relation to your YABC program and program administrator, not the host school or school principal.

Please click the 'BEGIN SURVEY' button to start.

BEGIN SURVEY

1 How many teachers at this school...

a. help maintain discipline in the entire school, not just their classroom?

None	Some	A lot	All

b. are actively trying to improve their teaching?

None	Some	A lot	All

c. take responsibility for improving the school?

None	Some	A lot	All

d. are eager to try new ideas?

None	Some	A lot	All

e. feel responsible that all students learn?

None	Some	A lot	All

NEXT

2 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following. I am able to...

a. receive support around how to incorporate students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in my practice.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

b. use my students' prior knowledge to make my lessons relevant to their everyday life.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

c. modify instructional activities and materials to meet the developmental needs and learning interests of all my students.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

d. adapt instruction to ensure it represents all cultures/backgrounds positively.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

e. design appropriate instruction that is matched to students' need (e.g. English language learners (ELL) proficiency and students with disabilities).

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

f. apply my knowledge of parents' various cultural backgrounds when collaborating with them regarding their child's educational progress.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

g. develop appropriate Individualized Education Programs for my students with disabilities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

h. distinguish linguistic/cultural differences from learning difficulties.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

BACK   NEXT

3 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

a. **I feel respected by the NYC DOE central administration.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **Central DOE employees have confidence in the expertise of the teachers.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **Central DOE employees place the needs of children ahead of personal interests.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **The Chancellor is an effective manager who makes the NYC DOE run smoothly.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. **I trust the Chancellor at her word.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

BACK   NEXT

4 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

a. **I usually look forward to each working day at this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **I would recommend this school to parents/guardians seeking a place for their child.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **Teachers in this school trust each other.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **It's OK in this school to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with other teachers.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. **Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

f. **I feel respected by other teachers at this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

g. **Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who have a specific expertise.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

h. **I would recommend this school to other teachers as a place to work.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

BACK NEXT

5 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

a. **I feel respected by the principal/school leader at this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **The principal/school leader at this school is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **The principal/school leader has confidence in the expertise of the teachers at this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **I trust the principal/school leader at his or her word (to do what he or she says that he or she will do).**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. **At this school, it's OK to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with the principal/school leader.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

f. **The principal/school leader takes a personal interest in the professional development of teachers.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

g. **The principal/school leader looks out for the personal welfare of the staff members.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

h. **The principal/school leader places the needs of children ahead of personal interests.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

i. **The principal and assistant principals function as a cohesive unit.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

BACK   NEXT

6 **Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.**

a. **In this school, the professional staff believes that all students can learn, including English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

b. **I feel respected by assistant principals at this school.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

c. **At this school, students with disabilities are included in all school activities (lunch, class trips, etc.).**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

d. **This school educates students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment appropriate.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

e. **At this school, order and discipline are maintained.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

f. **This school is kept clean.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

g. **School Safety Agents promote a safe and respectful environment at this school.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

h. **This school has well-defined learning expectations for all students.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

BACK NEXT

NYC School Survey — 2018 Teacher Survey

Log off

38%

7 How often are the following things true?

At this school students harass, bully, or intimidate other students.

None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Most of the time

BACK NEXT

8 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following. At this school...

a. teachers design instructional programs (e.g. lessons, units) together.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. teachers make a conscious effort to coordinate their teaching with instruction at other grade levels.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. the principal/school leader, teachers, and staff collaborate to make this school run effectively.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. teachers talk with one another about instruction.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. once we start a new program, we follow up to make sure that it's working.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

f. it is clear how all of the programs offered are connected to our school's instructional vision.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

g. curriculum, instruction, and learning materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at this school.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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9 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following. At this school...

a. **parents/guardians are offered opportunities to visit their child's classroom, such as observing instruction, participating in an activity with their child, etc.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **teachers understand families' problems and concerns.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **teachers work closely with families to meets students' needs.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **school staff regularly communicate with parents/guardians about how parents/guardians can help students learn.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. **The principal/school leader encourages feedback through regular meetings with parent and teacher leaders.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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10 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following. Overall, my professional development experiences this year have...

a. **been sustained and coherently focused, rather than short-term and unrelated.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **included opportunities to work productively with colleagues in my school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **included opportunities to work productively with teachers from other schools.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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61%

11 Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following. The principal/school leader at this school...

a. **makes clear to the staff his or her expectations for meeting instructional goals.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

b. **communicates a clear vision for this school.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

c. **understands how children learn.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

d. **sets high standards for student learning.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

e. **sets clear expectations for teachers about implementing what they have learned in professional development.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

f. **carefully tracks student academic progress.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

g. **knows what's going on in my classroom.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

h. **participates in instructional planning with teams of teachers.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

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66%

12 How much influence do teachers have over school policy in each of the areas below?

a. Hiring new professional personnel.

No influence	Little	A moderate amount	A great deal of influence

b. Planning how discretionary school funds should be used.

No influence	Little	A moderate amount	A great deal of influence

c. Selecting instructional materials used in classrooms.

No influence	Little	A moderate amount	A great deal of influence

d. Developing instructional materials.

No influence	Little	A moderate amount	A great deal of influence

e. Setting standards for student behavior.

No influence	Little	A moderate amount	A great deal of influence

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NYC School Survey — 2018 Teacher Survey

72%

13 How satisfied are you with the following?

a. **The performance of the citywide Panel for Educational Policy with regard to school resources, oversight, curriculum, and progress in student achievement.**

Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	I don't know

b. **The performance of the Schools Chancellor with regard to school resources, oversight, curriculum, and progress in student achievement.**

Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	I don't know

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14 This question is for informational purposes only. It will not be scored and will not be used for accountability for your school. What content areas do you teach?

- ☐ Early childhood (e.g. Pre-K or 3-K)
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Science
- ☐ ELA
- ☐ Math
- ☐ All subjects (e.g., elementary, self-contained)
- ☐ Other

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Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

15 For pre-K and 3-K: In planning my last instructional unit, I had the resources and tools I needed to...

a. **meet the needs of my students.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **focus deeply on the concepts emphasized in the Pre-K Foundation for the Common Core to help students build strong foundations for learning.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

16 For general/self-contained/literacy/science/social studies: In planning my last instructional unit, I had the resources and tools I needed to include multiple opportunities for...

a. **building students' knowledge through content-rich non-fiction.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

b. **reading and writing experiences grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

c. **students to interact with complex grade-level text.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

d. **students to interact with academic language.**

| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

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NYC School Survey — 2018 Teacher Survey

77%

Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

17 For general/self-contained/math/science: In planning my last instructional unit, I had the resources and tools I needed to include multiple opportunities for...

a. focusing deeply on the concepts emphasized in the standards to help students build strong foundations for learning.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. creating coherent progressions within the standards from previous grades to current grade so student knowledge/skills build onto previous learning as foundations for math concepts.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. developing students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and their ability to apply math in context.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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Please mark the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following.

18 In planning my last instructional unit, I had the resources and tools I needed to include multiple opportunities for…

a. **building students' knowledge through content-rich non-fiction.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

b. **reading and writing experiences grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

c. **students to interact with complex grade-level text.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

d. **students to interact with academic language.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

e. **focusing deeply on the concepts emphasized in the standards to help students build strong foundations for learning.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

f. **creating coherent progressions within the standards from previous grades to current grade so student knowledge/skills build onto previous learning as foundations for math concepts.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

g. **developing students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and their ability to apply math in context.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A

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86%

19 How many students in your classes...

a. build on each other's ideas during class discussions?

None	Some	A lot	All

b. use data or text references to support their ideas?

None	Some	A lot	All

c. show that they respect each other's ideas?

None	Some	A lot	All

d. provide constructive feedback to their peers/teachers?

None	Some	A lot	All

e. participate in class discussions at some point?

None	Some	A lot	All

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20 How many students in your classes...

a. feel challenged?

None	Some	A lot	All

b. listen carefully when the teacher gives directions?

None	Some	A lot	All

c. have to work hard to do well?

None	Some	A lot	All

d. follow the rules in class?

None	Some	A lot	All

e. respond to challenging test questions?

None	Some	A lot	All

f. pay attention when they are supposed to?

None	Some	A lot	All

g. respond to challenging questions in class?

None	Some	A lot	All

h. do their work when they are supposed to?

None	Some	A lot	All

i. behave well in class even when the teacher isn't watching?

None	Some	A lot	All

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21 How many adults at this school...

a. **help students develop the skills they need to complete challenging coursework despite obstacles?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

b. **tell their students they believe they can achieve high academic standards?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

c. **teach critical thinking skills to students?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

d. **teach students how to advocate for themselves?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

e. **teach students the organizational skills needed to be prepared for their next level?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

f. **recognize disruptive behavior as social-emotional learning opportunities?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

g. **teach students the skills they need to regulate their behavior (i.e. by focusing their attention, controlling their emotions, or managing their thinking, behavior, and feelings)?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

h. **have access to school based supports to assist in behavioral/emotional escalations?**

None	Some	A lot	All	I don't know

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100%

22 This question is for informational purposes only. What grades do you primarily teach? (Please mark one)

Early Childhood (Pre-K or 3-K)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	High (9-12)

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100%

23 (Early Childhood Only) How much do you agree with the following statements?

a. Positive Behavior Guidance is applied fairly to students in my program.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. It's a priority at this program that staff help families support their child's transition to kindergarten.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. It's a priority at this program that staff provide families with information about the application/enrollment process for kindergarten.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. At the beginning of the school year, teachers support children in adjusting to pre-K or 3-K.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

e. At this program, teachers let families know that they can make a difference in their child's learning.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

f. At this program, teachers give families opportunities to share what they know about their child.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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23 How many of the students in your class(es)...

a. **feel it is important to come to school every day?**

None	Some	A lot	All

b. **feel it is important to pay attention in class?**

None	Some	A lot	All

c. **think doing homework is important?**

None	Some	A lot	All

d. **try hard to get good grades?**

None	Some	A lot	All

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92%

24 How much do you agree with the following statements? My students are safe...

a. **outside around this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **traveling between home and this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

c. **in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and cafeteria of this school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

d. **in my class(es).**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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96%

25 How much do you agree with the following statement?

a. **Discipline is applied to students fairly in my school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

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100%

26 How much do you agree with the following statements? It's a priority at this school that adults...

a. **provide guidance for the application process to middle or high school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

b. **educate families about the application/enrollment process for middle or high school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

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23 How much do you agree with the following statements? Adults at this school...

a. **talk to students about what they plan to do after high school.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

b. **create an atmosphere that encourages students to work towards a college degree?**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

c. **provide students with information about the college enrollment process.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

d. **help students consider which colleges to apply to.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

e. **show students options for how to pay for college (scholarship, grants, loans, work study programs).**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

f. **help students plan for how to meet their future career goals.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know

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NYC School Survey — 2018 Teacher Survey

Your survey is now complete.

Once you click the "SUBMIT" button below, your responses will be submitted and you will not be able to re-enter the survey or change your responses later. If you would like to review the survey to ensure that you have answered all of the questions you would like to respond to, press the "BACK" button and you will return to the questionnaire.

BACK   SUBMIT

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