# Race-conscious Preparation and Support Approaches for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native K-12 Leaders

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# Executive Summary

This white paper examines what we already know and what more educational scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners should know to strengthen the principal preparation and support pipeline for would-be, aspiring, and practicing *Asian, Black, Latinx,* and *Indigenous* K-12 leaders. Although researchers increasingly recognize the importance of race and race-gender conscious frames for understanding leader practice, these considerations remain novel in K-12 leadership preparation and support research.

Through a review of research spanning studies of racial-ethnic match, social justice leadership preparation, and race and K-12 principal leadership from the past 10 to 15 years, I present three themes that policy makers, preparation faculty, and researchers should consider in their continued efforts to increase the number of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native K-12 school leaders (with a focus on principals).

First, despite social justice scholars' increased attention to race and racism in leadership preparation, most research studies examine pedagogical and curricular interventions aimed at fostering White leaders' racial consciousness and social justice practice. Second, despite increased calls for preparing more leaders of color, there remains a paucity of accounts that note the leadership preparation and support approaches that directly benefit Asian, Black, Latinx, or Native leaders. Third, leadership preparation and support studies, including those framed by a demographic imperative to increase the number of leaders of color, largely exclude insights from research that documents Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leadership approaches and challenges.

Ultimately, I argue that educational leadership preparation researchers have much to learn and the field of education has much to gain from (a) acknowledging the numerous racial barriers that would-be and aspiring leaders encounter in pursuit of the principalship and (b) engaging the rich repository of knowledge and practices that Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders possess as a means to reduce these same racial barriers. I make four recommendations to guide future directions of research and funding:

- Draw on Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' racial and experiential knowledge, cultural wealth, and leadership practices to transform preparation and support interventions;

- Conceptualize leadership preparation and support for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders as spanning from teacher training years, into the principalship, and beyond;

- Examine organizational and structural interventions and transformations that support aspiring and practicing Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders; and

- Conduct research that aims to understand the relationship between (a) Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' racial consciousness, (b) leadership practice, and (c) preparation and support approaches.

Keywords: K-12 schools, leadership, principal preparation, race, racism

# Race-conscious Preparation and Support Approaches for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native K-12

## Introduction

This paper builds on calls to consider the specific and different forms of support to facilitate and promote the success of leaders of color (Young & Brooks, 2008). Specifically, it presents an overview of research about Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous preparation and support experiences to offer (a) a commentary on the state of the field and (b) an entry point for imagining race-conscious leadership preparation and supports. Throughout, I consider Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous leaders' racial identities and experiences as more analytically precise than the usual catchall "leaders of color," which I argue obscures important racial experiences and cultural repertories of practice (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Although I center racial identity and experience as a point of entry, I acknowledge that a sole reliance on racial identifiers obscures within group assets, cultural practices that differ based on gender, immigrant experiences, refugee experiences, national identity, and experiences of racial oppression that are shared across racial groups. Nonetheless, leader preparation approaches must recognize race and racism as salient factors shaping student, teacher, and leader experiences. An unwillingness to attend to the significance of race and racism will ensure racial inequities persist across *all levels* of leadership preparation.

I developed this paper by conducting a critical review of recent leadership literature that pertains to supporting and developing Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native K-12 school leaders, with a specific focus on K-12 school principals. Drawing on peer-reviewed academic articles that included leader interviews, focus groups, surveys, or observations, I explored analyses of Asian, Black, Latinx, or Indigenous leaders' leadership enactments. I centered studies that illuminated K-12 leader experiences and practices, and that held theoretical or conceptual relevance to understanding Asian, Black, Latinx, or Indigenous leaders. Throughout, I sought to understand their practices and what developmental resources supported their leadership preparation and practices. I prioritized research published within the last 10 to 15 years, starting with recent publications (last 5 years) and worked backwards in a process of following references. I supplemented core articles with studies from disciplines outside of educational leadership. I used a narrative synthesis approach (Popay et al., 2006) with a specific aim of identifying and clarifying what recent research implied as specific areas where differentiated supports would strengthen aspiring and practicing Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native K-12 leaders' capacities to meet the persistent and complex leadership demands of increasingly diverse yet persistently inequitable K-12 U.S. schools.

In the first section of this paper, I provide a *field context* by presenting principal, teacher, and student demographic trends in U.S. schools over the past 20 years. In addition, I draw on racial match research to suggest Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders and principals are key to

improving students' educational experiences and outcomes and that student learning is the primary reason we should be concerned with preparing more Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders. In the second section, *Principal Preparation Pipeline: Problems and Knowledge Gaps,* I present the major areas of research that are required to understand Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and supports. I argue that the field is overly focused on pedagogical and curricular interventions and that even social justice leadership preparation approaches appear to focus on preparing White principal candidates. There are actually very few accounts of Asian, Black, Latinx, or Native leader preparation and support experiences or benefits. In the third section, *Asian, Black, Latinx,* and *Native Learner Needs*, I highlight some leadership approaches and challenges that scholars note in their studies of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders. I bring these findings into conversation with social justice leadership preparation research to recommend leadership preparation approaches that might address the recruitment, preparation, and support problems that Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders face. I conclude with recommendations for further research.

## Section 1. Field Context and the Need for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native Leaders

As student racial demographics of K-12 schools continues to become more racially/ethnically diverse, teacher and leader preparation scholars continually call for increasing the number of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native teachers and leaders who work in K-12 schools. As illustrated in Figure 1, during a nearly two-decade time period from 1999–2000 academic year to 2018–2019, the percentage of: Asian/Pacific Islander students increased from 4.0% to 5.6%. Black students decreased from 17.2% to 15.1%. Hispanic students increased from 15.6% to 27.2%. American Indian/Alaska Native students remained about 1.0%, and White students decreased from 62.0% to 47.0%. Notably, the increase in students who identify as two or more races closely mirrors the decrease in the number of students who identify as Black. These changes in student demographics have outpaced the changes in principal and teaching populations.

**Student enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, fall 1999 through fall 2018 (%)**
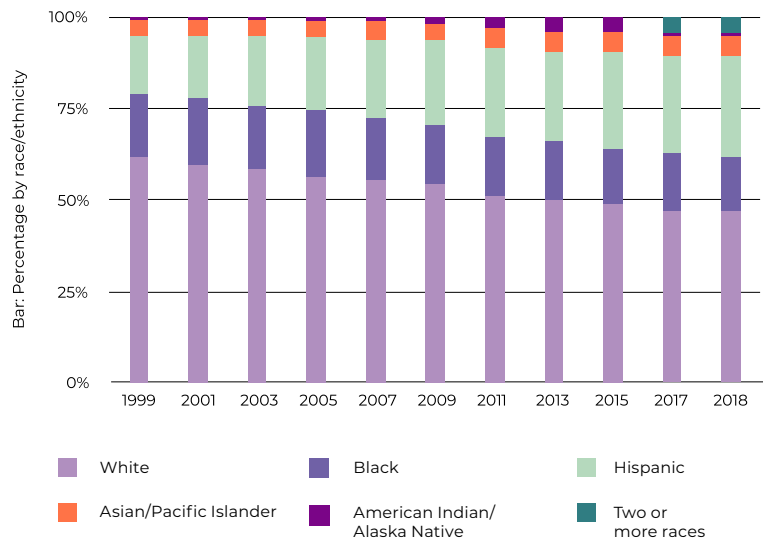


*Figure 1.* Students in US public elementary and secondary schools by race/ethnicity.[3]

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[3]Note: All graphic representations are based on information from Table 1 and 2 in the appendix. Each bar graph represents the percentage of U.S. public elementary and secondary students, school principals, and teachers by race/ethnicity. Since 2011–2012 survey, "two or more races" category has become available.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the total number of US public elementary and secondary school principals increased over the last two decades. Notable racial demographic changes to the percentage of principals from 1999–2000 to 2017–2018 include: Hispanic principals increased from 5.2% to 8.9%. White principals decreased from 82.3% in to 77.9%. On the surface, it appears that the increase includes a higher overall percentage of principals who identify as "people of color." However, the noticeable changes are driven almost exclusively by an increase in the number of principals who identify as Hispanic, and those who may also identify racially as White or otherwise. Principals who identify as two or more races also account for a noticeable increase. Black principals remained about 10% of the principal population. Asian and American Indian/Alaskan Native principals' percentages remained low, both at less than one percent.

**Principals in US public elementary and secondary schools by race/ ethnicity**
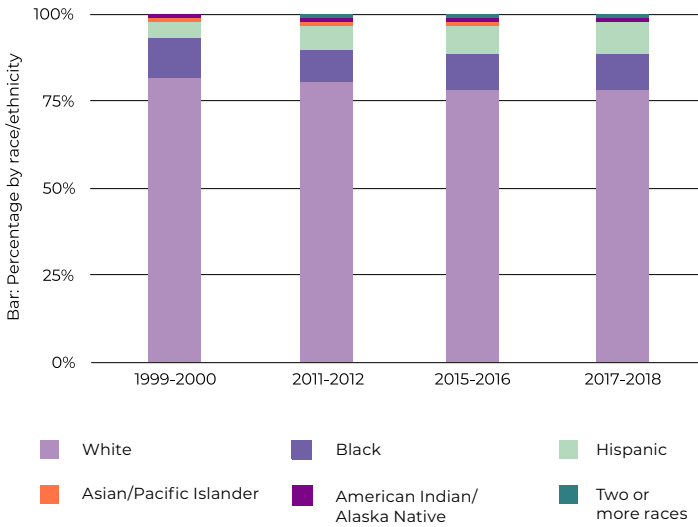


*Figure 2.* Principals in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools by race/ethnicity.

A similar pattern of demographic shifts is apparent with teachers. Figure 3 presents the total number of U.S. public elementary and secondary school teachers from 1999–2000 to 2017–2018. The percentage of "teachers of color" increased over the last two decades; however, a closer look reveals that, like with principals, increases in diversity reflect an increase in the number of principals who identify as Hispanic, whose proportional representation increased from 5.6% to 9.3%. As of 2017–18, more than 79% of teachers identify as White. The proportion of Black teachers decreased over time, from 7.6% to 6.7%; to note, Black teachers were the only group that reflects this trend.

**Teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, fall 1999 through fall 2017 (%)**
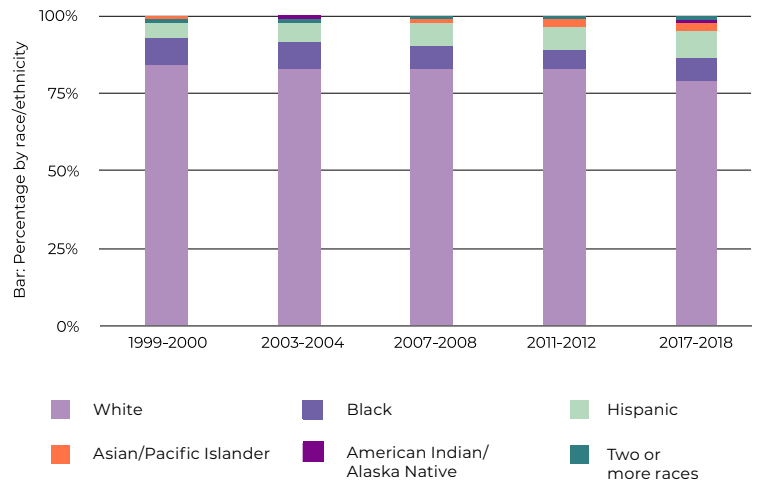


*Figure 3.* Teachers in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools by race/ethnicity.

Although the overall trend of principal leader diversity reflects trends that mirror student demographic changes in racial representation (i.e., the total numbers increased, while the number of White principals or White students decreased over time), the degree of change is more dramatic in student populations. In 1999–2000, White students comprised 62.0% of school-aged students attending public elementary and secondary schools. By 2018–2019, the number declined to 47.6%, a 14.4 point decrease. White principals decreased from 82.3% in 1999–2000 to 77.9% in 2017–2018, a 4.4 point decrease. Although the school leadership demographic imperative is widely acknowledged, few educational leadership studies seek to explain why addressing the underrepresentation of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders is such a critical issue. In the following section, I present research that suggests that increasing the number of educators of color in U.S. schools benefits students socially and academically.

**The Student Learning Imperative**

Producing more Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native principals is not merely a matter of working to achieve fair representation. Rather, if we look to racial-ethnic matching research, we can speculate that Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders are not only representationally (symbolically) important but are indeed a key resource for improving students' educational experiences, opportunities, and outcomes. With a few exceptions (Ehrenberg et al., 1995; Howsen & Trawick, 2007), educational research confirms that racial-ethnic matching is an important factor in increasing academic achievement of racially-ethnically marginalized students. In their study of third- to tenth-grade Florida reading and math state test scores, Egalite and colleagues (2015) found that Black, White, and Asian students' scores increased most when paired with same-race teachers. Dee's (2004) experimental research shows that racial matching in Tennessee primary schools produced comparable effects on student performance to placing students in small-sized classrooms. Recent research continues to demonstrate the positive effects of teacher racial-ethnic matching; despite samples being limited to particular states and districts (Howsen & Trawick, 2007; Petty et al., 2013), researchers have used methodologies (Yarnell & Bohrnstedt, 2018) to account for problems with unnatural research designs (Dee, 2004).

To explore if teacher-match theories held beyond states and in naturalistic settings, Yarnell and Bohrnstedt (2018) utilized the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Assessment at Grade 4 to examine teacher racial match theories. Moreover, they relied on a multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) framework that enabled them to "parcel individual from cluster-level effects to address the multiple ways that a cluster characteristic, such as a teacher's race, may interact with an individual characteristic, such as student race" (p. 289) and to explore matching effects at the student, classroom, and school levels. Critically, their research offered new insights into the intersection of race and gender matching. Some of their findings confirmed previous studies: in "classrooms taught by Black teachers, Black students—both male and female—perform comparatively better than they do on the whole" while in "classrooms taught by White teachers, Black students—particularly Black male students—perform comparatively worse than they do on the whole" (p. 309). Reading achievement is higher among Black students who are taught by a Black teacher relative to those who are not.

Yarnell and Bohrnstedt (2018) also found interactions previously unaccounted for in regard to race, gender, and teacher racial-ethnic identity. For example, Black females' reading achievement improved when taught by either a Black or Hispanic teacher. However, in classrooms taught by Hispanic teachers, Black male students underperformed relative to other student groups. When taught by a White Hispanic teacher, Black female achievement improved on par with other students. Overall, Yarnell and Bohrnstedt conclude:

Results supported the positive association of racial match with achievement among Black students suggested by prior research, suggested that both student and classroom level processes may be involved, and showed unique associations for Black male and Black female students and various classroom contexts. (p. 313) …

The support uncovered by our models for the racial matching hypothesis at the student level is consistent with the theory and research on passive and active teacher effects on achievement and with developmental literature. Moreover, the gender difference observed for the student-level effect, which suggests that a more precise match in race is needed for Black boys to perform on par with their peers than for Black girls, may be consistent with this literature. (p. 314)

While ample evidence supports the benefits of teacher racial matching for academic performance and achievement, research suggests experiential benefits as students also have overall more positive perceptions of Latinx and Black teachers on a host of teaching-related factors, compared to their White counterparts (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Osei-Twumasi & Pinetta, 2019). Cherng and Halpin (2016) examined student perceptions of individual fourth- through ninth-grade English language arts and mathematics teachers' instructional practices by drawing from Measurement of Effective Teaching longitudinal data in six U.S. school districts during the 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 academic years. They found consistent evidence that students have more positive ratings of Latino and Black teachers than White teachers after controlling for student demographic and academic characteristics, other teacher characteristics, work conditions, and teacher efficacy (see p. 409).

Unlike the case for academic achievement, where teacher racial matching aligns with improved performance, Cherng and Halpin (2016) found that minority students' perceptions did not always depend on having the same race/ethnicity as their teacher. For example, Black and Asian American students held particularly favorable perceptions of Black teachers. Latinx students, however, "did not consistently hold favorable perceptions of Latino teachers," which may suggest Latino teachers' and students' racial identities, language practices, places of origin, and more may be at play during interactions. Osei-Twumasi and Pinetta (2019) found similar results. Their study relied on student evaluations of teacher emotional support, classroom management, and instructional support. They found that as the percentage of Black students in classes rose, White teachers received increasingly less positive ratings on student perceptions. The negative relationship remained significant when controlling for a variety of class and teacher-related characteristics, which Osei-Twumasi and Pinetta argue are consistent with the literature about problems with racial mismatch and benefits of racial

match (Villegas & Irvine, 2010), as well as studies that demonstrate classes with higher percentages of Black students experience lower-quality instruction (Desimone & Long, 2010). They conclude by highlighting the importance of stakeholders recruiting and retaining teachers of color (Gates et al., 2006; Guarino et al., 2011; Ingersoll & May, 2011) and having strong administrative support for minority educators (Grissom, 2011; Grissom & Keiser, 2011).

**Does Leader Racial Match Really Matter?**

Much of what I have outlined in the previous section might be regarded as intuitive and common sense knowledge grounded in the lived and experiential knowledge of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native people (Luke, 2017). Writing about Black leadership, Lomotey (2019) notes that the significance of racial-ethnic match, while largely ignored in educational leadership research and in particular in leadership preparation research, "is not counterintuitive, as we know the significance of what psychologists refer to as homophily" (p. 336) as a factor in increasing academic achievement of racially, ethnically, and linguistically minoritized students. Yet, for now, in the field of educational leadership, principal and leader racial match research is novel.

In a groundbreaking study, Bartanen and Grissom (2021) examined longitudinal administrative records from Missouri and Tennessee and found that hiring a Black principal to lead a school substantially increased "the number of Black teachers in that school in subsequent years, relative to what the composition would have been under a White principal" (p. 34). Bartanen and Grissom argue that because principals are the primary human capital managers for schools, they are uniquely positioned to affect the racial composition of their teachers. For schools committed to improving educational experiences and outcomes for students of color, a strategy for doing so is to increase the numbers of teachers of color in a school. In both Tennessee and Missouri, Bartanen and Grissom found that teacher-principal race matching decreased teacher turnover and that in Missouri, this matching decreased the probability that a teacher exited the state's education system. Hiring and retaining principals of color is important for hiring and retaining teachers of color. Leaders of color encouraged teachers to pursue leadership opportunities.

One might assume that increasing the number of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders might deplete the number of high-quality teachers of color. However, Bartanen and Grissom (2021) found this was not the case:

> Increasing teacher diversity in schools with Black principals comes with no apparent loss with respect to measures of teacher quality. Although there may be a zero-sum concern that increased teacher diversity in one school comes at the cost of another, our results suggest that policies to increase the number of Black principals may do more than simply shuffle teachers around. Hiring diverse leaders encourages more teachers of

color to enter K–12 schools. Having a same-race principal reduced the likelihood that teachers would exit the K–12 system. (p. 36)

In a 2019 study, using the same data set, Bartenen and Grissom analyzed student-level data from Tennessee to estimate the impact of having a same-race principal on student math and reading test scores. They found positive effects on math scores of Black students after a Black principal's first year in the school. In addition, they found positive effects of Black teachers on Black students' outcomes that did not explain the impacts of Black principals, leading them to infer that principal race matters for students through mechanisms beyond only hiring and retention of teachers of color.

Luke (2017) engaged in a different approach that does not rely on quantitative analysis to confirm the "folk wisdom" that has long existed in communities of color. He writes about having Mr. Leong, an Asian American (Chinese) teacher, "who was visibly of my own cultural background, who looked and sounded like my parents, aunties, and uncles" (p. 108), as a key person in his educational experience. Luke questions the obsession with empirically substantiating the importance of Asian and other educators of color for students who look like them. In particular, Luke asks, Is the gap between minority community experience— "folk wisdom" or local knowledge (Levine, 2002)—and ''scientific evidence'' principally a matter of the time lag of empirical demonstration and research publication, limitations of prevailing scientific paradigms, or an effect of dominant ideology and the politics of knowledge? This sort of "we already know" and "so what's new?" (Luke, 2017) ethos is reflected throughout the academic literature and implied in arguments by leadership scholars such as Rodela and Rodriguez-Mojica (2019), who argue that Latinx leaders are uniquely attentive to and positioned to "confront the racialized politics of their administrative jobs, draw on their rich forms of cultural wealth, and enact leadership practices that will ensure kids in their schools, who are like them, don't ever go through what they went through" (p. 27).

## Section 2. Principal Preparation Pipeline: Problems and Knowledge Gaps

In the second section, I operationalize the principal preparation pipeline and explore the social justice leadership preparation scholars' attempts to address the imperative to increase the number of "scholars of color" working in U.S. schools. I point out two problems with the social justice leadership preparation knowledge base. First, the research focuses almost exclusively on understanding pedagogical and curricular preparation and supports and lacks accounts of organizational and structural transformations that might benefit students. Second, despite its stated commitment to supporting students of color, very few accounts of Asian, Black, Latinx, or Native leader needs, experiences, or benefits actually exist. Taken together, these two knowledge gaps reveal that despite numerous studies that examine Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leadership practices, very little scholarship examines the relationship between preparation and support processes and Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leadership practices or experiences.

**Operationalizing the Pipeline**

Aspiring Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders likely experience the leader development and preparation pipeline in ways that differ from their White peers. The development pipeline yields different race-based outcomes and it is important to acknowledge and view the pipeline as a structure that reproduces racial patterns. Gordon (2020) identifies 10 phases of the principal development pipeline that spans from teacher training to licensure renewal. Gordon conceptualizes the principal development pipeline as starting with *teacher preparation*, the time when educational leadership faculty have initial opportunities to begin cultivating future principals by collaborating with teacher preparation programs. A second phase where school leaders experience development is gaining *classroom teaching experience* and instructional expertise, which in time goes "a long way toward establishing credibility––and building relationships––with teachers" (p. 63). A third phase of development is *teacher leadership*, both formal and informal, which is practice-based and involves facilitating grade-level and subject area teams, curriculum and professional development, and improvement activities such as leading action research projects, cycles or inquiry, teacher observations, peer mentoring, and coaching novice or struggling teachers.

The next three phases of development fall into formal principal "preparation" where university-based educational leadership faculty play a stronger role cultivating leader preparation. The phases include *recruitment and selection* into formal preparation programs, expert-facilitated *program* learning experiences grounded in the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, and *initial licensure*. The final four phases of principal development include induction to the role of assistant principal and eventual

*assistant principal development to take on the role of the principalship*, followed by *principal induction*, and continued *professional development and licensure renewal* (Gordon, 2020).

Gordon (2020) argues that "each phase of the pipeline provides groundwork for the following phase, and together have a cumulative effect on principal development. Thus inattention to any one phase weakens to overall process of principal development" (p. 80). Still, he points out "neglected" pipeline phases where prospective leaders learn to teach, gain teaching experiences, and exposure to teacher leadership opportunities, are usually not considered at all in the principal development research. The phases beginning with formal recruitment into preparation programs receive the most scholarly attention, and still the research base for understanding these phases is inadequate. But like most pipeline frameworks, Gordon's is race-neutral.

To date, social justice leadership scholars have offered the field its most promising responses to how the principal preparation pipeline might produce more leaders of color by integrating teaching and learning about racism and racial justice as an important cornerstone of leadership preparation and support. However, as I will demonstrate, the social just leadership preparation approaches do not contribute to race-specific preparation and supports that prioritizes Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' development. Although scholars recognize that problems exists along all levels of the pipeline, two problems persist in the field. First, research conducted from a social justice leadership preparation and credentialing stance focuses almost exclusively on the pedagogical dimensions of leadership preparations and support at the expense of taking a more expansive view of leadership development. Moreover, within this pedagogical dimension, interventions aimed at disrupting racism and cultivating social justice leaders who possess racial consciousness, prioritizes White leaders' racial consciousness development.

## Social Justice Leadership Preparation's Pedagogical Focus

Social justice leadership scholars regard preparing leaders to work in districts where policies and practices exacerbate race-based inequities as much of a priority in preparation as instructional improvement (Diem et al., 2019; Furman, 2012). Social justice leadership preparation research espouses to focus on the institutional changes that will increase the number of leaders with social justice dispositions, who often happen to be identified as being from marginalized and underrepresented populations. Social justice leadership preparation scholars have advanced the field by acknowledging that graduate students of color face unique barriers and thus require unique supports to develop as leaders (Young & Brooks, 2008) and that although there are certain best practices that apply to supporting all graduate students, "difference-blind" approaches fail to address the extant inequities that permeate educational institutions and *all levels* of society (Larson & Murtadha, 2002).

Education leadership researchers note the importance of race and culture-specific knowledge, spirituality (Dantley & Green, 2015), cultural wealth (Rodela & Rodriguez-Mojica, 2019), and differential oppression leaders of color experience (Liang et al., 2018; Lomotey, 2019). While these considerations are taken up in accounts of leadership preparation, it is not clear that they have translated into the kinds of pervasive personal and organizational commitments to race-conscious preparation and support that social justice scholars argue they should become (Agosto et al., 2015; Diem et al., 2019; Young & Brooks, 2008). Indeed, rather than illuminating organization-wide commitments, most empirical accounts of social justice leader preparation research focuses on the personal and "pedagogical dimensions" of social justice preparation: how individual and teams of faculty members organize and deliver instruction and curriculum around the values of social justice, how individual students in leadership programs experience this learning, and what students learn from it. Common pedagogical interventions covered in the literature include learning activities such as:

- *Developing knowledge of self,* by engaging students in structured self-reflection, including writing and sharing their cultural autobiographies, guided reflection and journaling, and developing leadership growth plans based on their self-reflection (Gooden & Dantley, 2012).

- *Developing knowledge of others*, in which students use the tools of life history, cross-cultural interviews, diversity panels, and role-playing to practice the principles of good listening, dialogue, and cross-cultural communication (Capper et al., 2006).

- *Developing capacity to understand and solve school-based inequities,* which includes learning activities such as gathering and analyzing data to gain deeper understandings of problems of instructional practice, student learning, and organizational structures that produce inequities, including auditing or assessing the current school context regarding equity and inclusion in their schools (Frattura & Capper, 2007; Theoharis & Causton-Theoharis, 2008).

- *Developing teachers' and staff capacity to understand and solve school-based inequities* by talking about race (Gooden & Dantley, 2012), reading about and discussing multiple areas of difference (e.g., race, language, poverty, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability) (Capper et al., 2006), and encouraging culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2014).

- *Designing professional development to help teachers and staff interact with the school context* by focusing on pedagogy of place activities that seek to (re)connect school and community, including analyzing local social, economic, or environmental issues and what role the school plays in enabling, ignoring, or addressing issues that affect their lives and that of their students' communities (Green, 2017).

These leadership preparation pedagogies encourage leaders to enact social justice leadership. It is assumed that leaders who engage these practices will increase students' academic achievement, develop teachers and students into critical citizens, and structure schools to ensure that students learn in heterogeneous, inclusive classrooms. However, the extent to which such pedagogical interventions shape leader beliefs and practices, enhance student learning, and create more equitable schools remains understudied. The effects of social justice leadership preparation on leadership practice are not clear, as is the relationship between exposure to preparation interventions, deep understandings of one's racial identities, and how these mediate social justice leadership enactments. But some studies do attempt to capture the role of pedagogical interventions in developing racial ideologies and race-consciousness (Diem et al., 2019).

Diem et al.'s (2019) research study of course-level pedagogical interventions on the racial awareness and identity development of eight White, three multi-racial, and five Black students participating in a leadership preparation program offers an example of the types of *social justice leadership effects* studies that are sorely needed. The study aimed to investigate how coursework can be purposefully used to develop racial consciousness that prepares leaders to address racialized educational policies. In part, the authors found that White aspiring leaders, through constant revisiting of race-specific issues, grew more contemplative about the experiences of their Black and Multi-racial colleagues and began to openly question their previous "cut and dry" leadership practices in schools. Black leaders reflected on their own racialized objectification and what race and racism meant in their lives, past and present, and in particular how they "managed to beat the odds in spite of racism and stereotypes" (p. 722). The authors concluded that participants of color showed higher capacities to draw

on critical reflection opportunities, a key social justice pedagogical intervention. They also note that "leadership preparation programs must do a better job of intentionally monitoring factors associated with more even awareness development" (p. 726).

Although studies such as Diem and colleagues (2019) move the field toward an understanding of the differential racial effects of preparation interventions, such research studies are not common. Rather, most social justice leadership preparation and support studies offer theoretical or descriptive accounts of interventions aimed at increasing the pipeline of school leaders who demonstrate racial-consciousness and social justice orientations (Furman, 2012). With a focus on selection, knowledge and content, and post-graduation induction to the field, several social justice leadership scholars co-published an article suggesting that preparation programs proactively select students who already understand social justice and the "propensity . . . to critically question the inequities found in schools" (McKenzie et al., 2008, p. 188). Their knowledge and content recommendations included raising the critical consciousness of leadership students, placing more emphasis on instructional leadership, and teaching students how to create inclusive school support structures for all students in their care.

As the field works to "improve curriculum planning, hold themselves accountable for structuring reflective dialogue among the professoriate, monitor mind-set growth among faculty and students, and perhaps offer additional mentoring for faculty and students working through issues of race and racism" (Diem et al., 2019, p. 726), it is critical to be mindful of differential effects of program efforts and who they ultimately benefit. It appears that for now, social justice leadership preparation research primarily offers insights into what all leaders and educators need to become more racially conscious and enact social justice leadership. The default is that social justice leadership preparation, and by extension research accounts of such preparation, capitulates to what White leaders need to do to get better.[1]

**The Emphasis on Preparing White Social Justice Leaders**

Despite the common acknowledgement that people from communities of color possess unique funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), cultural community wealth (Yosso, 2005), and the like, social justice preparation leadership literature pays very little theoretical or empirical attention to racial identity as an important mediator of social justice leadership capacities or enactments. When social justice leadership preparation research gives attention to leader racial identity, it is primarily to White leaders' racial identities.

So, it is quite possible that social justice interventions, as they are adopted, will work to primarily benefit White leaders' social justice consciousness and practice. If the field's objective is to move aspiring and practicing Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous leaders toward social justice practice, then the field must understand what Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and support interventions should entail at curricular, pedagogical, and institutional levels.

To offer an institutional consideration, contemplate that the overall number of individuals *certified* to fill administrative positions is far greater than the number of positions requiring such certification (DeAngelis & O'Conner, 2012; Fuller et al., 2016; Perrone & Tucker, 2018). Researchers acknowledge the oversupply stems largely from White educators who pursue leadership credentials but do not pursue leadership positions (Fuller et al., 2016). In their study of the Texas leadership pipelines, Fuller et al. (2016) found that Texas preparation programs with higher percentages of White graduates had lower overall leader placement rates than programs that served higher percentages of Black and Latinos. This suggests that if placing principals is a preparation priority, then increasing the number of Black and Latino leaders and/or reducing the number of White students would support this aim. In other words, the call for more leaders of color ignores that reducing the preparation of White leaders is also a plausible option to shift institutional priorities. Unless such an orientation––reducing the presence of Whiteness––is considered, the institutional and pedagogical dimensions described in the research literature, even social justice-oriented ones, will likely not center the learning needs of Asian, Black, Latinx, or Indigenous leaders.

Consider the proposed pedagogical interventions suggested to prepare leaders to work with Indigenous populations: participate in "retreats, and workshops specifically focused upon learning about the Aboriginal worldview or other types of teachings related to the spirit of life ... classes on the Medicine Wheel followed by participation in a sweatlodge ceremony" (Preston et al., 2017, p. 339). Intervention approaches that center on helping "non-aboriginal individuals to cultivate a strong intercultural identity, which acknowledges the values, languages and worldviews of Aboriginal and Western perspectives" (p. 330) are laudable but problematic. The focus on cultural competence and increasing the consciousness of "others" creates a tension whereby preparation faculty choose to consider the developmental needs of non-Indigenous people alongside, or at the expense of, Indigenous people. Perhaps consciousness raising can happen for both. But there is no evidence that leadership preparation researchers are exploring if this is indeed happening. Do institutional or pedagogical interventions matter for shaping leader practice in desirable ways for some racial groups more than others?

[1] I intentionally excluded studies that primarily focus on White leaders' racial identity development as well as those that centrally examine White leaders' practices, and interventions that increase the racial consciousness, social justice development of aspiring or practicing leaders who identify as White.

# Section 3. Considering Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native Learner Needs

My review of literature confirmed many of Gordon's assertions related to the structural dimensions of the leadership development and preparation pipeline. However, based on my review, the race-neutral conceptualization masks socializing structures that are likely noticeable to scholars who research Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders. The leadership development and principal preparation pipeline is an institutionalized racial structure that Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders experience in ways that produce disparate outcomes. With the centrality of race, racism, and racial experiences in mind, I use this section to elaborate key aspects I regard as important for the field to consider as it sharpens its commitment to Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and support (see Figure 4).
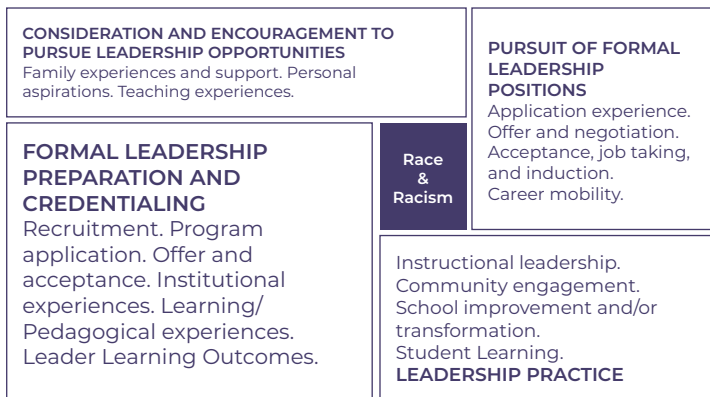


*Figure 4*. Support and development considerations.

## Encouragement to Pursue Leadership

Understanding leaders' *sources of encouragement to pursue leadership* is important because even before leaders of color enter the formal preparation pipeline, many express not receiving mentorship and sponsorship to guide their career decision-making such that they are best set up to pursue leadership preparation (Liang et al., 2018). Rather, a range of experiences inform their decisions. For example, Asian leaders' perspectives are important given their very low representation in leadership positions. Asian American barriers to entry are regarded largely as socio-cultural (Kawahara et al., 2014). In particular, K-12 Asian American women leaders described their leadership opportunities as "falling into their lap," which underscores a problem: Asian American women's pursuit of K-12 leadership appears to stem from informal forms of encouragement on one hand and happenstance on the other.

In their study of 15 Asian American women school leaders, Liang et al. (2018) found that most participants expressed no intention to become administrators when they started in education. Their study participants pursued administrative positions when they "were encouraged by family members, friends, colleagues, and other administrators, as they recognized the women's potential in leadership" (p. 628). Asian American women school leaders recounted working under leaders who allowed them to try different leadership roles in their schools. Although many Asian American school leaders gained leadership opportunities before earning their credentials, they often were pigeon-holed into leadership positions that focused on language learning and acquisition, even in cases where the participants did not possess the language skills to support student needs or could not speak the student's native language.

Scholars who have studied Asian American leaders beyond K-12 education find that many leaders found themselves "leading by necessity," having never actively sought leadership roles and preferring to have lower rather than high visibility professional profiles. In other words, when someone––professional and personal––asked them to lead, they did so. This may in part stem from a common cultural norm that equates their professional decisions as a public representation of one's family (Kawahara et al., 2014). It may also reflect a sense of obligation to the good of the group or collective. Kawahara and colleagues (2014) found that the cultural values of collectivism and working hard lead some to "fulfill a leadership position when asked [was] viewed as part of their duty and diligence and conforming for the collective good [and is] ... reflective of the Asian cultural values in which it is more valued to be asked than to ask to be a leader (p. 246).

## Formal Preparation and Credentialing

Although scholars in the field of leadership have produced numerous research studies examining *formal leadership preparation and credentialing processes,* very few studies explore how preparation programs work for and are experienced by Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native aspiring leaders. But race and racism matter in this context. At the point of application and selection for entry into leader credentialing programs, Agosto and colleagues (2015) found that in one program, race-neutral application and selection processes reduced the likelihood of admission. Understanding these sorts of patterns beyond select programs and institutions is critical if we are to gain a clearer understanding of how racism is enacted at this critical juncture. It is also important to pursue research about the experiences students have once admitted into programs. Diem et al. (2019) argue that program faculty often sidestep, deem unimportant, or shrug away issues of race and racism, and in doing so compromise the learning and developmental needs of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders. Again, few studies turn the lens toward preparation program policies, curriculum, or faculty practices in ways that might help the field explain or mitigate the continued low rates of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native principal preparation.

**Pursuit of Leadership Positions**

Conveniently, there are more studies that address the barriers aspiring Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders experienced in their *pursuit of formal leadership positions* that sit beyond the immediate sphere of preparation program faculty. Numerous research studies explore and explain that students of color get fewer job offers and opportunities to advance beyond the assistant principal role (DeAngelis & O'Connor, 2012; Fuller et al., 2016). In other words, leaders of color are less likely to gain access to the most consequential K-12 leadership positions. DeAngelis and O'Conner (2012), whose research examined factors associated with leadership placement in Illinois, found that "minority applicants registered significantly lower odds of receiving [leadership job] offers than non-minority applicants … a result of a marginally significant difference in job offer rates among minority applicants in urban locales, where 57.1% of minority applicants received job offers compared to 80.6% of non-minority applicants" (p. 491).

Fuller et al. (2016) found that in Texas, "Latina/o and White graduates tended to have greater placement rates than" (p. 658) Black aspiring leaders or individuals classified as other races or ethnicities. Moreover, aspiring leaders who were not White "were less likely than their White peers to become employed as a school leader, assistant principal, or principal. In general, such individuals were about 20% less likely in their odds to obtain employment regarding all three outcome measures than their White peers" (pp. 661–2). Although Latina/o graduates gained leadership positions at higher rates than their White counterparts, they, like Black leaders, were more likely to gain placements as assistant principals.

In a study of principal placement in a Southern state, McCray and colleagues found that Black leaders seemed to be on par with the student population (McCray et al., 2005). However, African Americans were principals in 54% of predominantly Black schools and 6% of majority White schools. White principals led 46% of predominantly Black schools and 94% of majority White schools, which begged the question, How are African American and White principals chosen for principal positions? McCray et al. (2005) argue that racism offers the only plausible explanation of principal hiring and placement that relegates Black leaders to predominantly Black schools while ensuring expansive placement options for White school leaders.

**Leadership Practice and Ongoing Development**

Regarding Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' *leadership practices*, the field has developed a more robust body of research that contains both similarities and nuanced differences about the challenges Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders face and their responses to them. The very little that we know about aspiring and practicing Asian American school leaders stem primarily from studies of Asian American women. Generally, researchers

characterize Asian Americans' leadership as transformational, developmental, and directed toward a collective purpose and vision (Kawahara et al., 2014). Themes of family, work, and the importance of racial/ethnic identities permeate Asian American leadership research. Many scholars explicate Asian American leaders' values by contrasting them with Western values of individualism, competition, and materialism. However, upbringing and generational status shape the extent to which leaders believe their leadership practice should reflect and work to retain Asian cultural roots and values or embrace Americanness and Western values. Foreign-born Asian Americans often see themselves as "very different" from American born Asians, who find more commonalities with Western values.

An example of an oft ignored challenge among Asian leaders is the problem of being steered into language-specific programs (e.g., dual language programs, ELL, etc.). In Liang and Peters-Hawkins's (2017) study of eleven Asian American woman school leaders, some responded to their pigeon-holing experiences by resisting the expectation that they work in Asian communities and schools. They thought it was "necessary to serve in a variety of schools to avoid being 'typecast' as an administrator only good for 'their own people'" (p. 55). However, the strategies they used to gain leadership positions usually involved accepting whatever position was available as opposed to seeking out positions they wanted––leadership by necessity was the primary means of job placement.

Much of the research on Black racial identity and leadership center women leaders and thus reflect intersectional analyses that account for gender, race, age, and even school type as factors that interlock to shape leader practices (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003; Horsford & Tillman, 2012; Lomotey, 2019; Moorosi et al., 2018; Peters, 2012; Reed, 2012). Black leaders regard themselves as full-fledged members of the communities they serve. Black leaders blur the lines between schooling and community, treating them as overlapping performative spheres where people who share social affinities express these affinities through shared norms, expressions, and activities (Khalifa, 2012). This conception of community is place-based. Thus, becoming a school leader is akin to *forming community* with people.

Leading, therefore, necessitates "a deep understanding of the neighborhood community being served" (Khalifa, 2012, p. 427) and demands that leaders' presence and involvement centers the interests of the people who have a longstanding stake in sustaining community. The school leader joins in the communal activity of educating its children. An example of a challenge among Black leaders is managing the substantial stress and strain of working with limited resources in schools that exist in the ravages of racism and inequality (Moorosi et al., 2018; Reed, 2012). Black leaders often respond by creating a "balance" in terms of work-life for themselves as well as their teachers. This is particularly true for Black women leaders who disproportionately lead the nation's most challenging schools (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003; Livingston et al., 2012; Peters, 2012; Reed, 2012; Rosette & Livingston, 2012).

Latinx leaders' experiences are varied depending upon geography. Leaders in districts and schools' with historically high concentrations of Latinx students have different affordances and challenges than their New Diaspora counterparts. In fact, "in some regions of the U.S. the number of leaders of color is now proportional to the student and community populations" (Alemán, 2009, p. 183). Latina leaders manage to overcome discriminatory hiring practices, glass ceilings, good ol' boy networks, and stereotypes to earn positions as school leaders. In an innovative national study of Latina school leaders, Méndez-Morse and colleagues (2015) found that in the face of inadequate mentorship, Latina leaders relied heavily on the encouragement and guidance of their mothers. These Latina leaders assembled mentors by drawing on the talents of individuals based on the resources they had available. Latina leaders use a unique approach to leadership that focuses on student success, especially for underachievers in addition to community participation, in particular "helping parents become more knowledgeable about the school system" (Méndez-Morse et al., 2015, p. 177).

Regardless of region, Latina leaders contend with racial and gendered stereotypes of being docile and passive, among a host of other misconceptions (Méndez-Morse et al., 2015). Despite having more educational credentials and experience than males, Latinas largely lack sponsorship or mentors, lead predominantly minority schools and districts, and are assumed to lack budgetary and fiscal knowledge. Throughout their leadership journeys, Latinas also express familial pressures to be homemakers (Rodela & Rodriguez-Mojica, 2019). Ironically, 75% of participants in Méndez-Morse and colleagues' (2015) study indicated that their gender or race/ethnicity "had not influenced their work as leaders yet the same percentage indicated that race/ethnicity influenced their work with students of color" (p. 184), which underscores the concern among Latinx leadership scholars about the constant creep of majoritarian values that undermine racial and ethnic solidarity, as well as the need to raise the critical consciousness of Latinx leaders (Alemán, 2009; Rodríguez et. al., 2016).

The variability in what constitutes Indigenous education is nuanced within geographical and cultural settings. Indigenous leadership reflect the values of multiple Indigenous groups, especially in the United States (Guillory & Williams, 2014). Despite the broad range of contexts in which Indigenous educational leaders work, some shared beliefs and practices are agreed upon (Preston et. al., 2017). For example, foundational elements of Indigenous K-12 education include adhering to the Four Rs (respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility), honoring the land and realizing one's actions are connected to all living and non-living things everywhere (i.e., holism), promoting, preserving, and revitalizing local language and culture, and partnering with family and community.[2] Each is an essential aspect of what Indigenous leadership scholars regard as important for influencing a quadrilateral notion of student success that accounts for intellectual, physical, emotional,

and spiritual wellness (Preston et al., 2017). Success for Native students is not meant to be portrayed solely as a number or grade representing a student's intellectual success. Successful leadership attends to each student's overall growth and well-being within the four previously noted quadrants (Claypool & Preston, 2014).

A challenge for Indigenous leaders is to promote a deep cultural understanding and retention of Indigenous knowledge while also not subscribing wholly to either "cultural purity" or embracement of the "new world" (Hohepa, 2013). This commitment to Indigeneity (Hohepa, 2013; Mackey, 2018) is complicated by oppression rooted in colonialism, erasure and invisiblization of Native people, as well as pressures to embrace contemporary culture while adhering to what Indigenous youth often refer to as Elders' "old ways" of traditional native epistemologies (Guillory & Williams, 2014). Leaders "are expected to know how to conduct themselves in professional educational settings and activities that may have little link to" their indigenous society (Hohepa, 2013, p. 621). They are also expected to adhere to traditional values of service to community. For example, Scott and colleagues' (2013) study of First Nations leaders demonstrates how the idea of being responsible and accountable to the school community translated into leaders' practices of being accessible beyond the typical school days an academic year, often 24 hours a day, 365 days per year (Scott et al., 2013). Increased technology access, infrastructure development, and use mediates some of the demands on leaders to be present and available (Richardson & McCleod, 2011). Core questions of Indigeneity and sovereignty remain essential concerns for Indigenous leaders who attempt to balance the real need for improved resources with the power of tribes to self-determine (Richardson & McCleod, 2011).

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[2] Numerous quadrilateral notions, grounded in Tribal traditions, exist in the literature. For examples, see Tunison (2013). Most include four elements that focus on community, land, knowledge, and learning.

# Summary

The varied values, orientations, and practices outlined above are relatively well-documented. However, it is unclear if the practices that Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders engage are at minimum recognized or at best leveraged in leadership preparation and supports. It is possible that many of the patterns of practice are reproduced primarily through leaders' own efforts, social networks, and self-initiative for informal mentoring and coaching. While this is laudable, it begs the question: Are Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and supports actually just credentialing? Do Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders pursue leadership by happenstance or do models of successful recruitment exist?

Do Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders persist through formal preparation programs in spite of, because of, or as a result of any systematic efforts on the part of preparation stakeholders' efforts? The state of the field suggest much remains to be understood and changed to strengthen Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and support in ways that will accelerate an increase in the number of high-quality leaders of color who are principals in K-12 schools. This may partially be because the knowledge based that takes up racial considerations is sorely lacking, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. *Pipeline of Preparation and Supports – State of What We Know*

| Pipeline Stages | Factors | Weak or Nothing | Developing | Strong |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Consideration and encouragement to pursue leadership** | Personal aspirations | Asian, Indigenous | Latinx | Black |
| | Family experiences | Asian, Indigenous | Latinx | Black |
| | Teach experiences | Asian, Indigenous | Black, Latinx | |
| **Formal leadership preparation and credentialing** | Program Application | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | Offer and acceptance | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | Institutional experiences | Asian, Latinx, Indigenous | Black | |
| | Pedagogical experiences | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| **Pursuit of Leadership Positions** | Application experience | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | Offer and negotiation | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | Acceptance / Job taking | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | Career Mobility | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| **Leadership Practice** | Increases Student Performance | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |
| | School improvement or transformation | Asian, Latinx, Indigenous | Black | |
| | Community improvement | Asian, Black, Latinx, Indigenous | | |

# Discussion : Differentiating Preparation Supports

The current school leader development and preparation pipeline is failing to produce the numbers of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders that the increasingly diverse U.S. student population requires to ensure improved student experiences and outcomes. Even with an increase in social justice-oriented preparations and supports––which do focus on race and racism but less on leader racial identities and experiences––racial inequities persist across *all levels* of leadership preparation. This occurs because what we know about the benefits of social justice leadership preparation stems primarily from accounts of pedagogical and curricular interventions, rather than organizational and systems change efforts. Moreover, the interventions reveal an enduring concern with preparing White leaders to become social justice leaders. There are strikingly few accounts of Asian, Black, Latinx, or Native preparation and support efforts, even at the level of pedagogical and curricular interventions. Finally, while there are numerous accounts of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' practices, it remains unclear the extent to which their their preparation and support experiences inform (or deform) their leadership practices and effectiveness.

Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leader preparation and support approaches must center and recognize leaders' race. Of course, leadership preparation and supports should share some core learning experiences. But differentiation that thoughtfully considers students' racial, cultural, and personal experiences is also important. Cultivating racial consciousness and justice orientations amongst Black leaders might require a different pedagogic form than fostering consciousness amongst Asian or Latinx leaders. Black leaders often contend with school culture milieus of entrenched deficit ideologies about Black students and families' intellectual capacities, aspirations, values, and preferred modes of communication. This is particularly the case in schools impacted most adversely by poverty. As a participant in Wilson's (2016) study of critical care and transformative leadership, Principal Simms explained that common teacher perceptions include ideas such as "parents don't care and are not involved; we (students' teachers) should have low expectations for their learning and achievement; students don't understand anything but the language of fussing; '(poor Black students') families just care about material things like clothes and shoes'; and 'these kids are all two grades behind'" (p. 567). Teachers maintain deficit-based judgements about Black students and their families that translate into teachers' adopting and rationalizing practices such as "let's (the teachers) just go ahead and fuss at them" (Wilson, 2016, p. 567) and maintaining low academic standards.

Asian American leaders profiled in the educational studies I reviewed, by and large, did not consider racism as a factor in their professional lives despite their experiences of being typecast and racially steered into particular leadership positions, The school leaders, all women, viewed most of their problems as stemming from gendered stereotypes and sexism, reflecting gender-conscious race-blind leadership frames for making sense of their experiences. Yet, critical scholars argue that anti-Asian American racism is always at play. The racist model minority myth casts Asian Americans as inherently hard-working, industrious, and academically oriented. Asian Americans are also stereotyped as diligent, agreeable, flexible, modest, polite, soft spoken, and non-confrontational (Kawahara et al., 2014). Asian American men are stereotyped as effeminate. These sorts of racist projections onto Asian Americans make them seem unfit for certain leadership positions (Sy et al., 2010). The broader implications of such damaging stereotyping are that it emboldens "bamboo ceilings," a racist-structural phenomenon which places Asian American leaders in a precarious position of appearing "unfit" for leadership positions thought to require tough or assertive leadership dispositions (Kawahara et al., 2014; Sy et al., 2010). Bamboo ceilings are especially damaging for Asian American women leaders who often used sense-making approaches that personalized professional problems instead of seeing problems as institutional and structural in nature (Liang & Peters-Hawkins, 2017).

Although Latinx Educational Leadership is greatly influenced by geography and countries of origin, Latinx leadership scholars across the board regard the recognition, development, and maintenance of Spanish language as a valuable asset that is critically important to Latinx student success. Many aspiring and practicing Latinx Leaders are bilingual and bicultural and therefore are uniquely situated to address the needs of the rapidly increasing Latinx student population (Méndez-Morse et al., 2015; Roberts & Hernandez, 2012; Rodela et al., 2019; Rodríguez et al., 2016). Hostile policies, Eurocentric curriculum, and anti-immigrant political and cultural sentiments abound, posing threats to the maintenance of this distinct linguistic and cultural asset.

Native and Indigenous leaders who are committed to self-determination, cultural preservation, and sovereignty, contend with the continued need to "justify the value of what they know, what they want to teach their children, and how they want their children to be taught" (Harrington & CHiXapdaid, 2013, p. 488). They also contend with epistemic, linguistic, and cultural affronts to their *indigeneity*—rights to live in today's world, being the same in some senses and different in others while ensuring the survival of one's traditional culture, as pertains to leaders enacting Indigenous leadership while investigating non-Indigenous approaches (Hohepa, 2013; Mackey, 2018). Indigenous leadership scholars weave the tensions of indigeneity and the juxtaposition of indigenous and non-indigenous leadership throughout their research. But it is not clear that preparation programs or interventions designed to increase the number of Native leaders' factor in such considerations. What would this look like?

**An Example: How an Appreciation of Native Leadership Helps Us Rethink Preparation and Support for Native Leaders**

Creating high-quality Indigenous leader preparation and supports will require a fundamental shift in how educational leadership researchers conceptualize leaders and leadership to better align with non-binary conceptions and worldviews. Indigenous worldviews reject binary opposites. In keeping with this rejection and its challenge to the monopoly of Western epistemology (Louie et al., 2017), it is important to problematize the notion of leader/teacher and leader/parent (Scott et. al., 2013). If one accepts a non-binary conception of K-12 leadership, Guillory and Williams' (2014) research study could be regarded as a K-12 leadership study: its participants included "middle and high school teachers, middle and high school principals, state AI/AN education directors, AI/AN parent educational committee chairs, AI/AN parents, retired teachers, federal program coordinators, and cultural resource coordinators" (p. 160). In the study, the specific contributions of middle and high school principals or other leaders are not easily discernable. Assuming that the study offers little to learn in the way of Indigenous leadership would miss the point that the indiscernibility itself is a leadership distinction.

If scholars and faculty do not understand Indigenous leaders' distinctions, is it possible to develop institutional or pedagogical interventions that prepare and support that distinct type of leader? Pedagogically, Indigenous leader preparation and support would offer leader learning opportunities that include continued discussions and deep explorations of *remembering, claiming, and connecting* as essential. Assessing leader practice would include grading discussions, as well as accounting for voices from the field and communities whom leaders serve. Essential leader practices that a program of study would cultivate would include *Indigenous negotiating* skills, *celebration of survival* and *creation survivance,* and *storytelling*. A relevant curriculum would address these concepts as well as Indigeneity.

My aim is not to exhaustively lay out what Indigenous leader preparation should entail. I do not pretend that I have the experiential knowledge, book learning, and imagination to do such a thing. But I do recognize that Indigenous educational leadership preparation should be located within and informed by Indigenous cultures. As Hohepa (2013) notes, the policies and procedures that protect, support, and grow such leadership is essential to making a positive difference to Indigenous student outcomes (p. 622). If Indigenous leaders' roles in facilitating success for indigenous students remains elusive, that does not mean it is not happening. It could be that the field's reliance on restrictive Western notions of leaders and leadership fail to recognize Indigenous leadership. Leaders from all races should be afforded opportunities to develop a critical consciousness that counters majoritarian ideologies (Alemán, 2009), understand what it means to lead for social justice and equity in public schools (Rodríguez et al., 2016), and attend to the importance of academic achievement (Roberts & Hernandez, 2012; Rodríguez et al., 2016). This begs the question: What is the value added of social justice leadership preparation and support for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders––during preparation programs, during the pursuit of leadership positions, and during their tenure as building leaders? Expanding the conceptualization of preparation and support to consider the both the (a) expanse of developmental needs––encouragement, formal preparation, pursuit of leadership positions, and practice––and experiences and (b) the significance of race and racism––in particular for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders––throughout the preparation and support process warrants more attention from preparation stakeholders.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

The pressing task for the today's leaders is to improve the learning outcomes of racially diversifying student populations while addressing the imperative of cultural retention. If we concede Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders have a special role to play in this process, then researchers and leadership preparation programs must leverage race-specific knowledge and cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), experiences of oppression, or developmental wants and needs of Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native principals as a part of increasing their numbers. Researchers increasingly recognize the importance of race (Lomotey, 2019) and race-gender conscious frames (Liang & Liou, 2018) for understanding leader practice. However, these considerations remain novel in preparation and support research.

Scholars committed to addressing demographic imperatives have mostly been concerned with *reducing barriers* as the means to improve leadership preparations and supports ranging from entry to graduate school to career advancement (Agosto et al., 2015; Campbell-Stephens, 2009; DeAngelis & O'Connor, 2012; Young & Brooks, 2009). But educational researchers concerned with leadership preparation and support have much to learn from engaging in research that seeks to recognize the rich repository of knowledge that is readily available from Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous leaders and the research that presents this knowledge. I recommend that stakeholders:

- Draw on Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' racial and experiential knowledge, cultural wealth, and leadership practices to transform preparation and support interventions;
- Conceptualize leadership preparation and support for Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders as spanning from teacher training years, into the principalship, and beyond;
- Examine organizational and structural interventions and transformations that support aspiring and practicing Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders; and
- Conduct research that aims to understand the relationship between (a) Asian, Black, Latinx, and Native leaders' racial consciousness, (b) leadership practice, and (c) preparation and support approaches.

As long as the field ignores questions about racial identity, aspirations for cultural retention, and the vast research on the benefits of racial matching on teacher and student experiences alike, the field will not develop a basis from which to reimagine or design differentiated learning opportunities to strengthen Asian, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous leadership preparation, support, and practice. It will remain subtractive at worst, non-additive at best, and continue to center White aspiring and practicing leader developmental needs.

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# Appendices

Note: My use of Asian includes Asian and Pacific Islander populations.

Note: My interchangeable uses of Native and Indigenous reflect the uses of authors in the articles I reviewed.

Note: I intentionally excluded studies that primarily focus on White leaders' racial identity development as well as those that centrally examine White leaders' practices, and interventions that increase the racial consciousness, social justice development of aspiring or practicing leaders who identify as White.

Note: I was generally unable to identify studies that empirically examined the effects of structural interventions or pedagogical experiences on leadership behaviors and practices or impacts on students, schools, and communities.

Note: Many of the social justice leadership preparation articles are theoretical, offering change and transformation frameworks that offer insights into credentialing stage programmatic interventions, curricular reforms, and pedagogical practices that cultivate social justice leadership practice.

Note: Numerous quadrilateral notions exist, grounded in Tribal traditions, exist in the literature. For examples, see Tunison (2013). Most all include four elements that focus on community, land, knowledge, and learning.

*Appendix B. Principals and Students of US Public Schools by Race/Ethnicity*

| | School Years | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Category** | **1999-2000** | **2001-2002** | **2003-2004** | **2005-2006** | **2007-2008** | **2009-2010** | **2011-2012** | **2013-2014** | **2015-2016** | **2017-2018** | **2018-2019** |
| **Principals** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N N (in thousands) | 83.79% | - | - | - | - | - | 89.79% | - | 90.21% | 90.66% | |
| % White | 82.3% | - | - | - | - | - | 80.3% | - | 78.0% | 77.9% | |
| % Black | 11.0% | - | - | - | - | - | 10.1% | - | 10.6% | 10.6% | |
| % Hispanic | 5.2% | - | - | - | - | - | 6.8% | - | 8.2% | 8,9% | |
| % Asian/Pacific Islander | 0.8% | - | - | - | - | - | 0.9% | - | 1.4% | 0.9% | |
| % American Indian/ Alaska Native | 0.8% | - | - | - | - | - | 0.7% | - | 0.7% | 0.7% | |
| % Two or more races | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1.1% | - | 1.1% | 1.0% | |
| **Students** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N (in | 46.85% | 47.67% | 48.54% | 49.11% | 49.29% | 49.36% | 49.52% | 50.04% | 50.43% | 50.68% | 50.69% |
| % White | 62.0% | 60.3% | 58.6% | 57.0% | 55.7% | 54.1% | 51.7% | 50.3% | 48.9% | 47.5% | 47.0% |
| % Black | 17.2% | 17.2% | 17.2% | 17.2% | 17.0% | 16.7% | 15.8% | 15.6% | 15.4% | 15.2% | 15.1% |
| % Hispanic | 15.6% | 17.1% | 18.6% | 19.9% | 21.2% | 22.3% | 23.7% | 24.9% | 25.9% | 26.8% | 27.2% |
| % Asian/Pacific Islander | 4.0% | 4.3% | 4.4% | 4.6% | 4.9% | 5.0% | 5.1% | 5.2% | 5.3% | 5.6% | 5.6% |
| % American Indian/ Alaska Native | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% |
| % Two or more races | - | - | - | - | - | 0.7% | 2.6% | 3.0% | 3.4% | 3.9% | 4.1% |

*Note.* Data are retrieved and combined from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Common Core of Data (CCD), "State nonfiscal survey of public elementary/secondary education." For principal data, pacific islander category is combined with Asian category for the following reason: pacific islander data are not available or applicable. '-': Data are not available.

*Appendix C. Principals and Teachers of US Public Schools*
*by Race/Ethnicity*

| Category | School Years | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1999-2000 | 2003-2004 | 2007-2008 | 2011-2012 | 2015-2016 | 2017-2018 |
| **Principals** | | | | | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| N | 83.790% | - | - | 89.790% | 90.210% | 90.660% |
| % White | 82.3% | - | - | 80.3% | 78.0% | 77.9% |
| % Black | 11.0% | - | - | 10.1% | 10.6% | 10.6% |
| % Hispanic | 5.2% | - | - | 6.8% | 8.2% | 8,9% |
| % Asian/Pacific Islander | 0.8% | - | - | 0.9% | 1.4% | 0.9% |
| % American Indian/ Alaska Native | 0.8% | - | - | 0.7% | 0.7% | 0.7% |
| % Two or more races | - | - | - | 1.1% | 1.1% | 1.0% |
| | | | | | | |
| **Students** | | | | | | |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| N (in thousands) | 3.002% | 3.251% | 3.405% | 3.385% | - | 3.545% |
| % White | 84.3% | 83.1% | 83.1% | 81.9% | - | 79.3% |
| % Black | 7.6% | 7.9% | 7.0% | 6.8% | - | 6.7% |
| % Hispanic | 5.6% | 6.2% | 7.1% | 7.8% | - | 9.3% |
| % Asian/Pacific Islander | 1.6% | 1.5% | 1.4% | 1.9% | - | 2.4% |
| % American Indian/ Alaska Native | 0.9% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.5% | - | 0.5% |
| % Two or more races | - | 0.7% | 0.9% | 1.0% | - | 1.8% |

*Note.* Data are retrieved and combined from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Common Core of Data (CCD), "State nonfiscal survey of public elementary/secondary education." For principal data, pacific islander category is combined with Asian category for the following reason: pacific islander data are not available or applicable. '-': Data are not available.