

Full Length Research Paper

Measuring pre-service master's of school administrator's candidates' social capital as a predictor of culturally responsive leadership

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This study measured Pre-Service Masters of School Administrators' candidates' social capital as a predictor of culturally responsive leadership. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between the MSA Pre-service candidates' social capital and their propensity to become culturally responsive leaders. The 23 participants in this study were pre-service Master of School Administration students. A cross-sectional design with the regression analysis procedure is useful in determining the predictor's variables for the influence of multiculturalism and student experiences. Summaries of correlations, means, and standard deviations were reported, along with *F*-ratio, *R*-square, and confidence intervals for resulting predictors. Educational leadership programs need to redefine their roles in terms of how they are preparing twenty-first century leaders for twenty-first century schools. Now, more than ever, there is an increasing phenomenon of poor educational outcomes for students despite the efforts of educational leaders. This study explores the theoretical construct of culturally responsive leadership and social capital as a framework for educational leaders to follow in order to close the opportunity gap for students. More specifically, the study explored the social capital of pre-service Master of School Administrations students and their propensity toward becoming culturally responsive leaders. The study revealed that a correlation could be made between a student's social capital index and their propensity toward becoming culturally responsive leaders.

Key words: Social capital, culturally responsive leadership, social networks.

INTRODUCTION

Proponents of social capital theory have conceptualized this construct as the sum total of social relationships with reciprocal benefits (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Rodrigues and Child, 2012). As Rodrigues and Child (2012) explain, "engagement with networks may accrue benefits, which otherwise would not be available" (p. 25). Although this has been the dominant consensus regarding the overall definition of social capital when it comes to more advanced gradations of social capital, there are variations in understanding how social capital can be developed, its benefits, and how to capitalize upon it. Much of the research on social capital has been

viewed on the macro-level as a collective measurement of values of relationships within countries, regions, states, neighborhoods, and groups (Bullen and Onyx, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). However, there has been limited research on individual social capital. As such, there is value in looking at an individual leader's social capital, particularly a school administrator's social capital as it relates to culturally responsive leadership. This article explores the internal and external factors considered in determining pre-service school administrators' social capital and whether these factors contribute to their propensity toward becoming culturally responsive leaders.

The notion that all relationships, when combined, comprise a relational set that can be measured to serve as an indicator of a school administrator's social capital

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and culturally responsiveness will be explored in this article. These factors will be categorized into two subsets: quality-dimension and quantity-scope, terms coined by the authors. The quantity-scope is defined as the number of social relationships that fall within the parameter of the administrator's relational set as well as, the quality-dimensions of those relationships. The quality-dimensions of those relationships have to do with the level of mutual "self-sharing" between each member as well as, in the words of Rodriguez (2012);

"the quality relationships which constitutes network membership" (p. 25).

A school administrator's social capital is not determined by a single measure, but the compilation of a set of measures of self and self with others. Social capital is the interrelationship between internal and external assets that a person either possesses directly, inherently, or potentially. The external attributes that may become assets pertain to the quantity-scope sets of these relationships. The internal attributes pertain to the quality-dimension that all parties in the relationship possess, such as disposition, intellectual acuity, communication skills, ethics, and sense of humor. Certain internal attributes can be antithetical to a school administrator's social capital such as negative temperament, intolerance, limited worldview, and antisocial personality. These internal attributes may negatively impact the quality dimension of the existing relationships and the potential for the creation of additional relationships with others. Bourdieu (1986) explains,

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (p. 248)

Thus, there is value in examining school administrators' social capital as a predictor of their potential for becoming a culturally responsive leader.

Much of what has been written about social capital has focused on macro indicators such as measures of organizational life, engagement, community, volunteerism, informal social ability, social trust, and what people believe about these issues (Acar, 2011; Bullen and Onyx, 1998; Putnam, 2000). However, very little research has explored the nature of a school administrator's social capital, particularly as it relates to culturally responsive leadership (Plagens, 2010). Therefore, this research looks at the internal and external factors of social capital

such as tolerance towards diversity, neighborhood connections, family and friend connections, and values of life, as well as the students' trust and connection among each other within the Master of School Administration program. Moreover, within this construct, attitudes, trust, and personal empowerment are building blocks of social capital.

Noted theorists of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000) support the notion that the more people are connected to each other in a positive way, the more trusting they become of each other. Thus, an argument can be made that the more people are connected to one another in socially trusting ways, the more likely they will be accepting of each other's differences. The authors highlight the construct of "quantity scope" and "quality dimensions" in speaking to the importance of connections among people (quantity scope) and the how they are connected in a positive way (quality dimension).

Marginalized schools need social capital improvement. School administrators must be able to create educational opportunities through positive social capital for their students that supports and sustains academic achievement. As Noguera explains,

. . . urban public schools can operate as a source of either "negative" or "positive" social capital (Waquant 1998; Gariulo and Beassi 1997; Bourdieu and Waquant, 1992). Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of social capital (1986), which he defines as "the sum total of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual (or a group) by virtue of being enmeshed in a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (1986: 248), it is possible to conceive of schools as public institutions and social resources which have the potential of generating and developing social capital for a community. The forms of social capital produced at urban schools can either be negative—because they serve to maintain and reproduce the marginality of inner-city residents—or positive—because they provide the forms of cultural capital valued in the broader society and economy and support the formation of social networks that promote the interests of inner-city residents. (para. 16)

Gladwell (2008) posits that to close the educational gap, educators must look toward closing the opportunity gap for students. Social capital, through the establishment of social networks, inherently provides opportunities for one who has accumulated this capital. Of course, the inherent opportunities are in direct proportion to how much social capital one has accrued and able to retrieve at any given moment. Like most forms of capital, the more social capital one has, the more one has an advantage over

those who lack the particular resources. For school administrators, this requires them to not only assess their social capital, but how they can lend their social capital to those marginalized students within their school. Furthermore, it will require school administrators to explore how they can use their social capital to create and sustain trusting alliances with community members to create educational opportunities for marginalized students that may not exist in their schools.

Moreover, this requires that school administrators look at the human variables that lend themselves to creating and sustaining trusting relationships within the school environment to improve social capital. In order for administrator to truly assess the human variables that lend themselves to creating and sustaining trusting relationships, they must first evaluate their own social capital. This will require school administrators to assess their social capital through the prism of the following two domains, which have been developed by the authors for this article: (a) the Principle of Mutual Exchange and Ethical Retributive Responsibility (PME/ERP), and (b) the Principle of Depository Domain (PDD).

The Principle of Mutual Exchange and Ethical Retributive Responsibility asserts that if you operate on the assumption that someone's actual asset is presumed to be your retrievable asset through mutual benevolence, then it is becoming on all parties to provide actual assets to another who may need retrievable assets. That is, your assets (the benefits of social capital) are dependent on how readily available these assets are as well as how others' assets (those within your social capital network) are available to you. The central tenet of the Principle of Mutual Benevolence and Ethical Retributive Responsibility requires disclosure and communication of access to retrievable assets. Each party should be able to presume that certain capital "third-party-own," meaning, "you are a secondary owner of my resources, particularly when I am not in need of them." In other words, if one party has a "rainy day" fund, at some point in the relationship that rainy day fund should be mentioned.

The Principle of Depository Domains asks the question, "How do I increase and maintain my social capital?" It further explores the notion of how one can make potential relationships assets. For example, a school administrator may ask, "What part of the school curriculum accumulates and utilizes the assets of the students in your school?" It answers the fundamental question, "When you do not utilize the actual level of social capital in students, do you give them an opportunity to take their assets to the next level?"

The fundamental tenet of the Principle of Depository Domains is how we can convert potential assets into actual assets. For example, a school administrator would evaluate the curriculum to determine the part of the curriculum that accumulates and utilizes the assets of the students in their school. When you do not utilize the actual level of social capital in students, do you give them

opportunity to take their assets to the next level? This type of evaluation of experiences challenges and exposes deficiencies in one's own social capital.

Connection between social capital and culturally responsive leadership

Taliaferro (2011) outlines culturally responsive leadership (CRL) based on Gay's (2000) principles of culturally responsive teaching. According to Taliaferro, culturally responsive leadership encompasses seven core beliefs: (a) leaders lead with a sense of self, (b) leadership is validating, (c) leadership is comprehensive, (d) leadership is multidimensional, (e) leadership is empowering, (f) leadership is transformative, and (g) leadership is emancipatory. Culturally responsive leaders lead with an understanding of themselves. They understand the biases they may harbor and how they make decisions. These leaders are constant in their self-reflections and how their decisions impact others. Culturally responsive leaders are validating in their actions toward students, faculty, and school community members' educational histories and their cultural heritages. These leaders are purposeful in their actions toward creating a school environment where divergent perspectives and experiences are not only accepted, but celebrated. These leaders understand, in the words of Wilbur (2011), "guidance for constructing an equity culture must enable human agency and honor decision making of all members of the culture" (p. 1).

The belief that multiculturalism improves the community is a key indicator of culturally responsive leadership. Culturally responsive leaders value diversity. They seek to embrace and celebrate diversity in meaningful ways. Villegas and Lucas (2002) explain that educators who are culturally responsive:

- i. Involve students and in examining issues of power and stratification
- ii. Cultivate a sense of responsibility for dealing with inequalities in society
- iii. Promote the integration of diverse perspectives into analyses and interpretations
- iv. Encourage a willingness to examine one's own assumptions
- v. Foster respect for differences and a willingness to learn from the diversity of others. (p. 163)

Culturally responsive leaders seek to create not only physically, but conceptually safe environments where, in the words of Villegas and Lucas (2002), "issues of diversity are central to the intellectual life of the institution" (p. 163). Conceptual safe environments are environments where the teachers and staff members have honest and hard conversations about students, parents, and the school community, as well as challenge

the beliefs that continue to marginalize students without fear of retribution. In conceptual safe environments, as Pierce (2004) explains, “students can learn to take risks, develop strong bonds with friends and adults.”

In theory, the more one is accepting of others who are different from themselves, the more likely they are to be more “sensitized” to who they are and their unique experiences (Putnam, 2000). Culturally responsive leaders are those, as previously stated, who are accepting of others from diverse cultural contexts. This is why it is important for school leaders to be culturally responsive in their practice. Culturally responsive leaders are able to create and sustain culturally responsive environments that are supportive of diverse students and their families.

Moreover, culturally responsive leaders are developed through systematic and purposeful multi-varied personal experiences with those from diverse backgrounds. As Putnam (2000) elaborates, “social joiners and civic activists are as a rule more tolerant of dissent and unconventional behavior than social isolates” (p. 356). If we extrapolate this concept and apply it to the framework of developing leaders and school environments that are amenable to diverse cultural contexts, one can posit that the more one social networks-creating positive connections with others-the more likely one will be accepting of those who are different from themselves.

Acar (2011) contends that the “central idea of social capital is that social networks have value” (p. 458). He emphasizes the “benefits of social networks, such as information, trust and reciprocity” (p. 458). The author posits that “the collective values of these networks help individuals resolve issues more easily and collectively” (p. 458). Ainsworth (as cited in Tennett et al., 2006) further explains,

Children who grow up in communities possessing high levels of social capital are more likely to be exposed to helpful social networks or adults who provide positive resources, information and opportunities that may be educationally beneficial. Alternatively, children living in areas characterized by low levels of social capital can be disadvantaged by smaller social networks or networks that are less beneficial than those in more advantaged areas as a result of the social position of parents, friends and siblings. Further, children in impoverished neighborhoods are disadvantaged because social interactions among neighbors tend to be confined to those whose skills and lifestyles are not conducive to promoting positive outcomes relative to those in more stable neighborhoods. (p. 3)

According to Putnam (2000), “the positive link between connectedness and tolerance is especially strong with respect to gender and race: the more people are involved with community organizations, the more open they are to

gender equality and racial integration” (p. 355). If educational leaders want to create school environments that are culturally responsive, they must work toward providing many opportunities for the students, as well as the staff, to interact among themselves and with others. Social capital theory provides a “conceptual” road map for school administrators to follow in order to create culturally responsive environments and positive schooling outcomes for those within their school community. Positive schooling environments are those in which all students can reach their fullest potential. These environments, in the words of M. Pierce (personal communication, July 1, 2004), “are places that help students to dream, invent, discover, create and experiment.”

Much of the data suggests that the implementation of social capital theory is incongruent with today’s school culture. Brown (2008) argues that even though school leaders have the necessary skill set to improve schooling outcomes for students, there has been limited overall educational gains as students’ achievement levels have remain unchanged (that is, there is a disproportionate number of United States public school students who are unable to perform at a functional level of reading). According to the Kids Count Data Book (2011), “68% of fourth-grade public school students in the United States scored below proficient reading levels” (p. 44); of this percentage, over 80% are Black or Hispanic. Therefore, it is imperative that school leaders establish a culture of belonging and success through the constructs of social capital and culturally responsive leadership.

Impact of social capital on culturally responsive leadership

Conversely, Putnam (2000) stated that it is parents’ social capital, rather than their financial capital, that is more important to their children’s success in school. Social capital, as defined in this study, is based on trust, dense social networks, and the value these networks have in terms of producing positive outcomes for students. One of the fundamental tenets of social capital is trust. In order to create a culturally responsive environment, students, staff members, and the school community must trust each other. Furthermore, social capital theorists posit that social networks have value and that those who possess more of this capital often are more successful in school. Ainsworth (as cited in Tennett et al., 2006) reports the following:

neighborhood characteristics, such as the amount and quality of social capital, not only predicted educational outcomes, their impact outweighed that of more commonly cited family-school related factors such as residential stability, economic disadvantage and racial/ethnic heterogeneity. (p. 3).

As the school principal, all aspects of the schooling and educational process are under the aegis of the school leader. To change the trajectory of public school leadership, educational leadership professors must work diligently in terms of preparing pre-service master of school administration candidates as culturally responsive leaders. For this to happen, education leadership professors should provide a multitude of enhancement experiences for students that are transcultural. That is, these experiences should allow for pre-service master of school administration students to be able to analyze their own culture and find value and pursue other cultures, as well as understand how other cultures impact their culture. In other words, students should have many opportunities throughout their educational leadership preparatory programs for cross-cultural engagement experiences. This is why it is essential that educational leadership programs work toward producing culturally responsive leaders who are able to transform their school environments through social capital. Noguera (1999) illuminates the importance of social capital in transforming schools,

Coleman applies the concept of closure to his analysis of social capital to argue that norms and sanctions on behavior, which support group goals and aspirations, only develop when “the trustworthiness of social structures allows for the proliferation of obligations and expectations” (1988:107). Particularly, in relationships that exist between parents and schools, Coleman argues that student performance is enhanced by the degree of closure in parent-school relationships (1988:118). (Noguera, 1999, p. 12)

In light of these facts, the premise of this study is that the higher index of social capital an educational leader has, the more likely he or she will become a culturally responsive leader. In other words, do higher indexes of social capital predict a school leader’s propensity toward becoming a culturally responsive leader?

Theoretical framework

The social capital theory perspective as it relates to schooling posits that dense social networks have value, meaning, and create accumulative opportunities for members of the school community. The accumulative opportunities, or ‘accumulative advantages,’ a term coined by Gladwell (2008) provides an inherent advantage for those who are beneficiaries of it as opposed to those who have not had many opportunities, which results in a lack of advantages. Gladwell explains,

Success is the result of what sociologists like to call “accumulative advantage” . . . that little

difference leads to an opportunity that makes that difference a bit bigger, and that edge in turn leads to another opportunity, which makes the initially small difference bigger still. (pp. 30 to 31)

Unfortunately, for most poor and minority students, the lack of opportunities within the realm of their educational experiences tends to limit their academic achievement potential (Anyon, 1980; Hooks, 1994; Nieto, 1992).

Conversely, the culturally responsive leadership perspective posits that school leaders should be uniquely sensitized to the diverse experiences of the students, staff, and community in which they lead. Culturally responsive leaders understand, in the words of Reeves (2000), that “diversity not only includes differences among students, but also the differences that exist among schools, curricula, programs, cultures, and learning styles” (p. 94). This sensitivity as it relates to diversity enables a culturally responsive leader to have a deeper understanding and awareness of the educational histories and cultural heritages of the students for whom they are responsible. Culturally responsive leaders are better able to relate to the members of the school community in a more authentic way because they understand how the histories and heritages influence the way in which students perceive themselves in the school environment.

The theoretical framework for this study draws on social capital theory and culturally responsive leadership theory, which primarily focuses on Master of School Administration pre-service candidates’ propensity to become culturally responsive leaders. One of the elements revealed through social capital theory is that the more one is exposed to diverse cultural contexts, the more one is accepting of multiculturalism (Putnam, 2000). Therefore, the study seeks to determine if this same hypothesis can be applied to Master of School Administration pre-service candidates. That is, is there a way to predict the degree to which MSA pre-service candidates’ social capital predicts their propensity toward becoming culturally responsive leaders?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study comprised 23 Master of School Administration students. The students comprised various ages and teaching experiences. The students’ demographics consisted of 16 female and 7 male students with a mean age of 40 years (age range 26 to 54). The mean teaching experience of the students who participated in this study was 12 years (teaching experience range 0 to 31 years).

The sample was representative of the graduate student population in the Master of School Administration program. Participants were drawn from one internship seminar class in educational administration, and two educational administration core curriculum classes. At the time of the study, class sizes varied from 9 to twenty-five students.

Table 1. Summary of correlations, means, and standard deviations for local community, classmates as friends, initiative, help classmate, lunch/dinner, and trust classmates as a function of social capital.

| Internal factors | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|
| MSA community | - | | | | | | |
| Local community | 0.24 | - | | | | | |
| Classmates as friends | 0.77* | 0.21 | - | | | | |
| Initiative | -0.15 | 0.09 | -0.18 | - | | | |
| Help classmate | 0.03 | -0.11 | 0.29 | 0.03 | - | | |
| Lunch/dinner | -0.04 | 0.07 | 0.27 | -0.49* | 0.12 | - | |
| Trust classmates | 0.58* | -0.14 | 0.52* | 0.09 | -0.07 | -0.12 | - |
| <i>M</i> | 3.26 | 2.87 | 3.04 | 3.43 | 3.26 | 1.78 | 3.13 |
| <i>SD</i> | 0.75 | 0.97 | 0.93 | 0.66 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.55 |

N = 23 for correlations, means, and standard deviations. Higher values are indicative of more extreme responses in the direction of the construct assessed. **p* < 0.01. MSA, master school administration.

Table 2. Predictors of master school administration (MSA) Community.

| Variable | Model B | 95% CI |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------|
| Constant | 1.83 | [-0.38,4.04] |
| Local community | 0.11 | [-0.14,0.36] |
| Classmates as friends | 0.58* | [0.23,0.93] |
| Initiative | -0.22 | [-0.60, 0.16] |
| Help classmate | -0.09 | [-0.34, 0.16] |
| Lunch/dinner | -0.24 | [-0.51,0.02] |
| Trust classmates | 0.27 | [-0.27, 0.81] |
| <i>R</i> ² | .73 | |
| <i>F</i> | 7.19 | |

N = 23; CI, confidence interval; **p* < .01.

Procedure

The research participants were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their social capital. The principal investigator, in a group setting with the students, administered the questionnaire. To ensure the participants' privacy, students were instructed not to put any identifying information on the questionnaire. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to place their surveys in an envelope such that the investigator would not be able to identify the individual responses of a given participant.

Measures

The questionnaire was adapted from Bullen and Onyx's (1998) survey of measuring social capital in five communities in New South Wales. The instrument was designed to measure the students' quantity-scope (external factors) and quality-scope (internal factors) of social capital. Furthermore, the instrument was designed to determine how these factors contribute to the students' principles of mutual exchange and ethical retributive responsibility and the principle of depository domain. Several Likert scales were used to measure 38 items on a social capital questionnaire including: 1 =

Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = Always for 20 items; the next measure of 14 social change questions 1 = No, Not at all, 2 = Very Little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Yes, definitely; also, two measures with scale 1 = None, 2 = Few (1-3), 3 = Some (4-6), 4 = Many (7 or more); and followed by two more measures 1 = No, not at all, 2 = Very little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Yes, to a great extent.

RESULTS

A cross-sectional design with the regression analysis procedure is useful in determining predictor variables for the influence of multiculturalism and student experiences. Summaries of correlations, means, and standard deviations were reported, along with *F*-ratio, *R*², and confidence intervals for resulting predictors.

A regression analysis was conducted to determine the best linear combination for predictor variables, including the following: feeling part of the local community, classmates as friends, initiative at school, helping classmates, lunch/dinner, and trust classmates. The correlations, means, and standard deviations are shown in Table 1. This combination of variables predicted students feeling part of a community in the MSA program ($F(6, 16) = 7.19$, $p < 0.01$), with one variable significantly contributing to the prediction. The unstandardized coefficients (Model B), presented in Table 2, suggest classmates as friends contribute most to predicting student feeling part of a community in the MSA program, while feeling part of the local community, initiative at school, helping classmates, lunch/dinner, and trust classmates provide minimal contribution to this prediction. The *R*² value was 0.73. This indicates 73% of the variance in students feeling they are part of community in the MSA program was explained by the model. According to Cohen (1988), this is a large effect.

Key to the findings illustrated in Table 1 is that the MSA pre-service students feel that they are a part of the school

Table 3. Summary of correlations, means, and standard deviations for multiculturalism, accept stranger, and different lifestyles as function of social capital.

| External factors | Multiculturalism | Accept stranger | Different lifestyles |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Multiculturalism | - | | |
| Accept stranger | 0.10 | - | |
| Different lifestyles | 0.69 | 0.12 | - |
| <i>M</i> | 3.43 | 3.00 | 3.26 |
| <i>SD</i> | 0.79 | 0.60 | 0.62 |

N = 23 for Correlations, means and standard deviations. Higher values are indicative of more extreme responses in the direction of the construct assessed. * $p < .01$.

Table 4. Predictors of multiculturalism.

| Variable | Model B | 95% CI |
|----------------------|---------|---------------|
| Constant | 0.54 | [-1.30, 2.38] |
| Accept stranger | 0.02 | [-0.43, 0.46] |
| Different lifestyles | 0.88* | [0.44, 1.31] |
| R^2 | 0.48 | |
| <i>F</i> | 9.03 | |

N = 23; CI, confidence interval; * $p < .01$.

community. The students view each other as friends, and are willing to help their classmates without being asked. The most significant finding is that the MSA students trust one another. Trust is one of the central tenets of social capital. Conversely, the MSA students have a high social capital index within the program. Most students considered their classmates as friends. According to the findings, the master of school administration students' internal factors, as defined in the article, contributed significantly to the quantity-scope and the quality-dimension of their relationships with each other.

A regression (simultaneous) analysis was conducted to determine the best linear combination for predictor variables multiculturalism, different lifestyles, and accept stranger. The correlations, means, and standard deviations are in Table 3. This combination of variables predicted the feeling that multiculturalism makes life

The unstandardized coefficients (Model B), presented in Table 4, suggest people of different lifestyles contributing most to predicting the feeling that multiculturalism makes life better in the community, while accepting a stranger provide minimal contribution to this prediction. The R^2 value was 0.42. This indicates 42% of the variance in multiculturalism makes life better was explained by the model. According to Cohen (1988), this is a large effect.

Table 3 illustrates the most direct link to culturally responsive leadership and social capital. Putnam (2000) posited that the higher your social capital index is, that is, your social networks, the more likely you will be more tolerant of those who are not like you. For the purpose of this research, tolerance toward diversity is labeled as an

external factor. This table emphasizes this construct in that it reveals that a large populous of the MSA students believe that multiculturalism, tolerance of diversity, makes life better. These same students also had high levels of social capital and networks of support within the MSA program, which furthers the theory that people with high social capital index, tend to be more accepting of diversity.

DISCUSSION

While it may be difficult to generalize the findings due to a small sample size and purposeful sampling, it may be reasonable to assert applicability from preservice school administrators to in-service administrators in terms of what the data yielded regarding the relationship between high levels of social capital and one's propensity toward becoming a culturally responsive leader. In addition, the data yielded from the study provide insight to the relationship between social capital and culturally responsive leadership; more specifically, the relationship between the quantity-scope and quality-dimension of the students' social capital. The study confirmed that a prediction can be made between the MSA students' social capital and their propensity to become culturally responsive leaders. The evidence helps one to understand the significance of social capital in developing culturally responsive leaders. Social capital theory posits, as defined in this study, that the more social networks and trusting relationships one has, the more likely one is to be accepting of multiculturalism. Overall, the students in the MSA program had high social capital indexes. The data revealed a high correlation between the MSA students trusting their classmates and their views towards multiculturalism. The data revealed that the students viewed their colleagues as friends, which contributed mostly to their overall feeling of being part of a community. According to the data, the students in the Master of School Administration program believed that the program contributed significantly to their social capital. The social capital that the students gained while in the program will serve them well as culturally responsive leaders.

In relation to multiculturalism, the MSA students believe

that diversity in a community only serves to make it better. Affirming diversity is an essential component of becoming a cultural responsive leader. The study highlights the need for more culturally responsive discourse and experiences within educational leadership programs. Educational leadership professors must broach their curriculum in terms of providing many opportunities for students to enhancement experiences for their students outside of the classroom.

However, the data revealed that MSA students could work toward developing the quality-dimensions of their relationships to a deeper level. The MSA students responded that many of them do not meet with their classmates for lunch and dinner. Meeting with classmates off campus in alternate settings would provide the students an opportunity to deepen their awareness of each other's mutual "self-sharing" attributes, thereby strengthening their social capital. Although a low correlation was revealed through the study in terms of MSA students meeting with classmates for lunch and dinner, this did not seem to impact their trust levels among each other.

The significance of the study as it relates to the broader context of education is that it would not only help administrators, but educators could gain an understanding of social capital theory and its relationship to culturally responsive capacity building. Moreover, this study provides educators with the knowledge of the importance of building new relationships to increase the quantity-scope and quality-dimensions of their social capital in their buildings, not only for themselves, but for their students as well. The study highlights the importance for educators to build relationships across cultures within the school building and educational systems to create positive educational outcomes for students.

Limitations of the study

The findings indicate several areas that need further investigation. First, a future study that would allow for the candidates to respond to the results of the social capital index in terms of students' perspective on what they view as high and low social capital in schools. Secondly, a future study that addresses the role of ethnicity and the impact of one's development of social capital would be a great area of focus. The study could determine if the mere indication of ethnicity is as important to social capital development as the role of one's own consciousness of his or her ethnicity in relationship to others, particularly as the consciousness of one's ethnicity may or may not impact building relationships that are part of social capital development. In other words, how would the quantity-scope and quality-dimensions of the multicultural experiences of a candidate be a variable to be considered outside one's race alone in terms of becoming a culturally responsive leader? In short, race

and ethnicity alone are not sole indicators of a candidate's potential to become a culturally responsive leader without the variable of race and ethnicity being paired with other variables that would provide insight into the dynamics of relationship building as a part of a social capital assessment. Another limitation to the study is that there are limited studies that address the focus of this research, thereby limiting the degree to which this study could be compared to previous studies. Lastly, although a significant predictor of social capital and multiculturalism emerged from this study; further analysis is needed in terms of predicting additional variables that impact social capital such as measuring the students' social capital upon entering and exiting the MSA program.

Conclusion

Culturally responsive leaders are validating in their responses to the school community members. They respect and understand the cultural heritages and educational histories of the students, staff, and school community in which they lead. Culturally responsive leaders create an environment that is uniquely sensitized to the needs of the students. Teachers are liberated through their freedom to be innovative, creative, and bold in how they design their lessons and deliver instruction. Students are liberated because they feel safe in an environment that is not only physically safe, but conceptually safe in that they can take risks and make mistakes without fear of retribution.

However, to create culturally responsive leaders, educational leadership programs should focus on providing their students with experiences that broaden their awareness of diverse cultural contexts, as well as expanding their social capital. Prospective educational leaders should be culturally responsive and learn how to leverage their social capital into opportunities for their students.

Moreover, it is important for culturally responsive leaders to assess their social capital through the Principle of Mutual Exchange and Ethical Retributive Responsibility and the Principle of Depository Domain. This is essential for school leaders to be able to discern their own social capital, and whether or not they would be able to tap into their social capital when needed. As Putnam (2000) states, social capital is the sociological superglue that keeps communities together. If culturally responsive leaders can create culturally responsive environments that allow for the building and sustaining of not only their social capital but the social capital of the students whom they lead, this could become the foundation for creating positive achievement outcomes for students.

Educational leaders should not continue to use the predictable indicators (students' test scores, social economic status) as indicators of success, as well as the basis for improvement. Educational leaders should look

beyond test scores to the more nebulous elements of schooling that are often overlooked or not adequately addressed in schools—such as diversity across programs—as it pertains to the diversity of students as well as challenging negative assumptions about a student’s potential.

As educational leaders, we cannot change the students’ and parents’ cultural and educational backgrounds; however, we can change how we are preparing ourselves to lead their schools. We can change our approach to how we interact within the school environment. As educational leadership professors, we can work toward raising the socio-cultural consciousness and awareness of the candidates who will one day be school principals. Lastly, we can decide to generate the investments needed in social capital in order to transform schools through culturally responsive leadership.

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