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The Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology of Social and Racial Justice Educators: An Untapped Resource to Address the Unequal Educational Outcomes for Students of Color and Other Non-dominant Communities

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THE ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND AXIOLOGY OF SOCIAL AND RACIAL
JUSTICE EDUCATORS: AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE TO ADDRESS THE
UNEQUAL EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR AND
OTHER NON-DOMINANT COMMUNITIES

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Educational Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctorate of Education

by

Adriana E. Rangel

August 2019

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The Designated Dissertation Committee Approves the Dissertation Titled

THE ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND AXIOLOGY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
FACULTY OF COLOR: AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE TO ADDRESS THE
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Adriana E. Rangel

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Abstract

THE ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND AXIOLOGY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE FACULTY OF COLOR: AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE TO ADDRESS THE UNEQUAL EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR AND OTHER NON-DOMINANT COMMUNITIES

By Adriana E. Rangel

Despite repeated efforts towards educational reform, white students continue to experience higher educational attainment levels than historically underserved students. While the responsibility to change these outcomes has been vastly placed on the educational system, these disenfranchised populations have largely carried the blame for not improving their educational achievement. Thus, Students of Color have been portrayed as not possessing the drive nor interest to increase their educational attainment rates. Research notes many educators working with Communities of Color often lack the necessary critical consciousness around issues of race, privilege, power and oppression. These are warranted to adequately understand and support opportunities for marginalized populations. This research study employed a qualitative approach and multidisciplinary lenses to examine *testimonios* of five Faculty of Color committed to social justice. The premise of this study is to explore: 1) the ontological, epistemological, and axiological principles that shape how Faculty of Color approach their work; 2) the strategies used in professional training and credentialing programs where they teach; and 3) ways they navigate racial dynamics within academic institutions. This research study proposes an ontogeny model for social justice educators, and pronounces how critical this ontogeny is to reach social and racial equity at any level of formal education.

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I dedicate this research to all the students that inspired it; students who struggle every day in a system that needs to catch up to their needs, students like my brother, Sandro, whose potential is still hidden. For all the late bloomers and *por los que no*.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
Chapter One – Background of the Study	1
Setting the Context	1
Unequal educational outcomes.....	2
The responsibility of educators.....	3
Preparing the next generation of educators.....	4
Social justice education programs.....	5
Statement of the Problem.....	7
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Questions.....	9
Significance of the Study.....	9
Definition of Terms & Phrases.....	10
Delimitations.....	12
Summary.....	13
Organization of the Study.....	13
Chapter Two – Literature Review	15
Contributing Factors	16
Critical Race Theory.....	16
Latina/Latino Critical Race Theory.....	17
Multiculturalism	19
Critical pedagogies	24
Pedagogy of the oppressed.....	24
Cultural responsive pedagogy.....	24
Culturally relevant pedagogy.....	25
Culturally sustaining pedagogy	27
Pedagogy of care.....	28
Critical hope	28
Culturally relevant care	29
Nepantlera pedagogy.....	30
Reality pedagogy	30
<i>Sentipensante</i>	31
Fieldwork.....	32
Reflections and counterstories.....	35
Summary of Contributing Factors.....	39
Deterring Factors.....	41
The false dichotomy of the social justice definition	41
Epistemology of the oppressor.....	44
The role of whiteness and white privilege	46

Hegemonic constructions.....	47
Meritocracy.....	47
Deficit thinking.....	48
Tools of whiteness.....	50
Lack of critical faculty.....	51
Superficial treatment of racism.....	52
Lack of diversity in teaching force.....	53
Silence and isolation.....	55
Summary of Deterring Factors.....	57
Changing the Status Quo.....	60
Chapter Three – Methodology	62
Participants	62
Site	66
Protocol & Data Collection.....	66
Limitations of the Study	67
Positionality and Biases	68
Validity.....	69
Rational for Qualitative Approach	70
<i>Testimonio</i>	70
Anzaldúa’s Mestiza Consciousness and the Path of <i>Conocimiento</i>	72
Critical race-grounded methodology	73
Indigenous methodologies	74
Chicana feminist epistemology	77
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs	79
The Social Justice Pyramid	79
<i>Dichos</i> (sayings)	82
Summary of Chapter Three.....	82
Chapter Four – Findings	86
Findings for Question 1	
Ontology of social justice educators.....	86
<i>El sacrificio</i> (community sacrifice).....	87
<i>Dale la mano a tu hermano</i> (relational commitment)	90
Epistemology of social justice educators	91
<i>El arrebatado</i> (the epiphany).....	92
<i>Calladito te ves más bonito</i> (“you look prettier when silent”).....	96
<i>No todo lo que brilla es oro</i> (“all that shines is not gold”).....	101
Axiology of social justice educators	103
<i>Por los que no</i> (for those who can’t).....	103
<i>Haz bien sin mirar a quién</i> (“for the common good”).....	106
Summary of Findings for Question # 1.....	107
Findings for Question # 2 – Strategies by social justice Faculty of Color	111
Knowing your Audience	111

Developing Critical Lenses 101	116
Concrete data	116
Reflections and counterstories	120
Addressing white privilege	122
Developing relationality with communities	130
Developing ideological and political clarity	133
Summary of Findings for Question #2	135
Findings for Question # 3 – Navigating Whiteness in Academia.....	139
Colleagues	140
Lack of criticality	140
Silence	142
Racial battle fatigue	146
Tenure	149
Summary of Question # 3 – Navigating Whiteness in Academia	152
Summary of Findings	154
Chapter Five – Conclusions and Recommendations	159
Overview	159
Contributions and Main Findings of the Study	160
The Uniqueness and Strength of Racial Justice Faculty of Color Ontogeny.....	161
The ontology gap	162
The epistemological gap	164
The axiological gap	165
Implications of the Study	166
Universities	166
Schools of Education	169
K-12 Schools	170
Future Research	171
<i>Y yo despierta</i> (Awoken)	171
References.....	174
Appendix A: Protocol for Data Collection	182

List of Tables

Table 1.	Study Participants.....	65
Table 2.	Institutional Racial Demographics.....	66

List of Figures

Figure 1. Fieldwork Quadrants.....	33
Figure 2. Rubric for Social Justice Proficiency.....	63
Figure 3. The Social Justice Pyramid.....	80

Chapter One

Background of the Study

It is important to contextualize critical data and scholarship to situate how this study is warranted in the field of education, higher education, teacher training, to further our understanding of marginalized Faculty of Color within academic spaces. As such, this first chapter initiates the discussion by presenting critical data and thematic elements to set the context for this work. Following the thematic needs for this study, the purpose, significance, and organization of this manuscript concludes this chapter.

It is equally important to note, for purposes of this study the terms Students of Color, People of Color, Communities of Color, and Faculty of Color are capitalized to challenge and reject the majoritarian grammatical norm (Anzaldúa, 1987). Further, for purposes of this dissertation manuscript, these terms define individuals and communities of Latina/o-Chicana/o, Native American, African American, and Asian Pacific Islander populations. The use of capitalization pronounce the importance of these populations as this study attempts to centralize and strengthen scholarly priority on the experiences of historically marginalized communities.

Setting the Context

The premise of chapter one is to contextualize the need for this study. To support this discussion, the following themes help support an understanding for this work: (a) unequal educational outcomes; (b) the responsibility of educators; (c) preparing the next generation of educators; and (d) social justice education programs. By discussing this themes and data points, this will situate how critical this research is not only to support

critical teacher education programs centered in social justice, but to also share voice and perspectives by Faculty of Color teaching new social justice teachers.

Unequal educational outcomes. The educational outcomes among non-dominant communities are consistent with those of Students of Color and other underserved students like English Language Learners (ELLs), immigrants, differently-abled and LGBTQ youth. These historically marginalized groups have lagged behind the academic outcomes than their white counterparts (Luna & Tijerina-Revilla, 2012; Yosso, 2006; Zarate & Burciaga, 2010). According to the US. Department of Education (NCES 2017), almost 40% of the student population age 5-17, is comprised by Students of Color with 14% Black students and 25 percent Latino students. In California, Students of Color already comprise more than 60% and in other districts Students of Color represent the majority (90%) of the student body. Although graduation rates have increased for all ethnic groups, the graduation rate of Latino students (88%) still lags behind their white counterparts at 95%, while the graduation of Black students is 3% behind white students (NCES 2017). Particularly at the postsecondary level, the US. Department of Education (NCES 2017) indicate that out of 17.3 million students enrolled in 2-4 year institutions, 18% were Latinos, and 14% were Black, compared to 60% of their white counterparts.

In terms of college graduation data, out of almost a million earned certificates (n = 969,353) awarded certificates in 2016, 4% were among white students, while a larger portion (19%) were Latinos, and 19% were Black. From the 1,003,364 that earned Associate Degrees, the majority (61%) were white, 17% were Latino and 14% were Black. Out of the 1,869,814 earned baccalaureate degrees, 68% were among white, 11-

percent were Latino, while a smaller percentage (11%) were Black students. Less than a million students earned their Master's degrees (754,475), of which 68% were white, 9% were Latinos, and 14% were Black. Finally, only 177,580 students earned Doctorate degrees with an overwhelming majority (n = 70%) of them awarded to white, 8% awarded Black and 7% awarded to Latinos (NCES 2017).

The responsibility of educators. Educators hold the immense task of preparing students to participate in a continually evolving global society while simultaneously address the needs of an increasingly changing socioeconomically and ethnically diverse students (Borman, Mueninghoff, Cotner & Bach, 2009). Research has demonstrated that at the K-12 level, Students of Color tend to perform better with teachers of their own ethnicity for several reasons. Teachers of Color become role models, they understand the students lived experiences and they have higher expectations of them (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016). These findings have further complicated the role of teachers given that the racial/ethnic composition of the teaching profession in the U.S. does not resemble the student population (Sleeter, 2001). This is especially pronounced in California where the racial gap between teachers and students representation is further pronounced as 65% of teachers are white while only 24.6% of the total student population is white (Educational Data Partnership, EDP, 2016). At the national level, statistics indicate that the teaching force in the U.S. is comprised of white females (81.9%). By contrast, the number of white students at the national level has severely decreased to 50%. (NCES, 2016).

Within the postsecondary level, faculty and student representation is also inequitable. As of 2015, racial/ethnic and gender faculty representation were as follows: (a) 42% of the

full-time faculty were white males, (b) 35 % were white females; (c) 6% were Asian/Pacific Islander males, while 4% were Asian/Pacific Islander females; (d) Black females and Black males were both 3%; and (e) Latina/os were 2% males and females, respectively. For full-time faculty the gender and racial gap increases as they are 56% white males, 27% white females, 7% were Asian males, and the remainder of the representation were 2% each (Asian females, Black males, Black females and Latino males). However, Latina females hold the least levels of representation with less than 1% in the full-time professoriate (NCES 2017)

Preparing the next generation of educators. As the teacher and student demographics shift, the challenge of preparing the next generation of educators is compounded when less Students of Color are obtaining the opportunity to enter postsecondary education. Further, the number of Student of Color who receive a baccalaureate degree to consider entering formal teaching training are further marginalized for consideration. There is a correlation between the limited success of white teachers working with Students of Color, and the challenge of recruiting Teachers of Color in teacher preparation programs (Ladson-Billings, 2006). On the other hand, there is evidence of the success of white teachers working with Students of Color when teachers embrace a commitment towards social justice that is often put forward by their teacher preparation programs (Picower, 2009). This suggests that the disproportionality of Students of Color tracked away from reaching college can be overturned if the number of Teachers of Color increase, or there is an increase of teachers with a social and racial justice training and mindset.

Social justice education programs. As the diversity of the student population increases in the United States, preparing teachers to meet the diverse needs of all students has been an elusive quest for teacher preparation programs. Social justice teacher preparation programs attempt to develop critical consciousness around issues of race, class, white privilege, power and oppression to allow teaching candidates to understand their students' needs. Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, & McQuillan (2009) argue the intent of teacher education programs for social justice is to provide the social, intellectual, and organizational training that prepare teachers to teach with a social justice lens in K-12 educational settings.

The focus to develop social justice teacher preparation programs started in the 1970's with the efforts of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). In 1976, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) incorporated the preparation of teachers towards diversity as a desirable "disposition" in its standards. Dispositions were defined as:

The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence practices and behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by knowledge bases and beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment (NCATE, 2006, p. 53).

As a desirable disposition, social justice was touted as "just good teaching" and critics discounted it as an educational goal. As a result, social justice was relegated to a desirable but not imperative objective, and it was casted outside of the sphere of knowledge and learning, which makes the concept easier to reject and avoid altogether.

By 2006 the phrase “social justice” was removed based on a controversy created by the false dichotomy between social justice and knowledge/learning (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009). To deal with the controversy, NCATE created a task force on Professional Dispositions to examine issues of social justice in the institutionalized accreditation process (Borko, Liston & Whitcomb, 2007). Opponents to use dispositions argued three concerns: (1) the construct could not be operationalized; (2) dispositions could not be measured reliably because psychometrical evidence of the impact of teacher dispositions in students could not be obtained; and (3) the ideological bias and danger by including dispositions in accreditation standards. These opposing arguments were rooted in two fundamentally different ways to see the problem: one based on measurements and the other based on ethical values. By contrast, supporters of the use of dispositions contended that dispositions in teacher education programs were at the core of what society values in education: the need to prepare teachers that are committed to prepare *all* learners (Borko et al., 2007), which is in fact at the root of social justice education.

Researchers (Cochran, 2009; Leonard, 2012) agree that social justice education training programs requires teachers to the following:

- Have an asset-based view of the cultural linguistic, and experiential backgrounds of students (versus a deficit ideology).
- Possess a cultural consciousness or an understanding that students have different identities and life histories contingent on their race, class, culture and their experiences with societal systems of privilege and oppression.

- Take an inquiry stance that questions their own assumptions as well as others, by posing and researching problems in a generative way, using curricula and existing research.
- Hold an understanding that teaching practice always takes a stand on society's current distribution of resources, and the respect/disrespect of different social groups.

Consequently, social justice goes beyond dispositions as it represents an approach to educating students with an asset view that values the intersectionalities of students' identity. These often questions assumptions including their own positionality as teachers. A Social Justice training also provides students a critical view to learning and knowledge creation, including a stewardship of respect towards their communities to equalize society's current distribution of resources.

Statement of the Problem

Social Justice training programs in education face a difficult position of preparing educators to become critical agents of change ready to address the needs of the whole student. While doing this, they also have the responsibility to narrow the opportunity gap between ethnic groups, and prepare students to become agents of change in society. Research highlight the challenges faced by critical educators when preparing teacher candidates by addressing epistemological and ontological issues of race, privilege, power and oppression, such as:

- Institutionalized racism
- Hegemonic constructions (e.g. meritocracy and deficit ideologies)

- Tools for preserving white privilege (e.g. colorblindness)

There is a correlation between the challenge in preparing teachers to work with a changing demographic in the K-12 classrooms, and the disproportionality of representation within students' ethnic groups. As a result, it is important to understand how social justice programs are developing and supporting educators if we intend to reduce and eliminate what Ladson-Billings (2006) called "the educational debt" owed by the country to ethnic groups that have been excluded from social benefit and opportunities (p. 5). While social justice education programs attempt to change the disproportionality of statistics by preparing educators to change the conditions that lead to inequities in education, it is equally imperative that the leadership within educational institutions possess an understanding of the work and challenges faced by faculty in education programs. In order to support their work in reducing the inequities that have created the achievement and opportunity gaps in education, an ecological understanding of leaders in social justice education programs are especially warranted.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the work of social justice Faculty of Color who prepare K-12 educators (teachers, counselors, administrators). By understanding the challenges and supports Faculty of Color face, this research seeks to discover generative tools for faculty as well as for K-12 leaders to sustain social justice work in public schools. The ultimate goal of this study is to use findings to support K-12 educators working to narrow the opportunity gap of disenfranchised students. Historically non-dominant communities who feel disenfranchised in schools deserve educators that see

them as assets and, prepare them academically to become agents of change and critical members of their local and global world.

Research Questions

This dissertation study is led by three guiding questions:

1. What are the ontological, epistemological and axiological teachings or principles that help shape how social justice Faculty of Color in graduate schools of education approach their work?
2. What strategies or innovative approaches are social justice Faculty of Color in schools of education using to develop and support K-12 social justice educators?
3. How do social justice Faculty of Color in schools of education navigate the racial dynamics in their institutions?

Significance of the Study

This study hold several significant points for faculty in teacher education working for social justice, as well as for educators and educational leaders in the K-12 system looking to support the work of social justice teachers. For faculty in schools of education, this research can provide an opportunity for articulation and alignment between teaching professionals. This research was a self-reflective, empathetic and community-oriented process as part of an emancipatory process. An emancipatory reflection leads towards social change that could be achieved in a way as Anzaldúa (2002) proposes *compartiendo historias* (sharing stories). *Compartiendo historias* is where ideas are shared between reflective individuals, as Anzaldúa names them, *Nepantleros*, in order to forge bonds, and

create a tribalism committed to a struggle with the intentionality of social transformation (Anzaldúa, 2002).

For K-12 educators and educational leaders, this study may provide generative tools to support the work of critical faculty committed to social justice in schools. This study may also serve as a vehicle to change the statistics about minoritized Students of Color. In addition, this research may provide ammunition to respond to a deficit narrative of “poor teaching” that is proliferating through neo-liberal policies presented in schools in the quest to privatize public education in the U.S. (Kohn, 2000). This study also argues for the need to increase accountability measures in schools to help address intellectual needs of the twenty-first century for the U.S. to remain globally competitive (Borman et al., 2009).

An incredibly important component of this study are the voices of participants as they are actually doing the work in teacher training programs. Their voices provide a response to social justice critics, and present an opportunity for self-reflection and reconsideration of a deficit position.

Definition of Key Terms & Phrases

Non-dominant communities, Communities of Color, or minoritized groups are used interchangeably to include students of different races and ethnicities. However, these also include those students relegated to second-class membership such as English Language Learners (ELLs), immigrants, differently-abled, and LGBTQ youth. I employ the term non-dominant communities from Kris Gutierrez (2008) and the UCLA Migrant Student

Leadership Program, which note the power relations between dominant and non-dominant communities.

Social justice in education is defined as the commitment to enhance students' learning opportunities and achievement. Further, social justice in education seeks to support students' life chances by challenging the inequities evidenced in school and society (Cochran-Smith, 2009). This commitment recognizes the inequitable distribution of opportunities, resources, achievement, and positive outcomes between students of non-dominant communities and their white counterparts. In addition, a social justice approach positions teachers as educators committed to reducing the inequities in school and society by redistributing educational opportunities and teaching truth to power (Cochran-Smith, 2009).

Social justice teacher education refers to programs preparing pre-service teachers to teach for social justice in K-12 educational settings. Providing new teachers with social, intellectual, and organizational support to work with Students of Color can yield important results (Cochran-Smith, 2009). It involves knowledge, interpretive frameworks, strategies, methods, and skills necessary to prepare students to critically challenge cultural biases in the curriculum, educational policies and practices, and school norms (Cochran-Smith, 2009).

Critical teacher is one that possesses a critical consciousness, and practices critical pedagogies of freedom, or what Paulo Freire (1970) called *conscientização* - the learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of said realities (Freire, 1970). This study subscribes to the

definition of critical teacher from Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) as one that produces academic success, cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness in students. Academic success translates into intellectual growth as a result of critical classroom instruction and learning opportunities.

Cultural competence refers to the teachers' ability to help students appreciate and celebrate their cultures of origin while gaining knowledge of and fluency in at least one other culture.

Sociopolitical consciousness refers to the ability to take learning beyond the classroom using school knowledge and skills to identify, analyze and solve real-world problems (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Lastly, to reiterate, for purposes of this study the terms Students of Color, People of Color, Communities of Color, Teachers of Color, and Faculty of Color are capitalized to challenge and reject the majoritarian grammatical norm (Anzaldúa, 1987). Further, for purposes of this dissertation manuscript, these terms define individuals and communities of Latina/o-Chicana/o, Native American, African American, and Asian Pacific Islander populations. The use of capitalization pronounce the importance of these populations as this study attempts to centralize and strengthen scholarly priority on the experiences of historically marginalized communities.

Delimitations

This is a study of social justice Faculty of Color preparing teachers to become social justice educators working with students from non-dominant communities. In addition, the decision to select social justice Faculty of Color was made due to the legitimacy issues

experienced by Faculty of Color are different to those of white faculty, regardless of their years of experience (Castaneda, Anguiano & Aleman, 2017). In addition, research points to the improved success of Students of Colors when they have the opportunity to engage with Educators of Color with a social justice orientation (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).

Summary

The unequal educational outcomes experienced by racial/ethnic groups continue to be a challenge in the field of education. Statistics clearly show white students continue to academically outperform students of non-dominant communities, at all levels of education. In addition, research note the difficulty for teacher education programs to develop the necessary critical consciousness of K-12 educators around issues of race, privilege, power, and oppression necessary to understand all student needs. This qualitative study aims to understand the ontological, epistemological, and axiological principles that influenced five Faculty of Color as they negotiate with the driving and restraining forces in their workplaces. Regardless of external forces, the personal reflection enables our understanding of their quest to prepare social justice educators to work with non-dominant populations.

Organization of the Study

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One contextualizes the need for this research study. Chapter Two presents a synthesis of existing literature related to the preparation of educators to develop a critical stance and work towards social justice. Chapter Three details the methodology and procedures employed for data collection and data analyses. This chapter also includes the criteria to select participants, the site of the

interviews, and how the validity of the findings were attained. Lastly, Chapter Three presents the positionality of the researcher and the limitations of the study. Chapter Four highlight findings of the study with discussion of these. Lastly, Chapter Five presents the summary, recommendations, and conclusions.

Chapter Two Literature Review

What factors contribute to the development of a social and racial justice educator?

Research points to several contributing factors, as well as deterring factors, in the shaping of a social and racial justice educator. The following themes have been identified as contributing areas to include in our understanding how a social and racial justice educator can potentially be trained: (a) Critical Theories, (b) Critical Pedagogies, (c) Fieldwork, and (d) Reflections & Counterstories. While these four areas help shape our understanding of the need to develop social justice practitioners, research also shows that a deterring factor in the development of a social and racial justice educator also depends on the ethnicity and the critical consciousness of the educator. As a result, two groups have been identified to help articulate this difference. The first group consists of white and colonized educators, who subscribe to the hegemonic values like meritocracy and colorblindness. The second group is comprised of Educators of Color and/or white teachers who hold critically conscious ideologies.

Teacher education programs are heavily comprised by white, suburban, middle class individuals in their twenties (Ladson-Billings, 2005) who have had little exposure to disenfranchised communities and, whose ideologies are permeated with hegemonic values like meritocracy and colorblindness. These ideologies are not exclusive to white teachers but also to teachers that have adopted a colonized epistemology about education, and Communities of Color. Research points out the factors that challenge faculty to prepare this particular group of educators:

- Dichotomy in the definition of social justice

- Epistemology of the oppressor
- Institutionalized racism
- Hegemonic constructions such as objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equality
- Tools for preserving white privilege like colorblindness and white fragility

The second group of candidates are teachers of color and white teachers who hold a critically-conscious understanding of the struggles among non-dominant students. The challenges that faculty may face when preparing teachers is to have more with their limited number of potential teachers enrolled in the education programs. As such, this may present two key results:

- Lack of critical faculty, superficial treatment of race and racism, and legitimacy
- Lack of diversity in teachers, silence, isolation, and racial battle fatigue.

Contributing Factors

Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was born from legal scholars like Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Jean Stefancic, Mari Matsuda and others. The premise focused on dissecting the role of racism in jurisprudence as it validates and re-centers the experiential knowledge of People of Color and disenfranchised groups. By centralizing race and racism, it centers the ways People of Color transmit this experiential knowledge (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) define racism as the “culturally sanctioned belief which, regardless of intentions involved, defend the advantages whites have because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities” (p. 55). This research refers to racism as the

systemic mechanisms established to protect white privilege, and the idea of neutrality and objectivity in the study about People of Color is false.

CRT provides a theoretical frameworks and methodologies that challenge traditional generalization and patterns which often do not provide a space for the expression of experiences that differ from what is considered the norm (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). As a result, CRT provides a vehicle for naming one's own reality or voice and is widely used by critical race scholars in various methods, such as counterstorytelling, epistolaries, narratives, and *testimonios*. These methods unapologetically focus on documenting experiences from dissenting voices (Bell, 1987; Delgado Bernal, Burciaga & Flores Carmona, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Solorzano & Villalpando, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 200). This body of research acknowledges the reality of People of Color and their way of creating knowledge from their racialized experiences. CRT enables researchers and allows the group from marginalized communities to challenge the dominant ideologies and examine said assumptions and perspectives with a new lens.

Latina/Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit). Solorzano & Delgado Bernal (2001) built on previous CRT research to distinguish how Latina/Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) addresses additional issues not addressed by CRT, such as language, accent, immigration status, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality. LatCrit focuses in the intersectionality of racism, sexism, classism and other forms of oppression (Solorzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Solorzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) delineated

five themes as the basis of query, methods, and pedagogy merging CRT and LatCrit in education:

1. *The centrality of race and racism, and intersectionality with other forms of education.* Racism is endemic but other forms of subordination are equally endemic (p.312).
2. *The challenge to dominant ideology.* CRT and LatCrit challenges the notions of objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity. Critical Race. In addition, LatCrit also challenge deficit frameworks used to explain educational inequality (p. 313).
3. *The commitment to social justice.* CRT and LatCrit aim to provide a transformative response to racial, gender, and class marginalization (p. 313).
4. *The centrality of experiential knowledge.* CRT and LatCrit recognizes that the experiential knowledge of Students of Color are valid in education. As such it includes methods such as storytelling, family histories, biographies, *testimonios*, *cuentos*, *consejos*, and narratives (Bell, 1987; Solorzano & Villalpando, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2000; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2001).
5. *An interdisciplinary perspective.* CRT and LatCrit place race and racism in a historical and contemporary context by using interdisciplinary methods (p. 314).

As a pedagogical tool, CRT and LatCrit have not yet been centralized or widely utilized in teacher education curricula. However, CRT and LatCrit are at the core of teacher preparation programs with a social justice stance.

Multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is part of many teacher preparation programs, as well as part of the counseling preparation curriculum. Some of the most comprehensive work on multiculturalism was conducted on a meta-study on Multicultural Education by Sleeter and Grant (1987). These scholars looked at 89 articles and 38 books with the goal of defining what multicultural education means, its contributions to the field and a critical look at its limitations. They operationalized multicultural education in five themes:

- 1) *Teaching the culturally different.* The main purpose was assimilating Students of Color into affluent cultural mainstream and developing a sense of positive group identity (p. 423).
- 2) *Human approach.* The goal was helping students of different backgrounds to get along and appreciate each other (p. 426).
- 3) *Single-group studies.* These works highlight the experiences, contributions, and concerns of different ethnic, gender, and social class groups (p.428).
- 4) *Multicultural Education approach that promotes pluralism and social equality.* The identified purpose was reforming the school program for all students to reflect its diversity (p. 429).
- 5) *Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist.* The goal was preparing students to challenge social structural inequality and to promote cultural diversity (p. 434).

Sleeter and Grant (1987) had plenty of criticisms regarding the lack of theoretical frameworks to support the myriad goals of multicultural education. Further, the lack of connection between authors' expectations and their recommendations were also critiqued.

They also criticized the fact that practices were limited to curricula and focused on individual teachers, not generalizable expectations to broader audiences. The most promising work that linked goals, theory and praxis, in their opinion, was the multicultural education approach by scholars like Baker, Banks, Gay, Gollnick and Grant (p. 437). Considering these scholars, Sleeter and Grant (1987) presented five clear goals of multicultural education,

“a) Strength and value of cultural diversity, b) Human rights and respect for cultural diversity, c) Alternative life choices for people, d) Social justice and equal opportunity for all people, and e) Equity distribution of power among members of all ethnic groups.”(p. 429).

These goals, though softly aligned with CRT, lacked the commitment to challenge racism and the dominant ideology as CRT does.

Thereafter, however, Banks (1993) published *Multicultural Education: Historical Development, Dimensions and Practice*, in agreement with Sleeter and Grant (1987) about multicultural education being limited to contend integration in practice. Banks (1993) calls for the need to describe, conceptualize, and research the dimensions of multicultural education. Banks (1993) proposed five dimensions of Multicultural Education:

- 1) *Content Integration*. Putting different cultures in the curriculum is the first dimension, but not the core of multicultural education (p. 25).
- 2) *Knowledge Construction*. Allowing students to investigate and analyze their cultural assumptions of knowledge by critically questioning various points of view (p. 25).

- 3) *Equity Pedagogy*. Adapting teaching methods, strategies, and techniques to enable diverse students to achieve (p. 27).
- 4) *Prejudice Reduction*. Each person comes to the classroom with racialized attitudes, prejudices and values that should be explored in order to develop more positive attitudes and values (p. 27).
- 5) *Empowering School Culture and Social Structure*. Consciously taking a look at policies and practices at school level that allow for disproportionality and unequitable distribution of resources (p. 27).

Banks position was more closely aligned with the principles of CRT and LatCrit, particularly with regards to prejudice reduction and the critical look at oppressive policies and practices in schools. The proposed dimensions built on each other and provided an understanding about multiculturalism as the epistemological development of an individual.

The work of Geneva Gay (2000) who wrote *Cultural Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice* defined cultural responsive teaching as using cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. Gay suggests culturally responsive teaching yields higher academic achievement for students when their cultures are included in their learning. Gay's (2000) work based on studies, experience, and stories of educators working with Students of Color outlined five tenets for culturally responsive teaching that should be included in teacher preparation programs:

- 1) *The development of a cultural diversity knowledge base.* This knowledge goes beyond content knowledge and pedagogical skills (p.106).
- 2) *The design of culturally relevant curricula.* This would engage controversy, study a wide group of ethnic individuals, and contextualize multiple perspectives on issues around race, ethnicity and gender. Also requiring teaching cultural analyses of textbooks in pre-service programs as well as preparation in the power of symbolic and societal curricula. This would enable the use of media representation and how to prepare critical consumers of information (p. 108).
- 3) *Demonstration of cultural caring and building a learning community that accepts nothing but success.* This required building partnerships between students and teachers in order to improve student achievement, and for teachers to help students to understand that knowledge has moral and political consequences which obligates them to take social action (p. 109).
- 4) *Cross-cultural communication.* Intellectual thought processes among students are culturally encoded in that its expressive forms are strongly influenced by cultural socialization. Teacher decipher these codes to teach effectively as well as to help students understand protocols of participation in discourse, task engagement, and organization of ideas (p. 110).
- 5) *Cultural congruity in classroom instruction.* Instruction has to be multiculturalized which Gay (2000) defines as teaching to the learning styles of diverse students. Teachers need to develop rich repertoires of multicultural instructional examples in their pedagogy (p. 112).

Gay's first and second element regarding cultural diversity knowledge and culturally relevant curricula, loosely match Banks first and second dimension about content and knowledge construction. Gay's focus is more on what the teacher needs to know versus the idea of building knowledge critically for the students. Her third element, cultural caring and building a learning community, is more aligned with Banks second dimension, knowledge construction, in regards to building a partnership of learning. Here Gay touches slightly on Banks fifth dimension, empowering school culture and social structure, when she talks about social responsibility. A large departure from Banks is evident in Gay's fourth element, cross cultural communication, which does not reach the level of Banks' fourth dimension, prejudice reduction that challenges deficit views of students and teachers. In addition, the equity self-analysis that Banks seeks in his fifth dimension is not included in Gay's work. Though Gay's work seems to depart from Banks and CRT, in her third element included theory of caring, possibly influenced by the publication of *Subtractive Schooling* by Valenzuela (1999).

Valenzuela (1999) argued schooling and pedagogy in public schooling do not take into consideration the lived experiences of Students of Color. She further contested curricula, by not including cultural nuances students bring to schools, subtract from the holistic potential of learning. The notion of social capital students bring to schooling spaces was further developed by Tara Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model. Together, Valenzuela (1999) and Yosso (2005) challenge preconceived notions about Latinos, and converged on Banks's prejudice reduction by elucidating an asset view of Students of Color. They also note the cultural differences between education and

educación, which includes the development of moral, social, and personal responsibility in students. Gay's work does not reach the activist stance of Valenzuela and Yosso but it proposes a combination of cultural awareness, preparation, and caring for students observed by the teachers in her study.

Critical pedagogies. In the attempt to challenge dominant ideologies and deficit-notions on Students of Color, there are a number of critical pedagogies that have emerged within the field of education. These prescribe several pedagogies to address the needs of non-dominant students. The following sections outline key pedagogical frameworks that help contextualize the study of teacher preparation and understanding the experiences of Faculty of Color teaching the next generation of social justice Teachers.

Pedagogy of the oppressed. This is a foundational pedagogy delineated by Paulo Freire (1970) as the practice of freedom, based on three principles of (1) *conscientização*, the power of the individual to look at the world, reflect on it and take action to change it; (2) knowing the nature of the individuals that can see the realities that shape their life and co-create knowledge rather than passively be fed information; and (3) the active agency that empowers individuals to transform their reality and the reality of those who have been marginalized and dehumanized with respect, dialogue and praxis, propelling a process of permanent liberation.

Cultural responsive pedagogy. Based on the work of Bartolome (1994) and Villegas (1988, 1991) and in response to deficit thinking of non-dominant students, their work seeks to find humanizing methods. These would include critical instruction tailored to incorporate cultural ways of learning of marginalized communities in teacher preparation

programs. Franquiz & Salazar (2004) developed a similar humanizing pedagogy following a model for academic resiliency based on: (a) *consejos* (good advice), (b) *buen ejemplo* (good example), (c) *confianza* (trust), and (d) *respeto* (respect).

Culturally relevant pedagogy. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) engaged in three years of research in pedagogical excellence, which she termed as culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (1995) distinguished between educators who tried to insert culture into the education, instead of inserting education into the culture like the subjects of her study had in order to be successful. Similarly to Banks, she recognized previous attempts to bring culture into education by some of her predecessors and colleagues in academia. She highlighted Shulman's (1987) conceptualization of subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. She also notes Bartolome's (1994) humanizing pedagogy that respects the history, perspectives, and reality of students as an integral part of educational practice. With these assertions Ladson-Billings defines a continuum that goes from the methodological conceptual knowledge to the cultural, humanizing relational knowledge.

Ladson-Billings (1995) defined culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy of opposition committed to collective empowerment, basing this empowerment on three propositions:

1. *Students must experience academic success.* The eight teachers in her study demanded academic excellence, supported it by attending to the needs of their students and got students to choose to be academically successful (p. 160).

2. *Students must develop or maintain their cultural competence.* Teachers affirm cultural knowledge and increase it by involving students, parents and community as sources of shared knowledge (p. 161).
3. *Students must develop a critical consciousness.* This consciousness allows them to challenge the status quo of current social order. Students are expected to engage the world critically by deconstructing the cultural norms and values of the institutions that maintain inequity, and by taking action to change these inequities (p. 162).

Banks and Gay defined their dimensions and elements in terms of teacher practices, while Ladson-Billings framed them in student outcomes. Yet, Ladson-Billings (2005) identified some philosophical and ideological foundations of the teachers in her study, expressly in the way teachers saw themselves and the way they saw the community they served:

- The teachers identified strongly with teaching. They chose to teach and they chose the community where they taught.
- The relationships with their students were fluid and equitable. Students could be teachers and teachers could learn from them. Teachers had an asset-based view of the students, their language, culture, and community.
- Knowledge was not taken at face value and was always subject of critical analysis by teachers and students (p.163).

We can see culturally-relevant teachers teach with a social justice agenda even though at the time their teaching was not defined as such. Teachers were clear of their role and the desired student outcomes as well as their social responsibility to challenge inequities.

Twenty-five years later, Ladson-Billings (2014) reflected on her original concern to develop practical ways to improve teacher education in order to produce new generations of teachers. A new wave of teachers who would bring an appreciation of their students' assets to their work in urban classrooms, mostly populated with African American students. She felt dissatisfied with what culturally-relevant became in practice. She felt the fluidity and variety of cultural groups was lost in the discussions of culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings' (2014) posits teachers were not encouraging students to consider critical perspectives on policies, practices, and issues that affect them and their communities. Instead, they hold limited culturally-relevant pedagogical training to the tokenistic inclusion of images, books and celebrations and few have taken on the sociopolitical dimension of the work, or omitted it altogether. Her criticism echoed Sleeter and Grant's (1987) criticism about multicultural education not going beyond direct curricula. Ladson-Billings (2014) reflected on how ideas become buzzwords, unrecognizable to their creators once they are released into practice. For this reason, she argued for the need to embrace a more dynamic view of culture and reassessing it as a vital tool in order to find powerful pedagogical models. She believed in the symbiotic relationship between pedagogical theory and teaching practices, recognizing that not knowing the answer was one of the most powerful tools in doing culturally-relevant work instead of hoping for a silver bullet (Ladson Billings, 2014).

Cultural sustaining pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (2014) highlighted culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris & Alim, 2012) as one of these powerful pedagogical models and a prime example of the remix of culturally relevant pedagogy. Cultural sustaining

pedagogy includes multiplicities of identities and cultures and pushes the education community to consider global identities that are complex, fluid and more hybridized (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Pedagogy of care. Based on the work of Ayers (2004), Gay (2010), Noddings (2005), Soto (2005), and Valenzuela (1999), address the relational ethic cultivated between teacher and student. Students can gain social capital through the creation of networks of trust and support from the authentic care of adults focused on an *educación* with the development of notions of respect, moral, personal, and social responsibility besides concepts and academic knowledge (Valenzuela, 1999). By contrast when teachers do not understand the cultural definition of *educación* and focus on aesthetic care based on unilateral goals, strategies and standardized curricula, they deny students the opportunity to engage in reciprocal relationship development and renders their education impersonal.

Critical hope. A cultural and community focus is also at the root of what Duncan-Andrade (2009) describes as critical hope, teaching in ways that connect the moral outrage of young people to actions that relieve the underserved suffering in their communities. This pedagogy involves three necessary elements of educational practices to sustain true hope:

1. *Material hope.* Includes the quality of teaching and the resources teachers make available to their students (p. 5).
2. *Socratic hope.* Sharing the pain and indignation of students through self-sacrifice, love, and support, as a way to pave the path to justice (p.6).

3. *Audacious hope*. Empowerment of students to act constructively to recognize, name, analyze and confront social conditions that affect them like poverty, racism, violence and inequality (p. 8).

Duncan-Andrade (2009) agrees with Valenzuela in regards to schooling and educating not being the same. Hence, pedagogies need to be tied to the students, their lives, communities, families, ethnic/cultural and linguistic historicities.

Culturally relevant care. Sealy Ruiz (2011) research evolved from a methodological standpoint to the relational for the development of racial literacy in teacher education programs. She posits the development of racial literacy by developing a language to discuss and refute racial stereotypes by: (a) reading critical texts, (b) self-examining notions of race, and Students of Color, (c) discussing and critiquing personal experiences with race and racism, and d) holding students accountable to practice racial literacy by taking action against racist practices.

Sealy Ruiz developed her culturally relevant care (CRC) model in 2016 after working and mentoring what she called over-aged and under-credited male high school Students of Color. She expanded on Noddings (2005), and Valenzuela (1999) pedagogy of care by acknowledging the dynamic ways in which a community of students can share the roles of caring-for and *being* cared-for in an effort to disrupt social inequalities. CRC teachers are expected to acknowledge inequities faced by students and work on challenging them. The commitment to the community forms a bond that develops a level of trust and openness enabling for warm demanding and criticism that pushes all members to attain their highest potential (Watson, Sealey-Ruiz & Jackson, 2016).

Nepantlera pedagogy. Reza-Lopez, Huerta Charles and Reyes (2014) delineated a nepantlera pedagogy of human dignity addressing the plight of Latinos in borderland schooling. A nepantlera pedagogy includes blended notions of praxis, identity formation, border epistemologies, language diversity, dialogue, and critical education present in Freire's (2000) concept of conscientization, Anzaldúa's (1999, 2002) concept of *conocimientos* and Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism. Reza-Lopez, et al. (2014) explain this pedagogy as an axiological posture that encompasses *respect* for Latino students and their families' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A nepantlera pedagogy is rooted in a commitment to social activism to transform any oppressive and discriminatory social practice. This pedagogy is committed to help students clarify their ideas by asking students to constantly challenge their assumptions about schooling, and how class, race, gender, language, sexual orientation, spirituality, and age have been used for stratifying students and teachers. As a result, students can develop, without an indoctrination process, a sense of agency and commitment towards people who are in need; people who have been marginalized and excluded. It is a commitment to social justice and the creation of a more equitable world.

Reality pedagogy. Christopher Emdin's *Reality Pedagogy* (2016) is the latest approach to teaching and learning directed to meet students at their own cultural and emotional domain. Emdin argues that educators need to recognize their own biases and recognize that there are other forms of brilliance other than their own, or what teachers are trained to believe. He suggests using co-gens, co-created plans of learning to improve the classroom dynamics as well as the academic performance of the students.

Sentipensante. As the pedagogical continuum tilts towards the relational side, we find Laura Rendón's *Sentipensante Pedagogy*, a holistic pedagogy, based on the notion that Orlando Fals Borda (1986) adopted from the Momposino farmers in Colombia. This was further guided by a non-dual epistemology and ontology that produces a balance between the inner and outer knowing; a complementarity between two opposites that decenters western epistemology and ontology. It includes practices such as meditation, contemplative writing, modeling, social justice advocacy, community service projects, and self-reflexivity. This also involves breaking old agreements about hegemonic beliefs regarding formal education and embracing new agreements about what constitutes knowing and learning in the classroom. Sentipensante pedagogy offers a transformative vision of education emphasizing the harmonic, complementary relationship between *sentir* (feel) as intuition and *pensar* (think) as intellect, between teaching and learning, between formal knowledge and wisdom, and between western and non-western ways of knowing. Sentipensante views individuals as whole human beings with the ability to transform the world by acting on it. Sentipensante seeks the integration and consonance of possessing knowledge and wisdom. Rendón (2009) calls this becoming *a persona bien educada*, a well-rounded individual that is able to apply knowledge with insight, intuitiveness, awareness, and common sense, besides being concerned with social change (Rendón, 2009).

Pedagogies that support Students of Color recognize the community cultural wealth model (Yosso, 2005) to acknowledge the strengths students offer. This process and acknowledgement equalizes status between learners and teachers, and builds a

community of knowledge creation utilizing a multiplicity of beliefs. Most importantly, a cultural wealth pedagogy refutes hegemonic beliefs that do not consider the centrality of race and poverty.

This refusal of hegemonic beliefs also align to Banks (1973) when he proposed multicultural education as a “response to the concerns of ethnic, racial, and cultural groups that felt marginalized within their nation-states” (p. 297). This standpoint is still present in Banks (2004) where he proposes six stages to reach Global competency. These stages also align to Gloria Anzaldúa’s seven stages of the path of “*conocimiento*” (Anzaldúa, 2002).

Both start with the realization of repression as a hegemonic belief and continue with a stage of cultural conflict followed by one of cultural awareness before reaching a stage of biculturalism and the acceptance of multiculturalism. The final stage of global competency as proposed by Banks, comes attached to the global responsibility of the cosmopolitan individual, capable of identifying the creators of knowledge, and uncovering the assumptions of knowledge. These six phases are required in order to guide actions that will create a more humane and just world.

Fieldwork. Fieldwork has been a commonly used method to develop the cultural competence of educators, particularly that of pre-service teachers. Fieldwork aims to develop empathy for the different student lived experiences. Fieldwork varies in length and focus, as shown in Figure 1. In terms of length, some fieldwork is as short as one semester (Baudry, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2014), other become sustained and on-going (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Picower, 2011). In terms of focus, there is also a spectrum of

involvement that goes from the superficial to the more committed involvement. The following quadrant shows the relationship within time invested and the level of commitment to the community served.

Figure 1: Fieldwork quadrants.

At the superficial and finite level of involvement (Baudry, 2015; Klehr, 2015), one could engage in community events participation. Some of these include visiting local community organizations; collaborating with students at the local high school for a project; or exploring the local high school over a semester period of time. The timing and length of the field experience are often pre-identified as an opportunity for pre-candidates that chose an early exposure to the classroom. Teacher-candidates felt they had to learn by experience and not hear what they may face when dealing with diversity in the classroom. They acknowledged theory did not prepare them for what they would face. Teacher candidates would have preferred to be placed in the classroom in order to practice the concepts being taught.

A second category is found in superficial involvement. These include partnerships between schools, non-profits (Chang, 2015) or between universities and schools (Klehr, 2015) as a way to cultivate professional agency. Noted as superficial as these

relationships and partnerships do not necessarily engage or involve the student perspective nor experience.

The third category leaning towards a more committed level, we find longer-term involvement (Mills, 2013) as a way to get to know the community in order to build legitimate connections with families. A longer-term enacts an agenda knowing it takes longer than a traditional school calendar to really understand the needs of the community and what the students bring to the classroom context.

The fourth category is the sustained and committed fieldwork, exemplified by Grassroots organizing with the purpose of engaging the community and bringing social change (Baudry, 2015; Chang, 2015; Horton & Freire, 1990;). The social change occurs while developing a *conscientización* with the pre-service teacher. K-12 practitioners often report positive impact results from cross-cultural immersion projects. White educators describe this kind of committed experience as more important than their courses given the opportunity to “grapple with being a minority and, not necessarily knowing how to act, and temporarily unable to retreat to the comfort of a culturally familiar setting” (Sleeter, 2001, p. 97).

Pre-teachers who participated in a field experience in addition to taking multicultural courses exhibited positive effects. Unfortunately, some pre-teachers complete their field experience with more confidence to work with students from different backgrounds, but did not change their preconceptions about Students of Color.

In 2000, out of 182 master programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs that required fieldwork hours, only 124

required hours to be completed at a school site. Other options for these hours included job shadowing, class observations, interviews with professionals and projects. More encouraging, an overwhelming majority of counseling programs (94%) (n= 154 out 163) required internship service in a school setting. The number of hours varied from 100 to 1500 hours with a few outliers that required 3,000 hours (Pérusse, Goodnough & Noel, 2001).

At the doctoral level we find that fieldwork depends on the research being conducted, with the most sustaining field work occurring only as a direct result of university and school partnerships. These also occur over extended periods of time, given the doctoral tenure process.

Reflections and counterstories. Reflection is a robust tool used in teacher education evidenced by the growing body of scholarship on this method. K-12 educators are required to explore their personal background and socialization. These include a reflection on how they view other people. Since most pre-teacher candidates are majority white, middle-class, and female in their early 20s, instructors tend to share their own autobiographies as white individuals who self-interrogate their privilege after formative years. Others use dialogical reflections (Conventino, 2016; Pace, 2013). Faculty of Color also share their counterstories with the same purpose (Matias, 2013).

Reflection varies from the autobiographical (Boyd & Noblit, 2015; Kohli, 2008; Picower, 2014), to engage K-12 educators in their own critical reflection about their personal experiences growing up. These reflections then lead towards reflections of community experiences (Baudry, 2015; Katsarou, Picower & Stoval, 2010) and

evidenced how these shape pre-service teachers' personal, practical knowledge impacting their identities and positionalities. The individual reflections and understandings of K-12 educators are documented through onsite notes, interview notes and journal entries. The newly acquired knowledge impacts their lessons and pedagogy as they start incorporating epistemology from their students, identities, and communities. This also allows pre-service teachers to place their students as co-creators of teaching and learning.

Kohli (2008) for instance, outlines the importance of encouraging K-12 educators to use reflection on their own educational experiences and how the belief in white culture superiority may have permeated their worldviews. Kohli notes how imperative is for K-12 educators to have a space for reflection before they enter the classroom.

Picower (2014), as a white educator who has been successful teaching Students of Color reflected on her racial identity following Derman-Sparks (2010) framework for white development. This enables the opportunity to identify varying types of white supremacy and institutionalized racism. Picower (2014) states the real teacher education did not happen in the pre-service program, but rather came from Educators of Color, who taught her about the importance of relationship-building and valuing the culture children bring to the classroom.

Picower (2014) notes the lessons in order to be successful:

- Commitment to the cause of social justice, and a true desire to change the inequities that exist within the current structure of education.
- Extend the classroom to the community
- Understand students and their families are your employer
- Build relationships. Being a teacher and a learner at the same time.
- Address your racial identity.

- Continuous quest for learning more, and doing more to address the root cause of racism and white supremacy in order to really teach children (p.120).

Katsarou, Picower & Stoval (2010) argue deficit thinking can only be challenged when brought to the attention of pre-teachers as they are often unaware that they void seeing the student as whole person. In order to challenge deficit thinking among K-12 educators and develop empathy, they were assigned an ethnographic writing assignment about a child with whom they could not connect. K-12 educators had to focus on the behavior rather of the child rather than labeling the student. After recognizing deficit thinking in a model of a previous pre-teacher they had to rewrite it, and later, they had to write a letter to the next teacher advocating for the student by providing strategies that could support student needs.

Faculty also employ dialogical exchanges to challenge teacher candidates to examine their social location within society as it shapes their praxis, and their aim to change the status quo. Conventino (2016) uses a critical and dialogical model when teaching multicultural social justice education. Here, in order to help pre-service teachers distinguish between ‘ethnic tidbits’ or a tourist approach and multicultural social justice education. Pace (2013) makes use of dialogue and inquiry in her classes to discuss provocative topics based on assigned readings. The aims is to build a classroom community in which all voices are heard, and everybody is empowered to contribute to the discussion. Pre-teacher graduate students listen and respect the opinions of others because of the understanding of varying truths. One of the most vivid discussions come after a simulated activity about unequal division of resources where students experience first-hand the challenge of accomplishing the same goal with unequal resources.

Counterstories seek to document the resilience of marginalization and racism from the perspective of those victimized by its legacy (Yosso, 2006). Counterstories are often used by Faculty of Color to offer a different perspective to white teacher candidates as a way to challenge color-blind narratives (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Matias, 2013; Porfirio & Malott, 2014). Matias (2013) highlights her experience as a Teacher of Color teaching in a mostly white teacher education program where race is invisible to the majority of white pre-teachers, but visible to Students of Color. Some K-12 educators go to the extreme and take part of trainings to learn about the “other” and want to become saviors for Students of Color without doing “critical racial analysis.”

Porfilio & Malott (2014) use counter-cultures with predominantly white K-12 educators to help them understand that their identities and experiences are socially mediated. They use economic and social developments from the 1970’s, particularly during President Ronald Reagan’s administration resulting in the economic dislocation of many Folks of Color. In other instances, pre-teacher students are encouraged to question the value of texts and countercultural movements like Hip-Hop.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) also presents a historical counterstory of the educational system of oppression that created the academic achievement gap. She deconstructs the narrative of the gap and reframes it as an educational debt owed to millions of Students of Color. The low academic achievement by Students of Color is a direct result of a historical, economic, and sociopolitical systems of oppression. Ladson-Billings (2006) draws a parallel between the national deficit caused by the educational

debt due to the deficient number of opportunities provided to Students and Community of Color.

Summary of Contributing Factors

The existing literature illustrate the backbone scholarship to engage in social justice education is CRT, as well as LatCrit. As such, the commitments are to: (a) centralize race and racism, (b) challenge dominant perspectives, (c) commitment to social justice, (d) value experiential knowledge and (e) be interdisciplinary. These guiding frameworks enable scholars and pre-teachers to centralize systemic oppression while understanding the critical need to honor student epistemology.

A second component identified in the literature are a myriad of pedagogies that have proven to work with minoritized students which are used in teacher preparation and counseling programs. Multiculturalism is the umbrella concept for teaching non-dominant groups. Sleeter & Grant (1987) provide the most comprehensive meta-study which classifies its objective as: (a) assimilating the culturally different to the dominant quo, (b) humanizing different groups, (c) single groups assessments, (d) multicultural education, and (e) multicultural that challenges structural inequality. Among the most notable works we find Banks (1993, 2004), Duncan-Andrade (2009), Emdin (2016), Freire (1972, 1985) Gay (2000, 2010), Ladson-Billings (1991, 2014), Noddings (2005), Paris & Alim, (2012), Rendón (2009), Reza-Lopez et al. (2014), Sealey-Ruiz (2011, 2016), Valenzuela (1999), and Yosso (2005). Their work varies in its alignment to CRT but the criticism made by some are that these pedagogies become diluted in actual practice. In my experiential knowledge, methods are successful depending on the fidelity

of the application, and when used adequately with the identified group centered in the research. The issue then continues to be a superficial one, and any method that neither centers the student experience, nor their race and the power relationships already established in the institutions they attend will void real findings.

A third contributing factor to the work of social justice is found in the fieldwork experiences among the communities being served. Fieldwork varies in length and focus. In terms of length, some fieldwork is as short as one semester (Baudry, 2015; Chang, 2015; Ladson Billings, 2014; Mills, 2013), other become sustained and on-going (Ladson Billings, 2014; Picower, 2011). In terms of a specialization or focus, there is also a spectrum of involvement that goes from the superficial (Baudry, 2015; Klehr, 2015) to the more committed involvement (Baudry, 2015; Chang, 2015; Horton & Freire, 1990). At the Master's level, universities require fieldwork hours, but not all of them are completed at school sites. Counseling programs also require internships in a school setting. The number of hours varied from 100 to 1500 hours with a few outliers that required 3,000 hours (Pérusse, Goodnough & Noel, 2001). At the Doctoral level we find that fieldwork depends on the research being conducted, with the most sustaining happening as a result of university and school partnerships over extended periods of time (Delgado Bernal & Aleman, 2017).

A fourth contributing category is the use of reflections and counterstories evidenced by the growing body of scholarship. Educators are required to explore their background and socialization, including how they view other people and their privilege. Reflections could be autobiographical (Boyd & Noblit, 2015; Kohli, 2008; Picower, 2014), dialogical

(Conventino, 2016; Pace, 2013), ethnographic (Baudry, 2015, Katsarou, Picower & Stoval, 2010), as a reflection of the levels of colonization by the white culture (Kohli (2008) or in the shape of counterstories (Matias, 2013; Ladson Billings, 2006; Porfirio & Malott, 2014; Yosso, 2006;) in order to challenge color-blind narratives.

Deterring Factors

The false dichotomy of the social justice definition. Social justice, originally defined by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 1976) as a desirable disposition for teacher preparation standards to understand diversity. This was redefined as “just good teaching” by its critics which allowed them to deny it as an educational goal. By 2006 the term “social justice” was removed from the standards based on a controversy created by a false dichotomy between social justice and knowledge/learning (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009). Opponents to the use of dispositions argued several concerns. First, there is a profound difficulty to operationalize social justice as a construct. Secondly, the impact of dispositions could not be measured by reliable standard, nor with psychometrical evidence. Lastly, there is danger of ideological biases, including dispositions in the actual standards (Borman, Mueninghoff, Cotner & Bach, 2009).

Argument one and two allowed opponents to not only discount social justice but to disqualify all qualitative research about social justice. This set the opportunity to legitimize the standardization of quantitative research to measure knowledge and learning simultaneously. This legitimization created a sense of entitlement, and an assignment of status to those achieving academic results regardless of the conditions allowing for this

achievement. In scholarship, this debate resulted in the quantitative research over qualitative research enabling preferences to case studies, ethnographies, phenomenology and narratives over counterstorytelling. The legitimization of knowledge as a function of power has been well documented by Perez-Huber (2009) who addressed how narrow knowledge production processes function to maintain structures of power and elite interest as elite. This is what Delgado Bernal and Villapando (2002) also call the apartheid of knowledge in academia.

On the other hand, supporters of the role of dispositions standards contended that teacher education should be at the core of what we strive in education, as well as the need to prepare teacher that are committed to prepare *all* learners (Borko et al., 2007). Some of these supporters openly claim the reduction and elimination of foundational coursework as a trend in teacher preparation programs. Instead of preparing pre-service teachers as thoughtful agents of change and social transformation, foundational courses teach them how to become classroom managers (Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015).

The third concern by the opponents to social justice was the danger of ideological biases, including dispositions in the standards (Borman, Mueninghoff, Cotner & Bach, 2009). Using Cochran's (2009) understandings of social justice teacher education, we can infer that opponents to social justice consider the following as ideological biases:

- Have an asset view (as opposed to deficit) view of the cultural linguistic, and experiential backgrounds of students.
- Possess a cultural consciousness or an understanding that students have different identities and life histories depending on their race, class, culture. Also

acknowledging student carry experiences with societal systems of privilege and oppression (as opposed to a hegemonic experience).

- Take an inquiry stance questioning their own assumptions as well as others, by posing and researching problems in a generative way. This includes using curriculum and existing research (as opposed to a passive obedient stance).
- Have an understanding that teaching always takes a stand on society's current distribution of resources, and the respect/disrespect of different social groups (versus accepting a dominant master narrative).

If social justice education is biased, then its definition proposes an approach to education aimed to have all students reach high levels of learning. This posits a commitment to prepare all students for active and full participation in a democracy (Villegas, 2007, p. 372). This line of thought concurs with Anyon's (1981) denunciation about the hegemony of education in the United States. Anyon notes that hegemony does not allow all students to reach higher levels of learning required to actively participate in a democracy.

The artificial dichotomy of social justice represents a bigger social divide reflecting opposing beliefs about the objective of education. Anyon (1981) sustained clear differences in the educational knowledge available to literati and peasant, aristocrat and laborer were not exclusive to earlier societies. She argued that some students are neglected and are more prone to being disciplined by teachers that have a deficit view of them. Anyon (1981) also notes that the curriculum used for these students is more factual and acritical. As a result, these students have internalized a defeatist view of themselves,

with lower aspirations to higher education, resulting passive resistance evidenced in their withholding of enthusiasm or attention.

By contrast, students in more affluent schools are exposed to experiences that engages them critically, with a more challenging curricula. These students develop a sense of entitlement and individualism as they are exposed to more socially conscious themes, practices, and critical discussions. Students in these environments develop a sense of competence and purpose (Anyon, 1981). These parallel and opposite experiences have legitimized and perpetuated the status quo, its ideologies, pedagogies and practices which impact those who enter teacher education programs.

Challenging the status quo is an arduous task if we consider the response of the Editorial Advisory Board for *The Teacher Education*. When polled about the best context to prepare teachers, only two faculty (Cochran-Smith & Sleeter, 2011) stressed the importance of having culturally appropriate pedagogy and assessments. These would then support learning about communities that are different from one's own positionality.

Epistemology of the oppressor. For the purposes of this research, oppressor is defined as an identity of power resulting from the legacy of colonization. Within a hegemonic world, dominant ideologies are normalized by societal rules, beliefs, systems, and practices. The debate over the inclusion of social justice by NCATE is one example of hegemonic beliefs that cast cultures and knowledge as out of the norm, creating a positionality of power based on a one-side perspective.

European colonizers' worldview gave them a sense of entitlement to take possession of the American continent, repeatedly over 500 years. They took not only lands and

enslaved indigenous populations, they also destroyed libraries, texts, and records of the indigenous peoples and knowledge. This began the erasure of epistemologies and initiated the dominant narrative of bringing civilization to the “savages” that inhabited the continent. These new texts presumed to justify colonizer ideologies and rationale for various forms of invasion (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). Once the colonizers named themselves rulers, they proceeded with the colonization of the mind of any surviving native inhabitants. This was accomplished by instilling a hegemonic European American worldview. The vast process to assimilate indigenous peoples were through the Indian boarding schools. Later this intent of assimilation and dominance was evidenced in segregated schools of the Southwest. This was a method to continue colonization, assimilation, and dominance as the natural order of Manifest Destiny (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). These processes enabled a deficit stance on native folks, allowing for deficit ideology to be embraced by the masses. The analysis of ethnographic stories by Villenas & Deyhle (1999) provides an insight into the schooling success and failure of Latino(a) students within the context of the narrative of Latino/Mexicanos as lazy, criminal and violent (Valencia & Black, 2002; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999).

This social construction of Latina/os is evidenced in the anti-immigrant, xenophobic environment in the United States. This contributes to the subordination of People of Color and impacts their self-identity and psyche. However, simultaneously, these assimilationist practices influence the epistemology of white people and their worldviews about minoritized groups. It is important to clarify that the epistemology of the oppressor is not exclusive to whites. There are People of Color that have assimilated so well that

they embrace the notion that white folks and their belief systems are better. The crucial point to be made here is that educators bring this ideology to their pedagogy, which prohibits them, vastly, in the way they view students of non-dominant communities.

Many new teachers have not spent enough time in the communities in which they will serve. As a result, their understanding of how their own positionality will impact the educational experience of their students is vastly limited. Many teachers, counselors and administrators believe that their own experiences were typical. King (1991) defines this as “dysconscious racism,” an acritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order.

The role of whiteness and white privilege. The disproportionate representation of white candidates in teacher preparation programs and their inability to practice critical pedagogy have prompted Porfilio & Mallott (2011) to label them an at-risk group (at risk of acting as oppressors). New white teachers are fairly naïve and have stereotypical beliefs about Students of Color and the conditions that affect their learning. Many of these new white teachers and argue for colorblindness in order to avoid considering institutional racism as a factor that impacts student learning. Others become defensive and seek any attempt to address race as discriminatory against themselves (Sleeter, 2001).

The lens of CRT is warranted and useful to understand how the supremacy of “whiteness” and the subordination of People of Color is created and sustained in the United States. Whiteness is an ideology and ontology used to maintain white supremacy (Picower, 2009). McIntosh (1988) defined white privilege as “an invisible package of

unearned assets” a system of opportunities and benefits bestowed to an individual simply for being white (p. 30). White privilege is the series of social, institutional, and political benefits that appear to be unrelated to race that enable white people to be blind to their own privilege. Ladson-Billings (2001) contends that white, middle class pre-teacher candidates have very little, or no understanding, of their own culture nor the privilege and power attached to it.

Lisa Delpit (1988) discussed the experiences of People of Color when they try to expand the worldviews of their white peers. Too often, People of Color are ignored and dismissed as simply presenting an individual experience. According to Villenas and Deyhle (1999) dominant groups have material power to make their reality fit their own ideas. By contrast, less dominant groups become whatever reality the white ideas suggest. What is said and thought about them becomes the reality of their lives because those who have the power to say and think also have the power to construct the world in that image. For example, in spite of Tatum’s (1997) belief that “the white person who has worked through his or her own racial identity process has a deep understanding of racism and an appreciation and respect for the identity struggles of people of color” (p.113), we seem to be really far from dismantling white privilege.

Hegemonic constructions.

Meritocracy. This generalized U.S. American value leads many to believe that their achievements are due to their individualist hard work without taking into consideration the opportunities and privileges afforded to them based on the color of their skin. Meritocracy is the value that, in conjunction with cultural assimilation, enables the deficit

and exclusionary view about Students of Color. This value supports the driving objective of public schools. Public schools, then, serve as a vehicle to assimilate students into the dominant, hegemonic Eurocentric culture. In doing so, schooling practices erase histories and the funds of knowledge Students of Color bring to the classroom (Convertino, 2016). The phrase “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” attributed to Richard Henry Pratt is an illustration casting white culture as having habits, skills, and dispositions to lead them to success. Many teacher education programs work hard to develop critical consciousness to counteract white privilege. Programs do this through multicultural education and training. Despite these efforts, there is evidence of white pre-service teachers resisting this training and masking their excuses under the myth of meritocracy (Picower, 2009).

Deficit thinking. Matias (2013) defines deficit thinking as the negative, stereotypic, and counterproductive views of Students of Color often held by adults. These deficit ideas often make students lower their own expectations about themselves. Depending on the time period, these deficit ideologies have included genetic, cultural or familial reasoning and have predefined students as “culturally deprived,” “at risk,” or simply as “other” (Valencia & Black, 2002). Unfortunately these deficit views are pervasive among white teachers who have not gone through an adequate social and racial justice training. Deficit thinking is not limited to students, it is also evident in the narratives about and towards Teachers of Color. An example of this is a warning prescribed by the CEDR policy brief number 2015-9 about diversifying the teacher workforce:

Policy makers must also be aware that there may be unintended consequences to diversifying the teacher workforce. One concern is that newly recruited minority teachers (perhaps recruited to the profession through policies intended to improve the diversity of teacher workforce) may not be as effective as minority teachers

currently in the teacher workforce. Suppose for example that Washington State – acting on evidence that minority teacher candidates are disproportionately affected by teacher licensure test requirements–decided to improve the diversity of the teacher workforce by reducing or removing these barriers to the teacher profession. This may improve the diversity of the state’s teaching workforce, but there is also compelling evidence that teachers with higher credential test scores are more effective at improving student achievement for all students. Thus it is unclear what the overall impact of such a policy would be, either on overall student achievement or racial achievement gaps (Goldhaber, Theobald, Tien, 2015, p. 6)

The editorial comment “perhaps recruited through policies intended to improve diversity...” cast a shadow of doubt over the credentials of every Teacher of Color, and positions the comment against the “compelling evidence” of teachers with higher credentials being effective for “all.” This implies that these doubtfully prepared teachers might not necessarily be beneficial for “all” students, which is code phrase for white students.

In the same brief, another scholar (Dee, 2004) makes the case that white students also benefit from teachers of their same race. There is a warning to readers about how the benefit of an increased teaching Force of Color for Students of Color might negatively impact the performance of white students. This suggests advancing policies to increase the performance by Students of Color without decreasing the outcomes of white students. While the title of this policy brief makes it appear as pro-diversification of teacher workforce, it critiques and invalidates the argument of increasing teacher diversity by dedicating twice as much writing against it. As such, deficit thinking “blames the victim” as defective and in need to be fixed rather than examining how schools and the political economy are structured to create obstacles to maintain victimization of Folks of Color (Convertino, 2016; Valencia, 2007).

Tools of whiteness. When the perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs that help explain educational inequality are challenged through a critical race lens, white and privileged individuals deny the benefits granted to them due to their race. Conventino (2016) identified these moments as bottlenecks as she was unable to facilitate teaching and learning. In a mostly white class (20 out of 25) her students were not making the connection between theory and the significance of research to their teaching practice. The resistance that ensued was made obvious by the claims of reverse discrimination and meritocracy in the United States. Picower (2009) has identified the following tools of resistance:

- *Colorblindness.* The belief that one should treat all persons equal, without regard of their race (p. 198).
- *Fear.* Sense of anxiety in situations with People of Color based on stereotypes (p. 202).
- *White as victims/white fragility.* Using policies to provide equity as reverse racism. E.g. Affirmative action, AB540 students paying State tuition (p. 204).
- *Emotional excuses/white tears.* Comments like ‘I never owned a slave’ or ‘Stop trying to make me feel guilty’ (p. 205).
- *Ideological tools.* Comments like ‘Now that things are equal’, ‘It’s personal not political’, ‘It’s out of my control’, ‘Just be nice’, ‘I can’t relate’ (p. 206).
- *Performative tools.* Comments like ‘I just want to help them’, ‘I would kiss a minority’ or remaining silent when racist comments are made (p. 209).

Perez-Hubber (2009) asserts that dominant ideologies of meritocracy, individualism, and color-blindness can mask the complexities of struggles among Students of Color. More so, dominant ideologies will discredit nor acknowledge systems of oppression that help create the negative conditions for marginalized communities, particularly those in the schooling system.

Lack of critical faculty. Research shows that the majority of faculty (94%) in higher education are white (Sleeter, 2001). According to Porfilio & Malott (2011), schools of education are still very traditional in their approach to prepare K-12 educators to work with students. More so, these programs remain silent about addressing the unequal power structures that have generated different outcomes for different racial/ethnic groups (Porfilio & Malott (2011). Only 56% of graduate programs require elementary education candidates to complete a multicultural education course. Many of these candidates are placed in schools that resemble their own personal schooling experience, which leaves them unprepared to serve students that are different than themselves (Sleeter, 2001). In addition, when faculty addresses the power that racial status confers to white people, they are faced with resistance and hostility (Porfilio & Malott, 2011).

Delgado Bernal & Villalpando (2002) assert that the story of critical Latin@ faculty is a story of struggle. Urrieta & Chavez (2010) concur and add that the academy can be very unwelcoming particularly for 3.5% of Latin@s, working class, and queer Brown folks in all higher educational institutions. The system has marginalized Latin@s and has created what Villalpando and Delgado Bernal (2002) termed as the “apartheid of knowledge” (p. 169). Villalpando and Delgado Bernal (2002) use apartheid to indicate

separation and division between dominant Eurocentric epistemologies and non-Eurocentric epistemological stances. These result in a separation and categorization of legitimate and illegitimate forms of knowledge. They argue that Eurocentric epistemological perspectives in academic spaces perpetuate dominant ideologies rooted in white superiority. As such, these devalue, delegitimize, and marginalize scholarship which draws from epistemological, theoretical, and methodological perspectives which honor Communities of Color. Communities, People, and Faculty of Color hold rich sources of knowledge that exist outside of the academy (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). Perez-Huber (2009) expanded on Villalpando & Delgado Bernal's work to explain how her work disrupts the apartheid created in academia with the use of Latina/o critical race theory and *testimonio* as a primary method. Perez-Huber notes how a colleague warned about making up her own methodology), which illustrates how non-dominant methodologies were cast as "made-up methodologies."

Superficial treatment of race & racism. Sometimes educators are not critical pedagogues due to their fear of dealing with negative consequences, such as punishment from parents, administrators and colleagues for being controversial in their attempt to liberate students instead of indoctrinating them the traditional hegemonic knowledge. Faculty of Color have to live in between the white and Latin@ world (Urrieta & Chavez, 2010). Similar to the concept of Anzaldúa's *Nepantla*, here is "where the outer boundaries of their mind meet the outer world" (Anzaldúa, 2002). Teacher Candidates of Color perceive this ambivalence and believe that the majority of faculty are afraid and

unwilling to center culturally-relevant pedagogy in their teaching and instead use best practices as code phrases (Jackson & Kohli, 2016).

Yosso (2005) also notes in her work that race is often coded as “cultural differences.” Simic-Muller, Fernandes and Felton-Koestler’s (2015) research on Math teachers show teachers who are committed to provide real-world experiences to their students. They do so by choosing to focus on “controversial issues” like the cost of war, drugs, government spending, school funding, instead of addressing topics about social justice like racial profiling. Given that social justice topics are political and controversial, these teachers want to facilitate fruitful discussions while supporting the arithmetic lesson plan. Subsequent interviews note teachers hesitated to cover controversial material because of the presumption that controversial issues should be discussed only with certain populations. These math teachers did not want to expose students who may not be aware of their racialized or marginalized experiences. The fear in speaking or including critical discussions about certain issues also exposes their deficit view of the students’ inability to respond to a guided prompt. Even for the topics that were discussed, teachers felt they did not want to go deep enough in a critical discussion (Simic-Muller et al., 2015).

Lack of diversity in the teaching force. Villegas & Irvine (2010) argue that Teachers of Color are more likely to engage in discussions of race, challenge inequality, and to reduce the achievement gap. Teachers of Color bring multicultural experiences that are similar to their students and hold higher expectations of their students (Ladson-Billings, 1991). They are also more likely to use culturally-relevant pedagogies and become cultural brokers with local communities (Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Irvine, 2010).

Jackson & Kohli (2016) provide three arguments for the benefits of Teacher of Color in K-12 schools: 1) They serve as role models; 2) Support a reduction of teacher shortage; and 3) Present a deeper understanding of the cultural experiences among Students of Color.

Teachers of Color, then, have a more favorable perception of the academic potential of Students of Color. Teachers of Color also feel the individualistic school system is in opposition to the relational responsibility (relational accountability) they have to create a strong, critical, intellectual community (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016). Teachers have to deal with negative narratives and portrayal in the media, coupled with low support in teacher education programs (Amos, 2010). Lack of mentorship during teacher training (Dingus 2008) is also a factor for teachers to be pushed out of their formal training. Pre-service Teachers of Color found programs marginalizing, isolating and not culturally affirming (Brown 2014).

Ladson Billings (2014) asserts that graduate training programs are not holding pre-service teachers in classrooms that are populated by mostly young white women who see Students of Color in a deficit way. The Office of Multicultural Arts Initiatives (OMAI) initiated a scholarship program to support a learning community of spoken word artists. This allows these institutions to recruit and support student artists as they pursue one of the university undergraduate programs. Some of these students decide to become public school teachers. Retention has been an issue as these teacher training students, finding themselves in classrooms where other students see them in deficit terms.

A large number of Black teachers (66%) come from historically black institutions which constitute about 5 percent of all the institutions of higher education. Latina/o tenured or tenure-track faculty members constitute only 4 percent (Ponjuan, 2013). Jackson & Kohli (2016) data also show that 37 % of the teachers that enter training programs are Teachers of Color, while only 14% of these teachers eventually enter the professions. Jackson & Kohli (2016) assert that research on the experiences of Teachers of Color are vastly limited. Further, also missing from this body of work are the conversations and experiences of potential teachers during their training programs. The research on this subject indicate that pre-service Teachers of Color feel that teacher preparation programs are ineffective, alienating, and the culture of whiteness is pervasive in teacher education programs (Jackson & Kohli, 2016).

Kohli's (2008) research on aspiring Teachers of Color show that their experiences of witnessing racial, cultural, or linguistic discrimination have impacted their cultural perspective. Further, they also consider what they might do to prevent difficult moments in their classrooms. The major salient theme of Kohli's work include structural racism, internalized racism, and the need for spaces to reflect and develop strategies to consciously interrupt racism. Most importantly, how these moments help build community as a means to create an atmosphere of unity, trust, and respect.

Silence and isolation. The overpowering presence of whiteness, both in the K-12 educators as well as in academia, privilege white comfort and can be silencing altogether (Galman, Pica-Smith & Rosenberger, 2010; Sleeter, 2001). Achistein and Ogawa's (2011) study found that unsupportive working environments silence dialogue about race

and limit Educators of Color cultural professional roles. Faculty have a tenure and promotion process that includes research, teaching, and service. However, Latina/o faculty have to deal with hostility in the classroom, often from mostly white students that create undue stress in their professional and personal lives. In addition, they are overburdened with committee service work as they become the token representative of diversity. Faculty of Color also, tend to have more administrative commitments than their white counterparts (Urrieta & Chavez, 2010). All of this adds emotional stress that have been termed “racial battle fatigue” (Smith, 2004).

Faculty of Color experience a sense of futility when trying to communicate their experiential knowledge to their white colleagues. As they begin to stop trying, white colleagues believe that the Faculty of Color agree with their claims (Delpit, 1988). This frustration is particularly detrimental in the induction years because teacher’s identity is formed during this time (Wang, Odell & Schwille, 2008).

Kohli & Pizarro (2016) argue that the marginalization experienced by Teachers of Color go beyond their race, ethnicity and phenotype. These Teachers are challenged when they share their insights and strengths as members of a Community of Color, also working in a school environment that promotes individualism rather than a community lens that characterizes Teachers of Color in a positive light. These ontological (ways of being), epistemological (ways of knowing) and axiological (ways of establishing ethics) differences result in a sense of marginalization and isolation that hinders critical efforts to advance social justice and challenge the status quo (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).

Summary of Deterring Factors

At the top of the deterring factors we find a false dichotomy created about social justice definition by NCATE (1976) as a desirable disposition in the standards of the teaching profession and its removal altogether. In 2006, due to the narrative created about its difficulty to be operationalized and measured (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009), a danger of ideological bias (Borman et al., 2009) is also presented. Supporters of the role of dispositions contended that dispositions in teacher education should be at the core of what they strive in education: the preparation of *all* learners (Borko et al., 2007) rather than preparing teachers as classroom managers (Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015). If social justice education is biased, then aiming to have all students reach high levels of learning and to prepare them for active and full participation in a democracy (Villegas, 2007) are biased as well. These practices continue to normalize privileging some students over others. The artificial dichotomy of social justice represents a bigger social divide that oppose the belief about the purpose of a formal education.

The second deterring factor is institutionalized racism in education as a result of the epistemology of the oppressor. These hegemonic views result from the history of colonization, normalizing societal rules, beliefs and practices, and create a one-side perspective based on white positionality of power (Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). Much in the same way that natives were portrayed as “savages” in order to justify their domination, the narrative of Latin@/Mexican@s presents them lazy, criminal and violent (Valencia & Black, 2002; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999;). This social construction of Latinos has played out in the anti-immigrant, xenophobic environment in the United States. This

has contributed to the subordination of People of Color and impacts their self-identity, self-esteem, and their academic accomplishments. The epistemology of the oppressor is not exclusive to whites anymore. There are a large number of People of Color that have assimilated the notion that white beliefs are better. This ideology has negatively impacted the success of white students and their communities because teachers, counselors and administrators believe that their own experiences were typical and become dysconscious racists (King, 1991).

The third deterring factor is the role of whiteness and white privilege. Whiteness is the ideology and ontology used to maintain white supremacy (Picower, 2009). White privilege is the series of social, institutional and political benefits that appear to be unrelated to race that allow white people to be blind to their privilege and their group membership (Ladson-Billings, 2001). The consequence of whiteness is the fact that the experiences of People of Color are ignored and dismissed as an individual experience, while their white worldviews becomes ubiquitous (Delpit, 1988)

The fourth deterring factor are hegemonic constructions like meritocracy (Convertino, 2016; Picower, 2009), deficit thinking (Convertino, 2016; Matias, 2013; Valencia & Black, 2002) in addition to the tools of whiteness used by white and colonized people. These include: (a) colorblindness, (b) fear of the other, (c) white as victims/white fragility, (d) emotional excuses/white tears, (e) ideological tools, and (f) performative tools (Galman, et al., 2010; Leonardo & Porter, 2010; Picower, 2009).

Faculty of color and critically-conscious white faculty identified two additional deterring factors to the work of preparing social justice educators. The first one is the

lack of critical faculty (Sleeter, 2001) and their silence about addressing the unequal power structures for different ethnic groups out of fear of the hostility and resistance that often follows (Porfilio & Malott (2011). Sometimes educators stop being critical pedagogues because they fear facing punishment and start to use indirect language to refer to students that are racially and culturally different than the teaching population (Yosso, 2005).

The second additional deterring factor identified by Faculty of Color and critically conscious teachers is the low number of Latin@ faculty (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Ladson Billings, 2014), Latina@ tenured or tenure-track faculty members constitute only 4 percent (Ponjuan, 2013) of tenure-track positions. Academia can be very unwelcoming (Urrieta & Chavez, 2010) of non-Eurocentric epistemological stances, which have resulted in a separation of legitimate and illegitimate forms of knowledge, termed as the “apartheid of knowledge” (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). This hegemony devalues, delegitimizes, and marginalizes scholarship which draws from epistemological, theoretical, and methodological perspectives which honor sources of knowledge that exist outside of the academy, particularly among Communities of Color (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). The benefits of having more Teachers and Faculty of Color is that a) they are more likely to engage in discussions of race, challenge inequality and reduce the achievement gap (Villegas & Irvine, 2010); b) they have similar experiences to their students and have higher expectations of them (Jackson & Kohli, 2016, Ladson-Billings, 1991); and c) they are also more likely to use culturally

relevant pedagogies (Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Irvine, 2010) and they have a relational accountability towards their communities (Jackson & Kohli, 2016).

The barriers Teachers and Faculty of Color endure given the low support in teacher education programs (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2011; Amos, 2010; Jackson & Kohli, 2016) and the lack of mentorship (Dingus 2008), push Teachers and Faculty of Color out of the system or silence them altogether (Sleeter, 2001). The tenure and promotion process that includes research, teaching, and service often include being the token representative of diversity. This, paired with the hostility in and out of the classroom from white students to white colleagues, creates undue stress in the lives of Teachers and Faculty of Color. This unnecessary stress has been identified as “racial battle fatigue” (Smith, 2004). These ontological (ways of being), epistemological (ways of knowing) and axiological (ways of establishing ethics) differences result in a sense of marginalization and isolation among Teachers of Color. These hinder their efforts to advance a social justice agenda and challenge the status quo (Kohli & Pizarro, 2016).

Changing the Status Quo

Faculty of Color live between the Anglo and the Latino world (Urrieta & Chavez, 2010). This balancing and often contradictory places have been identified as *Nepantla* “where they outer boundaries of their mind meet the outer world” (Anzaldúa, 2002). Similarly, critical teachers and faculty have to navigate between contributing factors that form part of their ontological and epistemological beliefs, and deterring factors of the outer world in order to work for social justice. Anzaldúa’s (2002) *Nepantla* within her model of *conocimiento* represents the contradictory struggle towards change and creation

of new knowledge. The extant literature identifies these colliding forces in the struggle to achieve social and racial justice in education. The current status quo is represented by education programs designed on the banking model of learning where it trains teachers and faculty on skills and methods that make them the beholders of all knowledge.

By contrast, social and racial justice Professors of Color are devoted to develop critical teachers to take action and establish processes in classrooms and communities centered in critical analysis, action, and *conscientization*. The goal is for all educational stakeholders (students, families, teacher administrators, community organizations and community members) to create tangible change in the larger constructs of oppression, such as racism, classism, gender subjugation, homophobia, ageism, and ableism. These systemic changes are expected to be realized in their immediate communities, cities, states, their nations, and the larger world. For social justice Faculty of Color, all stakeholders can contribute to the improvement of the educational outcomes for Students of Color. For this reason, social justice Faculty work in solidarity along with communities they serve to maximize the use of their assets, while simultaneously develop agency to challenge structural forces that contribute to inequality. The experience, knowledge, and voice from five social justice Faculty of Color are the central focus of this study.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This study examines the work of five social justice Faculty of Color, whose standpoint unapologetically focus on pedagogical skills that engage conflict as they navigate their quest to develop new social justice teachers at different levels of the educational system. This dissertation is guided with the following three qualitative questions:

1. What are the ontological, epistemological, and axiological standpoints that shape social justice Faculty of Color pedagogical approach in teacher education programs?
2. What strategies do social justice Faculty of Color employ in teacher education programs to develop and support new K-12 social justice teachers?
3. How do social justice Faculty of Color navigate racial dynamics in academic spaces such as those in teacher education programs?

Participants

The participants of this research were five social justice Faculty of Color in teacher education programs that identify as preparing educators as critical social justice educators. Four participants identified as Latina/os while one participant identified as Asian.

In order to determine who eligibility for participation in this research, a rubric (Figure 2) was developed to assist in the selection of appropriate candidates. Borrowing from the literature, the following were considered in the selection process: (1) goals of multiculturalism and critical pedagogies; (2) level of fieldwork in the communities they

serve; and (3) how much the candidates had published regarding social justice education. These were a starting point for participant consideration, and without acknowledging the complex navigation that Professors of Color undertake in the context in which they practice their work.

Proficiency Level	1	2	3	4
Criteria
Teaching Social Justice Multiculturalism Critical Pedagogies	Emphasizes Content Integration Covers Race readings	Emphasizes Knowledge Construction Engages in Race discussion	Emphasizes Equity Pedagogy Centers Race as endemic	Emphasizes Prejudice Reduction Challenges Status Quo with an Advocacy stand
Research in Social Justice Publishing/ Presenting	Published/presented in the last 6-7 years	Published/presented in the last 4-5 year	Published/presented in the last 2-3 years	Published/presented in the last year
Service Fieldwork	I Finite level Superficial involvement (e.g. community event participation)	II Sustained level Superficial involvement (e.g. partnerships with non-profits)	III Finite Level Committed involvement (e.g. International global experiences)	IV Sustained Level Committed involvement (e.g. grassroots organizations)
TOTAL				

Figure 2. Rubric for social justice proficiency.

The first criteria used to determine the social justice proficiency was their stance and approach to address race and racism in their curricula. The existing literature indicates multicultural studies, even when they originally were intended to challenge racial prejudice, has been diluted to a more touristy application of culture integration. Using Banks' (1993) dimensions of multicultural education and Ladson-Billings' (1995)

propositions, which are more closely situated to the tenets of CRT and LatCrit, this original rubric scales from superficial treatment of race and racism to a more political and challenging stand to address multiple levels of oppression.

The second criteria, publications on institutionalized racism, was proposed before truly understanding the politics of publishing in academia. My limited understanding (at the time) in not being able to fully integrate this point for consideration will be presented in the narrative. Meaning, the politics and multiple levels of oppression Faculty of Color face in the attempt to publish work on anti-racism cannot be adequately measured. Nonetheless, the assessment on the participant's pedagogical inclination to teach about institutional racism was considered.

The third criteria represents the spectrum of involvement with the community. This involvement may vary from the superficial to a more committed involvement. An original quadrant was developed to reflect the incremental categories of this criteria using time from finite to sustained involvement on one axis, and the level of relationality from superficial to sustained commitment on the other axis.

Fifteen faculty were identified as potential participants, and were invited via e-mail. Three faculty declined the invitation, one of them because she had just recently left her professorial assignment. Another professor that declined explained he was over-committed, and using any free moment to work on his own writings and commitments. I believe this is the main reason why there was a challenge in recruiting candidates. In fact, two of the faculty that were originally contacted were part of a book release on teacher education right after the conclusion of this research. Of the six faculty that accepted the

invitation, two of them later declined. The four faculty that remained, knew or had worked with common acquaintances. A final participant that was not in the original list was recruited by a personal acquaintance. A total of five (5) social justice Faculty of Color were identified as a purposeful sample for this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Gathering oral *testimonios* from five Faculty of Color in education programs was by no means an easy feat. It became apparent how over-committed university faculty, particularly Faculty of Color, are with class loads, on-going research, and additional service commitments such as committee membership. In addition, all five participants also engage in community work, speaking engagements, and their familial responsibilities. Grace and gratitude to these faculty, as well to those who contributed to referring candidates, cannot be stressed enough. Participant profiles are included next.

Table 1. *Participant Profiles*

Participant	Title	Years in profession	Department
<i>Profesora Silvinus</i>	Assistant Professor	3-5	Educational Leadership
<i>Profesor Triano</i>	Assistant Professor	5- 10	Educational Leadership
<i>Profesora Lazo</i>	Lecturer	10-15	Teacher Education
<i>Profesora Milagros</i>	Lecturer	10-15	Teacher Education
<i>Profesor Leal</i>	Tenured professor	10-15	Educational Leadership

All names are pseudonyms to protect their identity. Years of service have been included in ranges (0-3, 3-5, 5-10, and 10-15). All participants teach at public state

universities. Table 2 shows the racial distribution of the institutions where participants serve (white versus People of Color (POC) only).

Table 2. *Institutional Racial Demographics*

Participants	Students		Faculty	
	White	POC	White	POC
<i>Profesora Silvinus</i>	13%	63%	49%	25%
<i>Profesor Triano</i>	45%	26%	57%	11%
<i>Profesora Lazo</i>	36%	16%	71%	5%
<i>Profesora Milagros</i>	18%	26%	49%	14%
<i>Profesor Leal</i>	69%	12%	75%	Less than 5%

Site

Three *testimonios* took place face-to-face at the participants' workplace; the colleges where these social justice Faculty of Color work. One was conducted in an agreed upon by both the researcher and the participant. Another *testimonio* conducted through Skype. An objective in participant sampling was to include faculty who work in different colleges campuses, to represent the diverse perspective on multiple teacher education programs.

Protocol & Data Collection

All five participants received an introductory email invitation to participate in the study. Once they agreed to participate, participants signed a consent form that explained their *testimonio* was voluntary and unremunerated. The consent form also explained that the *testimonio* would be audio recorded. A statement about the right of the participant to

end their participation at any moment was also included as well as information of who to contact in case of any problem.

A protocol (Appendix A) was created based on the existing literature in order to gather answers to the guiding research questions. In most cases it was not necessary to ask protocol questions as the *testimonios* naturally provided answers to these questions. Instead, I actively listened to their *testimonios* about the factors that contributed to or hindered their work as social justice Faculty of Color.

Testimonios were recorded with a digital recorder and a minipad in order to capture every detail, and not interfere with the natural conversation flow of *testimonios*. The recordings were sent to a transcription service. Participants received a copy of the transcripts to provide on-going member-checks and to ensure their ideas were represented accurately (Cho & Trent, 2006).

Limitations of the Study

One possible limitation is the small number of participants in the study. However, because this is a qualitative-rich design, *testimonios* as primary method enables the study to unapologetically centralize its analyses on participant voice and experience. As such, these *testimonios* are the expression of the experiential knowledge of the participants, which can help to start generalizable commonalities to other Faculty of Color across different institutions. Furthermore, I also shared preliminary findings with a group of female faculty at different universities across the country, and their feedback proved useful to corroborate with final findings.

Data validity comes with raising of a common voice and the expression of common experiences by social justice Faculty of Color committed to social and racial justice. These critical agents hold a different worldview that cannot be measured by positivist methodologies.

Positionality and Biases

My positionality as a *mestiza*, Woman of Color, from a former colony, has led me to not only question hegemonic discourses in relation to race, gender, and ethnicity, but has led to believe in the permanence of power at any level. These experiences also ignite the need to constantly counteract its perpetuation and sustainability of power. As such, I am partial to social justice and Critical Race Theories and the scholars such as Richard Delgado & Jean Stefancic, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Daniel Solorzano, Tara Yosso, Angela Valenzuela, Dolores Delgado Bernal and Gloria Anzaldúa. My positionality holds a tremendous effect on the syncretic way that this research was conducted. As a *mestiza*, I find myself in a constant state of *Nepantla*, between *culturas*, between ways of doing research, but I have found that my *mestizaje* allows me to move between worlds in a syncretic way, as long as the essence of my ontology and who I work for remain intact. My positionality is also influenced by my 16-year tenure as a K-12 educator, which has enabled me to witness the marginalization of Students of Color as they continue to be pushed out of the educational system. Worse so, I witness too many Youth of Color pushed into the pipeline to prison. I have personally struggled to bring social justice into the schooling system. I have been penalized for speaking my truth. I have tried skirting the issue to not offend sensibilities. In other words, I have protected white fragility (I did

not know those terms then) with no results. I left the classroom and became an administrator to increase my sphere of influence, only to realize that this influence is still vastly limited. I have furthered my formal education with one purpose: to increase the opportunities for Students of Color by making them aware and visible in a system that continues to dismiss them. I have a strong commitment towards my community, and I understand the need to center race in the fight for social and racial justice, especially in the current political environment. I consider our collective responsibility, as researchers, to demolish deficit narratives that have been used to marginalize and oppress our communities in order to further work towards social and racial justice.

Validity

My positionality provides cultural knowledge to accurately interpret and validate the experiences of the participants of this study. However, as the only person facilitating *testimonios* and conducting the analysis, I was very aware of potential issues of bias that could have surfaced, and therefore I used Milner's (2007) framework of dangers seen, unseen and unforeseen: a) the color and culture line, and b) critical race theory, as a crucial tool to evaluate my actions as an educational practitioner, as well as an educational researcher. Following this framework, alternative methodologies employed by Scholars of Color, especially those of native descent, provided context to disrupt traditional views and methodologies used in "traditional" research. As such, a critical and constant questioning of the evidence by reviewing transcripts in iterative phases, focused on each one of my findings in order to avoid one-sided assumptions. Alternative views were reviewed to avoid unseen dangers and the perpetuation of unforeseen dangers

that are detrimental in the research on Communities of Color. For this reason, different lenses were utilized to go through the iterative process of analyzing the emergent episodes and codes in order to confirm data analysis.

This research aimed to achieve transformational validity, defined by Trent and Cho (2006) as an emancipatory process leading towards social change to be achieved by working in a self-reflective, empathetic way with those researched. In order to achieve this validity, transcripts of the *testimonios* as well as interpretations of the transcriptions were provided to the participants. This helped to verify accuracy of their voices and intentionality of the research. No major feedback was provided on the initial analysis, with an exception of one participant with whom I had three different conversations to clarify my understandings as the research progressed.

Rational for Qualitative Approach

This dissertation uses a qualitative approach in order to unapologetically centralize this study on the voices of social justice Faculty of Color. This qualitative approach minimized potential power relationships that may exist between researcher and participants by establishing a more collaborative process. Employing *testimonios* as the primary method, allowed the researcher to become a learner and trusted listener. This provides a critical context to enhance one's ability to listen and learn experiential knowledge of the *testimoniante*s and their standpoint on educational landscape they inhabit with its barriers, structures, but also possibilities for change.

Testimonio. *Testimonio* is a powerful way to capture counterstories about life experiences that often do not fit those that are considered normative. Through a process

of critical theoretical reflection, counterstories allow participants to challenge the white narrative by offering a different version of the events by centering the voices of the marginalized. Solorzano and Yosso (2002) define counterstorytelling as a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Similarly, *testimonio* allows the individual to transport past experiences and personal identity, into the present reflection to create a new interpretations and enhancing the future (Perez-Huber, p. 643). *Testimonios* are usually guided by the will of the narrator to tell events as she sees as significant. These are often an expression of a collective experience, rather than the individual. *Testimonio* involves the participants in critical reflection of their experiences within a particular sociopolitical reality (Delgado Bernal, et al., 2012). Rooted in the traditions of oral cultures in Latina/o, African American, and Native American communities (Delgado Bernal, Villalpando, 2002, Burciaga, 2007), *testimonio* centers the voice and experience of critical individuals allowing them to be actively involved in the research process by transmitting their stories to the researcher, much in the same way the ancestors of our cultures did in the past. This creates a bond between the *testimoniante* and the *testigo/witness/researcher* of the *testimonio*. This proactively positions the researcher/*testigo* as a *Tlacuilo*, a member of a co-created space of experiential knowledge. At the root of a *testimonio* is a metaexperience (Jasso, 2016) resulting from the reflection, and learning generated from shared experiences. Although social justice Faculty of Color spoke from a position of power as faculty, Scholars of Color who continue being marginalized in academia (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, & Carmona, 2012).

Anzaldúa's Mestiza Consciousness and the Path of *Conocimiento* (knowledge).

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) argues that:

The new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance of contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode (p. 101).

For Anzaldúa, where the mestiza stands is where phenomena tends to collide. It is where the possibility of uniting all that is fragmented occurs. This is the place of the *mestiza* consciousness, a new paradigm that synthesizes her borderland identity. This is where *mestizos*, like myself, as well as the participants of this study, live, operate, and collaboratively create knowledge. As a result, it was natural to follow the path of *conocimiento* from Gloria Anzaldúa (2002) as the inquiry cycle for this research. The path to *conocimiento* is an epistemological approach that represents the motivation to understand, using intuitive senses, and our experiential knowledge, simultaneously. It is an alternate way of knowing what synthesizes reflection into action to create subversive knowledge systems that challenge the status quo (Keating, 2000). There are seven stages to Anzaldúa's path of *conocimiento*:

- 1) El arrebato, the event that rattles our comfort by challenging our reality. This arrebato, which propels us to the second stage;
- 2) Nepantla, a liminal space where we are between two realities, where reality is fluid, where knowledge is being negotiated;
- 3) Coatlicue, a stage of self-despair and hopelessness, where we confront the "evils" that have colonized the mind;
- 4) El Compromiso, a stage where we reconnect with our spirit and engage with the community with the same vision;

- 5) Putting Coyolxauhqui together, scripting a new narrative of our known world;
- 6) The blow-up, the clash of realities as we try to present new perspectives, new paradigms. This is a stage of reaffirmation of our new truth that propels us to shift; and
- 7) Shifting realities, acting out the vision with a purpose and with full understanding of the differences between one and the others (Keating, 2000). I followed some stages of this cycle more than others as my understanding and interpretation of the data evolved.

Critical race-grounded methodology. Critical Race Grounded Theory (CRGT) is suited for research because it allows the opportunity for authentic involvement with data collection and analysis while unapologetically using my own cultural intuition (Delgado Bernal, 1998) and keeping in mind that we work in a context where racism permeates the standing paradigms of research.

A critical race-grounded methodology, based on the work of Malagón, Perez-Huber & Velez (2009), extends the principles of grounded theory to include a critical race theory lens to the process of developing new theory. Grounded theory develops theory from qualitative data rather than following Positivism which is the dominant paradigm of inquiry based on the scientific method and replication (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Malagón et al., 2009 propose a critical race-grounded methodology draws from multiple disciplines to challenge white supremacy, which shapes the way research specifically, and society generally, understands the experiences, conditions, and outcomes experienced by People of Color. It allows CRT scholars to advance a form of data collection and analysis that builds from the knowledge from Communities of Color to reveal the ways race, class, gender, and other forms of oppression interact to mediate the experiences and realities of those affected by such oppression (p. 264).

I initially read the *testimonios* using the Anzaldúan cycle of inquiry and critical race grounded methodology. In the initial coding, thematic findings were organized in a way they matched identified themes found within the literature, as well as those that arose to the surface as common codes. Every time a new code was identified, *testimonios* were reviewed in a repetitive fashion to find points of convergence or discrepancies, in line with the iterative process of constant comparison methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Testimonios were coded line by line to identify salient themes practicing constant comparison method at each stage of the analysis. As new data revisited, categories and their meanings were reassessed. Generalizations and connections began to create theoretical interpretations in how educators may become social justice educators. This initial guiding lens allowed the opportunity to theorize about the role each one of the intervening constructs played in the process. Whether these were ontological or epistemological, depending on how the construct resulted from the reality of the participant or the shaping of his or her understandings, these were taken into consideration in the analyses and final written narrative.

Indigenous methodologies. The first lens added to this analysis was the indigenous methodology which is directly tied to the first question of this research: What are the ontological, epistemological, and axiological standpoints that shape social justice Faculty of Color pedagogical approach in teacher education programs? Following Milner's (2007) framework, it was crucial to understand the complexities of the historical, cultural, and racial influences that informed the identities of the participants. Indigenous

methodologies illuminate different points of convergence in the formation of these faculty that defined themselves and evidenced their relationality with their communities.

As my knowledge widened through Indigenous scholars in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Hawaii, I was particularly drawn to one of these researchers, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, who speaks about the struggle for indigenous people for self-determination (1999), which closely paralleled the testimonios. I was privileged to hear from the participating faculty:

Self-determination in a research agenda becomes something more than a political goal. It becomes a goal of social justice which is expressed through and across a wide range of psychological, social, cultural and economic terrains. It necessarily involves the processes of transformation, of decolonization, of healing and of mobilization as peoples. The processes, approaches and methodologies – while dynamic and open to different influences and possibilities – are critical elements of a strategic research agenda (p. 116).

The indigenous research agenda consist of layers of survival, recovery and development to allow for healing, decolonization, transformation and mobilization of indigenous people. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) poses that these elements are at odds with Western views of the world that see indigenous populations as “natural objects” of research which takes away the credibility of indigenous people as researchers (p. 116). She highlights this as the lack of respect and reciprocity, which has marked the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people.

Since this research is designed to find practices employed by Professor of Color that sustain social and racial justice, this paradigm aligned with the struggle that our faculty experience in academia in order to accomplish their social and racial justice goals.

Shawn Wilson (2001), researched epistemologies of indigenous students that were successful in their universities but had kept a strong indigenous identity. This work continued to elucidate the similarity between the subjects of his research and the participants of mine. His question: How is it possible for us to live in two worlds, also aligned with the Anzaldúan stage of *Nepantla* in her path to *el conocimiento* (Knowledge)?

It is important to follow how Wilson (2008) operationalizes the indigenous research paradigm. The paradigm is a set of underlying beliefs that guide our actions. An indigenous paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational, knowledge is shared with all of creation (Wilson, 2001). An Indigenous research paradigm is a set of beliefs about the world, and about gaining knowledge that guide our actions as to how research will be conducted. Those beliefs include the way indigenous people view reality (ontology), how we think about, or know this reality (epistemology), our ethics and morals (axiology), and how we go about gaining more knowledge about reality (methodology). These ways of being were essential to question the way I saw the participants of the research and helped me revisit their testimonios to understand their formation with an expanded understanding.

Finally, the work of Weber-Pillwax (2001) who collaborated with Wilson in defining and contextualizing the focus of indigenous research as one that benefits the community, and turns powerful knowledge into action refined my lens. The critical principles to do this work according to Weber-Pillwax are two points:

- 1) relationality – the purpose of the research is to benefit the community
- 2) relational accountability – the researcher is accountable for the effects of the

research on the lives of the participants (Weber-Pillwax, 2004).

This line of thinking aligned with the need to give back to the communities, a shared purpose between participants and as a researcher, as well as with the social responsibility we carry in the daily implementation of our work in those communities. These terms clearly encapsulate the purpose of the work of social and racial justice educators.

Nepantleando meant spending time negotiating meaning of my evolving knowledge about the relationship between the formation of my participants and the historical context of their indigenous roots. This recurring process allowed the opportunity to review each *testimonio* with added lenses. In order to pull data apart and create more codes as new meanings and new perspectives were evidenced. A growing kinship with the experiences shared by participants was part of an evolving process of knowledge creation. For this reason, Chicana Feminist Epistemology (Delgado Bernal, 1998) is an additional lens to support data analysis. Chicana Feminist Epistemology supports the connection of the researcher experience, as an educator, to the experiences of research participants.

Chicana feminist epistemology. Chicana Feminist Epistemology (Delgado Bernal, 1998) centers the experiences and realities of Chicanas by shifting and centralizing the analysis of a gendered experience through race/ethnicity, class, and sexuality lenses. By doing so, Chicana Feminist Epistemology addresses the shortcomings of traditional patriarchal and liberal feminist scholarship and embraces instead concepts as *mestiza*, *borderlands* and *Xicanisma*. Delgado Bernal (1998) calls Chicana Feminist Epistemology as an epistemological combat against racism with what she names “cultural intuition.”

Cultural intuition often is assumed to align to Strauss and Corbin's "theoretical sensitivity" and uses its four pillars: one's personal experience, the existing literature, one's professional experience, and the analytical process itself (as cited by Delgado Bernal, 1998), but extends the personal experience to the collective voice of the community. The employ of Chicana Feminist Epistemology enables the researcher to use the four pillars as validating tools of personal intuition in analyzing the testimonios of the participants in this qualitative study.

As the analysis progressed, a more inductive analysis of the *testimonios* with the lens of research from an indigenous paradigm (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2001; Weber-Pillwax, 2001), and Chicana Feminist Epistemology (Delgado Bernal, 1998) of intuition were critical. These lenses provided a window not only into the formation of social justice educators, but shed light on possible reasons why social and racial justice has been argued to be so elusive.

A visualization process was important, similar to a roadmap, to ensure an understanding of the Profesores experiences were following in some order. This would enable data to help us understand how social justice Faculty of Color achieve identify and meet their goals along their career as faculty. This roadmap was guided by indigenous paradigms, but could not allow the exclusion of the effects of growing up in a colonized and racialized society. In order to check data findings, a test to assess the motivation of these faculty to pursue the work of social justice in education was performed against Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, which is widely used in education and other fields.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Commonly known as the Maslow pyramid (1943), the Hierarchy of Needs represents the motivation of human beings with a pyramid that contains the most basic needs at the bottom section. This section has two layers, the furthest one at the bottom formed by the basic physical needs of an individual like food and water. While the second layer formed by the safety needs of the individual like protection and freedom from fear. The middle section of the pyramid is constitute the psychological needs of an individual: the need to belong and the need for esteem. The sense of belonging, comes from the need to be trusted and accepted by the group, and the need of self-esteem of the individual is built on feelings of competence and accomplishment. Finally, the top section of the pyramid is comprised of the self-actualization of the individual, which propels the individual to the realization of his/her potential. The sixth layer is the need for transcendence and it was not part of the original layers of the pyramid, but was added later by Maslow.

Each axial category was explored and compared again within incidents in an abductive approach (Charmaz, 2014) in order to relate them to existing theories. Interlocking Maslow's needs to the ontological, epistemological, and axiological formation of our social justice Faculty of Color was a fitting framework to elucidate new answers. This final lens allowed to put *Coyoxauhqui* together in a model that I propose.

The Social Justice Pyramid. The Social Justice Pyramid shown in Figure 3 is a model to describe a parallel path in which social and racial justice individuals move along the continuum, formed by their *mestizo* ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

threatens the whole community, for example, the prosecution of immigrants and Communities of Color.

The middle section of the pyramid of social justice also corresponds to Maslow's middle section: the psychological needs of an individual, such as the need to belong, and the need for esteem. The way that the individual thinks about his/her reality is his/her epistemology (Wilson, 2001) and is shaped by the messages that the individual receives in the contexts where he/she moves. These messages once internalized, become a crucial part of the individual epistemological formation. In this section, the individual feels pressured to conform in order to feel acceptance to the group. This can lead to silencing and a "melting" of identity in order to become part of the identity of the hegemony. For this reason, this layer is referenced as *Calladito te ves más bonito* (prettier when silenced). On the other hand, part of this epistemological formation is the awaking and demystification of the structure of power. As such, this layer is named *No todo lo que brilla es oro* (all that shines is not gold).

Finally, the top section of the pyramid of social justice corresponds to Maslow's self-actualization, and the need for transcendence. These levels are only achieved when individuals are empowered to fulfill their axiology, the set of moral and ethics that guide their life, which in the case of social justice educators translates to the benefit of the community they belong and/or serve.

Self-actualization, which propels an individual to the realization of his/her potential has been termed *por los que no* (for those who cannot) given the acute awareness of the systemic sifting of People of Color in the educational pipeline working towards social

justice. Finally, transcendence reflects the crystallization of the relational responsibility of the individual towards his community and humanity. Hence, this top layer is known as *Haz el bien sin mirar a quien* (*Do good work for the common good*).

***Dichos* (sayings).** Spanish phrases are commonly known as “*dichos*” (popular sayings). *Dichos* illustrate the oral transmission of the cultural wealth of knowledge among Communities of Color, which express the deep wisdom of the community with a brevity of words. This oral tradition is a way our indigenous communities continue to pass intergenerational wisdom and knowledge through various generations. The endurance of these *dichos* is by itself a longitudinal oral research of the ontology, epistemology and the axiology of communities that continue to produce a wealth of community knowledge without western methods of recording or preserving.

The proposed Social Justice Pyramid illustrated in Figure 4, represents the formation of a critical social justice educator that often lives between two paradigms. This model will be utilized to analyze and present detail description of critical findings in this study.

Summary of Chapter Three

Chapter three describes the guiding lens and theoretical frameworks used to carry out this study. It starts describing the participants, five social justice Faculty of Color in teacher education programs. An explanation of the process utilized to select the candidates for the study was presented, as well as the protocol used for data collection. This chapter also discusses the delimitations and limitations of this study.

Important to this chapter is detailing the positionality of the researcher as a *mestiza*, woman of color, partial to social justice and critical race theory, also influenced the 16-

year experience as a professional experience as a K-12 educator in a school setting. Being aware of potential issues of bias propelled the use of multiple lenses in the conducting of this qualitative study.

These lenses are described in detail in this chapter, and include the use of *testimonio* (Burciaga, 2007; Delgado Bernal, Villalpando, 2002; Perez-Huber, 2009; Solorzano and Yosso, 2002) to center the voices of the participants in the study. Anzaldúa's (1987) Mestiza consciousness, and path of conocimiento as an inquiry cycle to allow the researcher to critically cognize the problem. The iterative analysis of the testimonios started initially with the use of critical-race grounded theory (Malagón, Perez-Huber & Velez, 2009) in order to look at the emerging codes, keeping in mind the different forms of oppression in our realities. *Testimonios* were coded line by line to identify salient themes using the constant comparison method at each stage of the analysis. The next lens added to this analysis was the indigenous methodology (Tuhiwai, 1999; Weber-Pillwax, 2001 & 2004; Wilson, 2001 & 2008). This paradigm includes an indigenous view of reality (ontology), how we think about, or know this reality (epistemology), our ethics and morals (axiology), and how we go about gaining more knowledge about reality (methodology). This paradigm was key to answer the first guiding question of this study.

Indigenous methodologies illuminate the relationally linking researched and researcher (*testimoniante* and *testigo*) and the kinship that exist in the shared space of the research process. The indigenous research agenda consist of layers of survival, recovery and development to allow for healing, decolonization, transformation and mobilization of indigenous peoples. This agenda addresses the second and third question of this research

as it aligned with our faculty' experience in academia in order to accomplish their social and racial justice objectives.

Indigenous research also benefits the community, and turns powerful knowledge into action. The critical principles to do this work are a) relationality – the purpose of the research is to benefit the community, and b) relational accountability – the researcher is accountable for the effects of the research on the lives of the participants (Weber-Pillwax, 2004). This aligns with the need to give back to communities; a shared purpose between the participants and myself as a researcher, as well as with the social responsibility we carry in the daily implementation of our work in those communities. These terms clearly encapsulate the purpose of social and racial justice educators.

My cultural intuition pointed to a growing kinship with the experiences of the participants as influenced my decision to include a Chicana Feminist Epistemology framework (Delgado Bernal, 1998). This additional lens add to my analysis in order to tie my personal experience as an educator to the experiences of the participants. Cultural intuition is a concept similar to Strauss and Corbin's "theoretical sensitivity" and uses its four pillars: one's personal experience, the existing literature, one's professional experience, and the analytical process itself (Delgado Bernal, 1998), but extends the personal experience to the collective voice of the community. The final lens added to this analysis was Maslow's Pyramid in order to understand the motivation of these faculty to pursue the work of social justice in education.

Interlocking Maslow's needs to the ontological, epistemological, and axiological formation of our social justice faculty seems fitting to help elucidate the challenges of

educators functioning between two paradigms (those of the oppressed and the oppressor). This final lens allowed me to put *Coyoxauhqui* together in a model to present the findings of this research in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Findings

The previous chapter described the methodology shaping the approach to analyze the data from the *testimonios*. The Social Justice Pyramid (SJP) is a proposed model after combining multiple empirical lenses to support this study. The SJP model serves as an organizational matrix to help contextualize and describe findings of this research. This model will also explain the roadmap that the *profesores* explained in order to conduct the social and racial and justice work at the universities where they work.

Starting at the bottom of the pyramid with the ontological principles that guide our *profesores*, we progress upwards to the top layer, their axiology, which will illustrate the strong commitment and relational accountability that our *profesores* have towards the community they serve. As we move upwards, it will become more and more evident that there is a substantial difference between the paradigms of Faculty of Color working for social and racial justice and the paradigm of faculty without this stance, since Maslow's hierarchy reflects individual needs, while the needs of social justice are relational.

Findings for Question # 1: Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology of Social Justice Faculty of Color

Ontology of social justice educators. This section will assess and utilize the two bottom layers of the Social Justice Pyramid and explain the different approaches to address the basic needs of humans which results in a different ontology. Maslow identified these lower levels where deficiency needs are located. These help explain that without these basic needs, an individual cannot progress to the higher levels. In the next two sections, we will see how the familial and community response to the needs of our

profesores create a completely different ontology that is foundational to their formation as social justice Faculty of Color.

El sacrificio (community sacrifice to provide basic needs). The sacrifices an older generation experienced in order to provide the opportunity of education to the following generation was a salient theme in these *testimonios*. The sacrifice was not a lonely act - it is a communal action led by elders on behalf of the younger generations. The impact on the beneficiaries of these *sacrificios* were directly internalized as a relational responsibility towards the rest of the community. In other words, as a way to pay it back and to pay it forward (Nava, 2012). Four of the five participants shared a common history of sacrifice provided by their elders. Often, elders pulled their resources together, selflessly, to provide access to a formal education for their children and grandchildren. Their *sacrificio* is not perceived any different than the ritual observed by different cultures as a tribute to a divinity in order to achieve something greater. In some cultures this sacrifice involves an offering, a willing *ofrenda*, in order to obtain a benefit for the community. In the case of these social justice Faculty of Color, their ancestors sacrificed their own aspirations and dreams in lieu of providing the next generation a better life, “*una vida mejor.*”

The awareness of their family’s struggles are part of a bigger historical struggle which ignited four of the participants to take on social justice work. However, only two shared details of this particular struggle. These Faculty of Color shared witnessing, firsthand, the struggle of their families working in the fields. *Profesor* Leal points out that as a child, this was a catalyst to ignite his interest in social justice work:

As somebody who was really close to my grandfather, he talked a lot—they were migrant farm workers, and they talked a lot about the stories and the struggles of doing that, as a family. I just remember growing up with a real strong sense of the struggle, and how they worked; they really were dedicated to providing for the family, and that opportunities weren't always available to them.

Profesor Leal at a really young age understood that the family was sacrificing plenty to provide opportunities to the next generation in spite of fully knowing that they would not directly benefit from the struggle. He understood the meaning of this sacrifice through his grandfather's stories of migration as the family travelled from crop to crop:

I always felt very proud of the fact that they were very hardworking people, very humble people, that the stories that they were sharing—they used to migrate from town to town following the crops. The farmers weren't always treating them very fairly. They were always trying to not pay them. I was always just very interested, and my grandfather was a good storyteller, so I just knew that that part of my history was very important to me. Even though I didn't grow up farm working, I still felt like—I felt like that was part of who I was, and I wanted to honor the sacrifice, by doing a career that would allow me to give back.

For *Profesor Leal*, his *abuelo*'s storytelling allowed him to understand the sacrifice of his family in order to give him, and the younger generation different opportunities. The sacrifice of his *abuelo* and his family not only provided the basic needs of food and shelter allowing him to focus in broadening his opportunities. *Profesor Leal* internalized these lessons of sacrifice for the good of the community which is at the foundation of his community-driven work. He sees his work as an offering to the community that supported him to reach his self-realization.

Profesor Triano also identifies with his family struggle at the core of his social justice ideological formation:

I grew up as a child of farm workers. For me, I have a deeper understanding of why I saw social inequality and the impact that it had on my family. I think it is one of the key drivers for why it is that I do what I do. By that, I simply mean, part of the reason

that I see myself as a teacher, as a pedagogue, as a professor, as a researcher, I think stems from the idea of, how is it that we could try to have an impact in. I mean, not only in the educational trajectory of young people and students, but also believing and seeing education as a place where social transformation can begin to happen.

Profesor Triano was very conscious of the inequitable labor conditions that his family experienced. He sees this knowledge as the seed of his development as an educator and researcher for social justice given what his family sacrificed so he could have more opportunities:

My mom is from that older generation that didn't have access. In many ways, they kinda sacrificed and they were working as a family collective in the fields. At that time to bring back resources for the larger family was a collective effort. They didn't have an opportunity. I see that of myself, as that—almost in that same generation with my younger *tíos and tías* that are—we finally got more stable and consistent access.

Profesor Triano also refers to his mother's contributing to the collective for survival but also to provide the younger generations with the economic stability and the access to a formal education. The gift of opportunity was available to the next generation by the sacrifice of their ancestors. *Profesor Triano* also talks about how that tied to the development of his relational responsibility:

Unlike older generations -I say that from the perspective of my grandmother who wanted to become an educator, but didn't have an opportunity to do so. My mother, similarly, who started school here when they migrated to the U.S., but as a middle school—as a high schooler, at the beginning of her high school year, within—left school. In many ways, she was pushed out for a variety of reasons, only to return later and get a GED and become an instructional aide. For me, I see a strong influence of particular women educators in my family as grounding me. Seeing that as an opportunity for having an impact and being an influence—not necessarily in status, but of your relationship to others, as a body of influence in your community.

Profesor Triano explain how seeing the *sacrificio* of the women in his family propelled his desire to achieve status not necessarily define by Western values, but as a

relational accountability towards his community. This relational accountability will be covered further in the next section.

Dale la mano a tu hermano (relational commitment to provide security and safety).

The *sacrificio* in the communities where these faculty were raised were not only for their immediate relatives, it was also for other members of the greater community. This kind of relational accountability is usually misunderstood by dominant cultures, as *Professor Triano* explains:

I've had students who, in many ways, feel like there's something particularly wrong when you have a family. They'll say things like, "Oh, well, immigrants, where you have 30 people in 1 house." They're making a joke of the larger idea that people have to collectivize.

The dominant culture of rugged individualism, perceives community relationality in a deficit manner. Their worldviews cannot fathom why immigrant communities lend a hand to each other and work together towards the improvement of their communities instead of fending for themselves and competing for resources. *Professor Triano* explains the importance of reciprocal relationships in non-dominant communities:

You know what? I've been there, and I recognize that in pooling your resources, that in looking out for somebody else is really something significant and really important. These are reciprocal relations that you have. It's kind of the person who visits you as a kid. They're there, and their kids are there for three or four days, or a week, or two weeks. You're like, "Mommy, how long are these people gonna be here?" It's like, "Oh, *Mijo*, no te preocupes. Alguna vez ellos nos ayudaron. Tu abuelita cuando..." It's these ideas of looking out for others.

This relational commitment to help one another is deeply ingrained in non-dominant communities through the commitment to support members of the community, especially in a time of need. This "*Hoy por ti, mañana por mi*" (I'll help you today, you'll help me

tomorrow) attitude that is dismissed many times in a competitive and self-determinist society, is a fundamental value in Communities of Color.

This is an ontological divide with a profound negative impact for Students of Color being educated by a mostly white teachers, counselors and administrators. These educational agents often cannot understand why students do not align with the “pull yourself up by your boot straps mentality.” Instead, Student of Color come from families and community aligned to community-oriented that places family and community first. This disconnect sends deficit messages to students that too often internalize this into compliance, self-defeat, or propel them into resistance. It is not until a person consciously analyzes how the system has influenced her belief system that she can finally set the liberatory steps towards achieving social justice. I called this “*El arrebató*” (Epiphany) because this awakening changes the epistemological formation of the individual. This *arrebató* will be further discussed as we move to discuss the epistemological formation of a social justice Faculty of Color.

Epistemology of social justice Faculty of Color. This section will utilize the middle layers of the Social Justice Pyramid and explain the different approaches to address the psychological needs of humans which produces a unique epistemology. Maslow identified these middle levels where the safety needs are located. These help explain that without feeling accepted and validated an individual cannot experience a sense of belonging. In the next three sections, we will see how this response to the needs of our *profesores* creates a completely different epistemology that is crucial to their formation as social justice Faculty of Color.

El arretrato (the epiphany/epistemological shift). As informed by Gloria Anzaldúa's *conocimiento*, *el arretrato* is the pivotal event that changes our reality, forever. It is the epistemological shift that shakes the core of a person and surrenders previous beliefs to a new realization. *El arretrato* was present and evident in all the participants of this study. For some, it came during college as they were exposed to Ethnic Studies and Critical Race Theory. For others it came early through the oral history passed on by older generations, often by their *abuelos*. Participants expressed the anger they experienced once the veil of ignorance (Rawls, 1971) was removed, and they realized that Communities and People of Color experience systemic oppressions and colonization.

El arretrato serves as a real validation of *el sacrificio* as a cultural asset, and it also debunks deficit views of their home culture, and offers an explanation to the erasure of their culture in their schooling experience. In that realization, *los profesores* not only came to terms with the power of education, both as an oppressive tool and as a transformational tool, but they also solidified their social responsibility to take action towards changing the system.

In the case of *Profesor Triano*, he narrates:

My first encounter with critical race theory was with a history professor I had that was looking at African-American—it was history, but it was African-American history. We always got that labor, race kind of analysis to it. I really liked it because I became angry and had a social awakening. You start looking at these inequities in ways that really make you question. Then I took some Chicano studies courses. I took Chicano studies, because that's what it was, Chicano studies, at that time. Chicano Latino studies. That furthered my thinking.

For *Professor Triano*, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was the vehicle for developing the consciousness to understand the assimilatory nature of the educational system. A system that denied and relegated his culture and other Cultures of Color in history. Feeling angered, *Professor Triano* set out to find more evidence of this oppression of his culture and history by taking Chicano studies courses.

“I shouldn’t have had to wait until I was in college to take Chicano Studies” explains *Professor Triano* to express the sense of being wronged and deprived of a real education. This feeling served as a catalyst for *Professor Triano* to work towards fostering the “valuing (of) the richness that families and communities bring with them to school spaces” as a foundation of his work towards social justice. *Profesora Milagros* also shared similar *arrebato* experience in college,

It was an eye-opening thing, and got me to reassess my history, and my own experiences in a different light. To experience it, and analyze it as more issues of racism, and classism, and sexism. That gave me the tools. It was eye opening going back and understanding the history. Then, feeling a little cheated because, as you’re coming into consciousness, right, and hearing all these things that were kept from you. That spurred me to want to be an educator, right, kind of a wow, even though I had the best education or whatever, that means all these things were kept from me. It was that anger, I think, initially, and then seeing the possibility in education to correct those.

Profesora Milagros, attended private schools and had “access” to what she considered “a better education,” and yet, it was not until she was an undergraduate student that she realized how she was deprived of her own history and the pride of her culture. As she became aware of how she had internalized racism to the point of considering that the right way of doing things was the “white way,” she understood why she distanced herself from her culture. She chose to attend college as far as possible from her family.

Ironically, it was far away while at college that she was able to rescue her culture and her pride in it. *Profesora* Milagros came to understand how colonizing her education was and how naïve she had been for not questioning what she was taught. That realization propelled her into her “*arrebato*” and allowed her to see a new reality.

Profesora Milagros’ *arrebato* was followed by the hunger for learning about culture as she explains:

I started taking a lot of cultural anthropology classes. A lot of readings, in particular, I remember in one of the classes I read a book on teachers as organic intellectuals. That book along with bell hooks, was like, “Okay. Education is the place that I need to be.”

In teaching, *Profesora* Milagros found her calling and a way to bring social justice to teacher preparation programs. Similarly, *Profesora* Silvinus experienced this “*arrebato*” once her beliefs were shaken:

My “Chicanos in Education” class was very transformative where I saw and experienced through my professor’s activities the systemic inequities. All the times I was trying to fix these broken students until I realized it is the system that broke them. Then I wanted to fix the system and then saw research as an avenue to do just that.

Profesora Silvinus felt colonized to believe the students who had not achieved her level of success were in that position because of their own doing. This propelled her need to want to fix students; she practiced the “white savior” mentality, which comes from a deficit view of People of Color – her people. This came to a halt when she realized how the education system set oppressive conditions limiting the achievement of the students that she wanted to fix. She also realized these oppressive systems were precisely those that conditioned deficit ideologies as her own views. *Profesora* Silvinus adds that CRT was really influential in shaking her epistemological beliefs:

Critical race theory has been the most influential, and you know what is ironic is that the first time I read about critical race theory was in the ethnic studies course. It was introduced as critical race theory, multiculturalism and something else. I said: No, Critical Race theory is too strong, teachers are never going to go for it; we need something in the middle... I was questioning it, but thankfully, I came back to it and I saw how powerful it is, and who it is meant for. It doesn't matter if people don't get it that is not the point.

Professor Leal experienced an early awareness of the lack of educational opportunities for his community:

Even as a young child, I remember being interested in those issues. I remember wanting to be involved in some kinda career that would allow me to work on those types of issues of equity and equality in schooling. I was always interested in politics. I felt like maybe go to law school. I thought maybe be involved with policy issues, cuz I was interested and I wanted to figure out a way to be involved with that.

As a child, he could not change the status quo, but *profesor Leal* saw education as the way for him to defend the rights of his family and his community. This early awareness propelled *Professor Leal* to deepen his knowledge, and pursue a career that would challenge the injustices he heard in his grandfather's stories. Furthermore, *Professor Leal* focused his work as he became formally educated:

Once I got into the doctoral program, I started to read more about issues related to Critical Race Theory, Latino Critical Race Theory, Chicana Feminist Epistemologies. I really began to think in terms of, if I'm going to do a doctoral program, and if I'm going to do a dissertation, I really want to be involved with doing something that was directly related to social justice issues.

Knowing how the status quo had affected the Latino community, influenced *Professor Leal's* decision to do the work he does today. He points to the importance of sharing the struggle with young people, as well as to include it as part of the curriculum in schools.

Interestingly, participants were exposed to CRT and critical pedagogies in African American history (*Professor Triano*), Ethnic Studies (*Professor Triano* and *Profesora*

Silvinus) and in Anthropology classes (*Profesora* Milagros). Only *Profesor* Leal was exposed to CRT and critical pedagogies in an education program while in a doctoral program. This suggests a gap in the preparation of social justice educators prior to any doctoral training. This also elucidates the importance of Ethnic Studies, Chicana/o Studies, and African American History to provide a more critical lens to students and the earlier the most proactive way to challenge the status quo.

The *arrebato* is not defined as a single moment in time, but instead series of moments in any epistemological formation of an individual. It is when the veil of ignorance and colonization gets torn to allow the individual to see the societal engine that shapes and dominates the narrative of the status quo. Multiple *arrebatos* are necessary in the deconstruction of internalized narratives that have shaped a psychological formation before the individual develops a new paradigm to approach life, especially one towards social and racial justice.

Though *El arrebato* was clearly present for our *profesores*, this is not necessarily true for everybody. We know many educators have never experienced an *arrebato*, and their colonized beliefs are never challenged if their psychological needs at this level are satisfied, and they feel they belong to the dominant group. The sense of belonging and validation in this section comes from messages that the individual received in contexts where he/she moves, and where they become part of his/her epistemological formation.

Calladito te ves más bonito (“**you look prettier when silent**”). *Calladito te ves más bonito* (you look prettier when silent) is a Mexican saying that is used mostly when adults want kids to be silenced, or keep discretion. This phrase is used here to note how People

of Color, particularly as one navigates formal schooling spaces have to “behave” or be silenced. Many are forced to conform if they want to belong and excel in academia. Maslow’s pyramid of need defines this layer of epistemological formation as the need to belong for any individual. At this stage, we also find the relationships that contribute positively to the epistemological formation of the individual. Trust and acceptance are at the root of an epistemological formation. Starting as early as elementary school, Students of Color receive subtractive or additive messages that inform their beliefs about who they are and what they are capable of doing. The following excerpt from *Profesora* Silvinus’s experience best exemplifies how these messages can affect members of the same family in opposite ways:

I was quiet, light-skinned, well-behaved. Even if I misbehaved, they said: “No, she would never say that.” Yes, I did but I was going to let you think I didn’t. My cousin was seen as a Latino male and he was tracked the other way. A professor showed me how we were tracked, and I realized, my cousin was tracked since the moment the driver put me at the front of the bus and he placed him at the back with the rowdy kids.

Profesora Silvinus recognized the academic tracking system gave her an advantage in contrast her own cousin was denied similar opportunities. *Profesora* Silvinus received messages that validated her. Her physical traits and her demeanor were viewed favorably compared to her cousin’s traits who presumed as a rowdy student. He was receiving subtractive messages at every level, from the classroom to transportation, and as *Profesora* Silvinus later reflects, these messages had nothing to do where their aspirations, level of intellect, or their academic ability:

He learned English before I did but somehow. I was put in the MESA-GATE class after school. By sixth grade we were in different classrooms, and by seventh grade, we were in different academies. I was in UC Davis (academy) and he wasn’t in any.

We were very much tracked. All of these things informed my lens of why I do what I do.

Regardless of the fact that *Profesora* Silvinus's cousin learned English before she did, he was deemed unworthy of the opportunities that *Profesora* Silvinus was afforded like the MESA-GATE after school program. The fact that he was not in any academy evidenced the school expectations about his educational aptitude. As the years went by, *Profesora* Silvinus's cousin was put on a different educational path that curtailed his opportunities, and by default his achievements. Unfortunately, this is not the exception, and it represents the experience of many Students of Color. Too many Students of Color are prejudged based on presumed personalities and phenotype, discounted and dismissed very early in their formal schooling. The epistemological formation of the individual is profoundly marked by these subtractive experiences (Valenzuela, 1999). For these reasons, the third layer of the Social Justice Pyramid is called *calladito te ves más bonito*. This *dicho* highlights the role that fitting (or not fitting) the status quo can impact your educational opportunities. This impacts Students of Color, educators, and Faculty of Color in American educational institutions.

Much in the same way that *Profesora* Silvinus shared accessing benefits early in elementary school due to her phenotype and demeanor, *Profesor* Triano shared the positive impact of being mentored by faculty:

I started getting mentoring support from faculty. A lot of my own decisions to get into this field come from that; seeing myself and seeing the professor as a possibility of having an impact. I do pretty well there. Then, they're encouraging me to pursue graduate school.

The messages that *Profesor* Triano received were positive and made him feel good about himself. These relationships made him feel and believe he belonged in academia. Faculty mentorship helped him see the professoriate as an opportunity to give back to his community as well. *Profesor* Triano decided to further his education because he was encouraged by the support and appreciation of his faculty. Their guidance encouraged him to participate in different opportunities that opened his possibilities:

Then I get to my junior and my senior year, and it's really like I get into a research program, and it's—I go down to a conference.... representatives from the School of Education were like, "Oh, you'd be perfect here. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." Then with that mentorship, a doctoral student at that time said, "Hey, you should apply. We need more *Raza* there." I apply, I get in... It was big jump from going to a public school to a very elite institution.

We can attribute *Profesor* Triano's achievements to serendipitous acts in his life, but we cannot deny that there was a point of convergence between the traits he possessed that were supported by his faculty. This in turn made his talents visible and appreciated. The resulting effect were the mentoring opportunities he received to continue on his educational path.

Profesor Triano warns, though, there is a risk of being colonized during this phase, of being white-washed given the desire to conform to traditional educational institutions:

I think part of what happens is that there's a certain kind of pain that we go through to conform to these institutions in ways that elements of your culture, elements of your soul, in some ways, are targeted and attacked.

Profesor Triano comments clearly speak about the pressure experienced by students, to remove what is seen as a "cultural baggage" or as he explained, "everything about you that is somehow different from the mainstream, dominant ideologies that seek to de-Mexify us or de-Latinofy us, to remove whatever ethnic of us." This view of other

cultures as a deficit has justified the assimilatory nature of education. This has rendered students invisible and developed a subtractive message of not belonging to the American dream at every level of schooling, from elementary to the doctorate. Often, the only resource in these situations can be silence, because of the risk to be separated from a space that we feel we are transgressive in the first place. Silence can also highlight the instability in the professoriate before tenure. The following example from *Professor Leal* exemplifies this experience:

When I first started, I just wanted to get tenure. I didn't want to affront anybody. I didn't want to endanger my tenure process. A lot of times, I just did what I needed to do. I published. I tried to teach as much as—as good as I could, as well as I could.

Keeping a low profile is common at this point. All faculty with the exception of one participant narrated similar experiences of their initial years as an assistant professor.

There is an awareness of the epistemological divide between them and those who differ from their social justice stance. This is acknowledged through microaggressions (*malas lenguas*) as one of the tools of whiteness is to attack self-esteem and feeds the impostor syndrome that many Educators of Color experience in academia. This stage is where social justice work can be paralyzing if the institutions have no regard to include social justice in their mission. While institutions want to increase racial diversity within, this often happens without any intention of embracing a more equitable way of doing business.

There was a clear purpose that characterized the participants in this study about who they are, and who they intend to serve. This can translate to silence and *di jure*

compliance as common and temporary coping mechanisms, but at this stage both are strategic. One of the faculty described it best as “Silenced, but not sold out”:

Sometimes, I bite my tongue, just don’t say anything. You could look around the room, and you don’t have the numbers, even if you wanted to vote. Sometimes it wasn’t worth going there with some people. I just didn’t feel like using the energy, when there’s five of them and one of me, or five and six of them and two of us. We would leave the office and then talk about it, with my friend or whatever. I always reminded myself that if I don’t get tenure, I can’t help anybody. I can’t even help myself. It’s a combination, just being committed to who you are, but also being realistic.

In a way this represents another sacrifice to provide for the next generation and for the benefit of the community, which points to the continuous cycle of relational accountability experienced by Faculty of Color. This often leads them to work within the dominant paradigm that contradicts their personal purpose. Clearly, Faculty of Color know the only way to change the system is from within. Here, participants realize that educational institutions that they initially saw as a way to improve the conditions for their community are also perpetuating the marginalization of their communities.

No todo lo que brilla es oro (“all that shines is not gold”). This Spanish saying means “all that shines is not gold” representing the process of the demystification that occurs at the graduate level. The development of a renewed sense of competence and accomplishment is warranted. This layer of the pyramid corresponds to the development of self-esteem, also aligned in Maslow’s Pyramid. Having moved beyond the star-struck stage and the need to belong, individuals can look at their environment and the people in their surroundings. It is at this stage that new paradigm shift, the credence of their own competence, solidifies for Faculty of Color. Here they recognize the fallacy of the hegemonic narratives about minoritized populations. The following excerpt best

exemplifies how *Profesor Triano* debunked one of the messages internalized by

Communities of Color:

(Being at a tier I university) demystified the process of who is there and their abilities, their varying levels of knowledge. What counts and what doesn't count, and why those things don't count. I think (being at a Tier 1 University) was good for me in the sense that I gain the opportunity to see a different context.

Profesor Triano realized during his university years that his white counterparts were not smarter or more competent than he was. In fact, the difference was what the institution valued and nothing else. Informed by this realization, *Profesor Triano* was able to see that the system was sifting talented Individuals of Color away from the educational pipeline, which reinforced his commitment to work for social justice.

Tenured mentors and colleagues that also work for social justice can make a difference between getting diluted, and being able to assert a social justice stance.

Profesor Leal explains how mentors guided him to do this:

Early on, I had really good mentors who taught me that, too. "Hey, you don't need to say anything on this. I'll say it. Let me just make the point. I'm gonna say something. That way they understand that we know what they're doing. We're not gonna win, but at least they know we know what they're doing."

By making this point, *Profesor Leal's* mentor added another layer to *Profesor Leal's* social justice armor, in spite of his being silenced. In the same way that his mentor expressed what *Profesor Leal* was not allowed to do, given what was at risk (his tenure),

Profesor Leal reaffirmed strategic needs:

I think one of my mentors told me, "You have to remember where you were. You took the job. You work at a research one institution. When you're at a research-intensive institution, which means they're gonna have certain standards. You have to at least meet the standards where you work. Don't forget that." He always told me, "Don't forget that. Your number one job is to publish, and publish at the top tier journals, cuz that's what they're—that's the first thing they're gonna look at."

During their epistemological formation, Faculty become very strategic about navigating constraints within academia in order to get a seat at the table. They do it consciously in order to reach a place where they can have a direct impact on their communities. Having left the safety and familiarity of their own communities, they realize there are different paradigms that regulate to control people. In trying to move them, they abandon their formation and may be absorbed by hegemonic ideologies. As a result, social justice Faculty of Color adopt a syncretic way of being, using the tools of the hegemony but keeping a hold and clarity in their intentionality and purpose.

Axiology of social justice educators. This section will address the two top layers of the social justice pyramid to explain the strong value of relational accountability present in our profesores that is central to their work as social justice Faculty of Color.

Por los que no (for those who can't). Sandra Cisneros concludes her book *House of Mango Street*, expressing that she will return for those who can't advocate for themselves, *por los que no*. After realizing that her future was to leave her home community to become a writer, Esperanza, the protagonist in the text, also expressed her commitment to return to help those who stayed behind. This phrase explains the relational accountability experienced by social justice Faculty of Color, to move between opposing paradigms but persist in their efforts to work for the benefit of Communities of Color.

This layer of the pyramid corresponds to the self-actualization in Maslow's Pyramid but it goes beyond the self. Even within academic constraints, Faculty of Color direct their research efforts to study marginalized communities and find new ways to provide

access and expand possibilities for the new generations of scholars. All the participants are at different levels in their academic trajectory, and yet, all of them focus their academic queries in their communities. This serves as a main source of their research and writing motivation. They do this as a source of strength and as a way of resistance against colonial practices in academia. They do it to counteract the racial battle fatigue that working for social justice too often generates. Mainly, they do this because they feel a sense of accountability to Communities of Color, and a need to benefit their own communities by legitimizing their voice and stories. These create opportunities to those that come after them, new generations of Students and Scholars of Color. *Professor Triano* provides an example of what writing about his community creates for social justice Faculty of Color:

This focus are really places of strength. I think that I see my work, in many ways, is to write about some of those issues, to really push back so that the—there's other folks like myself, or from other groups, or from other experiences, that can look at some of the stuff that we write or talk about, and relate and say, "Oh, wow. I see myself in this article, or I see myself in this story, or I see myself in the words that you're writing about." I think this could be powerful in the sense that, again, it's another way to legitimate, in the sense that we have our own stories.

Professor Triano expresses the relational responsibility that is attached to his self-realization. He takes the fact that he has reached a position that allows him to prepare others, and as a result, he takes his research and publications very seriously. He knows that his writing will be a source of validation and strength to others that share his lived experiences and those following the path of academia.

This relational responsibility was evident in the writing and research produced by the participants which is focused on their communities and how to improve the educational conditions for future generations. Professor Leal shared how this is very purposeful:

That's one of the [strategies]. If I was going to do research, and if I was going to dedicate my time and my expertise, that's where I was going to do it. I didn't wanna—I didn't want give my time anywhere else. That's one of the strategies I did use, when you're facing battle fatigue, racial battle fatigue. It's like I'm just not gonna—I'm not going work with you. Some people might look at that as arrogant or selfish, but I'm going to dedicate my time in my community. Yeah, I'm going to publish about it, so you can't tell me that I'm not doing my work. That's what I'm going to write about. If I'm going to volunteer my time, and if I'm going to do community service, I'm going to do it there. I'm not gonna do it anywhere else.

Even when they are working within stringent and oppressive parameters set by their institutions, which can vary substantially from their own principles, *profesores* find a way to use their research and writing as a source of resistance to the status quo. This allows them to justify and satisfy institutional requirements. This also exemplifies the indigenous axiology at the root of their work, which propels their research to do something beneficial for this world (Weber-Pillwax, 2001). The following excerpt exemplifies the strategic way that faculty satisfy their multi-fold agenda to work for the benefit of their communities:

We always tie it to research, so that you could get more doctoral help, you can get funding, and I could get tenure, and my colleague could become full-time. We started small, strategically. We never lost sight of what the purpose was, which was to work with Latino and Chicano communities and families, to change the culture of the school, to get rid of deficit thinking, and to help center the experiences of the families that we were working with. That's the way—we always remembered those goals.

With his work and strategy, *Profesor* Leal accomplished several institutional requirements with his priorities in mind: (a) mentored future faculty; (b) satisfied the tenure requirements; (c) supported requirements with his collaborative research

colleague; (d) advanced social justice work in his community; and (e) validated community strengths and wealth they have to offer. He expressed his axiological principles of relational accountability very succinctly, “that’s the way” to getting things done by acknowledging those that came before him, and to continue critical work for the ones who that will come after him.

Haz bien sin mirar a quien (“for the common good”). *Haz bien sin mirar a quien* is a *dicho* commonly used by adults to teach their children the value of helping others unconditionally. The peak of Maslow’s pyramid includes the legacy that individuals who are considered high achievers, leave for humanity. For individuals working towards social justice, this stage allows the individual to fully implement an axiology based on respect, responsibility, and reciprocity towards their respective community. To have arrived at a place of transcendence means that the impact of their research and work have translated now to benefit generations to come. In a way it completes a full circle that started with the sacrifice of the community to help the individual advance to, then, a point where the individual can provide to the community. The work of one of the participants is at the top representation of transcendence in the Social Justice Pyramid of all the participants. He describes the work he has led in the community as follows:

Now, probably the last ten years, I’ve been looking at higher education scholarship too. Working on university community partnerships, building partnerships, doing community-based work. Community-based activism, community-based partnerships, that’s the way I’ve grown into my work, too. It’s like how can higher educational faculty and administrators partner with communities, partner with neighborhoods, partner with schools, not to be top down, but to be more horizontal? How you work—how you do work in a way that building educational pathways, so that you break down the barriers between K-12 and higher Ed, in a partnership framework.

His work is creating ripple effects in the community because it involves several groups working together to transform the educational pathways for Students of Color. Participants in this particular partnership includes students, parents, teachers, administrators, doctoral students, university faculty working at the same level as *Profesor* Leal explains:

The community-based part of it is a different approach, because higher education teaches you that you're the expert. So, you go into the community, and you conduct the research. A community-based approach is not that. You're supposed to give some of that power away. As a community-based researcher, you're supposed to sit down at the table, and have a conversation. I don't come in with all the expertise, the community holds it as well.

Profesor Leal is using an indigenous methodology of doing research by removing power differences and instead fulfilling his accountability to the relationships established through his research. He explains how this accountability took place:

Very strategic, little by little, we were always true to our values. It was about changing the culture of the school. It was about creating pathways for Latino and Chicano students. It was about engaging families, and with their knowledge—acknowledging their knowledge, acknowledging that, even if they're immigrant families, they have lots of knowledge and know-how and history and wisdom. How do you engage them and bring that into the school philosophically, with different philosophies?

The question posed by *Profesor* Leal regarding how to engage communities and bring that into the school, philosophically, encapsulates the struggle to achieve social justice.

How do we bridge different philosophies?

Summary of Findings for Question # 1

This section used the Social Justice Pyramid to explain the ontological, epistemological, and axiological principles at the root of the formation of our social justice Faculty of Color in order to illuminate the strong commitment and relational

responsibility that our *profesores* have towards the community they serve. This section also explained the difference between Maslow's individual needs, and the proposed Social Justice Pyramid model.

We start at the bottom of the pyramid with the Ontological principles that guide our *profesores*, or what Maslow would call basic needs. In order to provide these basic needs, families of the participants sacrifice their dreams as a communal action of the elders on behalf of the young ones. The impact on the beneficiaries of this *sacrificio* is internalized as a relational responsibility towards the rest of the community to pay it back and to pay it forward (Nava, 2012). The awareness and/or the witnessing of their family struggle as part of a bigger historical struggle moved four of the participants to take work towards social justice. This lesson of sacrifice for the good of the community is at the foundation of one of the faculty's community-oriented work. He sees his work as an offering to the community that supported him to reach his self-realization.

Another *profesor* explained that in seeing the *sacrificio* primarily by the women in his family propelled his desire to achieve status - not the status as defined by western values - but as a relational accountability towards his community. This is also evidenced in the ontological need to help others achieve the same sense of security and safety, which was termed *Dale la mano a tu hermano*. Examples of this need to help were seen in the reciprocity of community members who support each other as opposed to the dominant culture of rugged individualism that perceives community relationality in a deficit manner. This disconnect sends deficit messages that are internalized into compliance and self-defeat, or propel individuals into resistance.

The conscious analysis of the oppressive messages of the system was termed *El arretrato* (epiphany), and marks the epistemological shift that shakes a person's core to make them surrender previous oppressive beliefs to a new liberated awakening. *El arretrato* was present in all five participants. For some, it came during undergraduate years as they were exposed to Ethnic Studies and Critical Race Theory. For others, it came early through the oral history passed on by their ancestors. *El arretrato* served as a validation of *el sacrificio* as a cultural asset, and debunked deficit views of their own culture, or the erasure of their culture in their own formal education. In that realization, *los profesores* not only came to terms with the power of education as a transformational tool, but also with their social responsibility to take action to change the system through their work in education.

All of the participants credit the ideological shift to their exposure to CRT, critical pedagogies in African American history (*Profesor Triano*), Ethnic Studies (*Profesor Triano* and *Profesora Silvinus*) and in Anthropology classes (*Profesora Milagros*). Only *Profesor Leal* was exposed to CRT and critical pedagogies in an education program at the doctoral level. This suggests a gap in the preparation of a social justice educator prior to the graduate and doctoral training. This also elucidates the importance of Ethnic studies and African American History to provide a more critical lens to students at any level, but especially as soon as it is possible.

Maslow's psychological needs, Belonging and Self-Esteem, were paired off with the two layers of epistemological awareness of the challenges to be faced in order to belong, and receive recognition from the hegemonic community. One of them was termed

Calladito te ves más bonito (“you look prettier when silent”) to denote that People of Color in education have to “behave” to be accepted, or be silenced. The epistemological formation of the individual is profoundly marked by these experiences which can be subtractive (Valenzuela, 1999) or can be positive and propel individuals through mentoring opportunities to continue their educational path. The second level named *No todo lo que brilla es oro* (“all that shines is not gold”) to represent the process of demystification that occurs at this level when the individual start seeing people in their actual surroundings. A renewed sense of competence and accomplishment comes with that development, as Faculty of Color recognize the fallacy of the hegemonic narratives about minoritized populations, and also a stronger resolve to work to benefit their communities.

The final two levels of Maslow’s pyramid, Self-actualization and Transcendence, differ from the axiology of the Social Justice Pyramid given the relational responsibility to achieve for those that do not have access. Further, this commitment is also to help Communities of Color at a larger scale, even within the constraints of academia. Faculty direct their research efforts to study their communities as the main source of their inquiry and writing. They do this as a source of strength and as a way of resistance. They do it to counteract the racial battle fatigue that working for social justice generates. Most importantly, they do this because they feel a sense of accountability to their communities, and a need to benefit their communities by legitimizing their voice and experiences. They also engage in this way to give opportunities to those that come after them. This work exemplifies the indigenous axiology at the root of social justice work which propels

their research to do something beneficial for this world (Weber-Pillwax, 2001). This is the primary reason this level is called *Haz bien sin mirar a quien* (“for the common good”). The peak of Maslow’s pyramid recently added the legacy that individuals who are considered high achievers, leave for humanity. For individuals working for social justice, this stage allows the individual to fully implement an axiology based on the respect, responsibility, and reciprocity towards their respective community. To arrive at this place of transcendence means that the impact of their research and work have translated now for the benefit of generations to come. In a way, it completes a full circle that started with the sacrifice of the community for them to their offering back to the community.

Findings for Question # 2: Social Justice Faculty of Color Strategies in Professional Training of New K-12 Educational Leaders

The goal of social justice Faculty of Color in professional training and credentialing of educational leaders is one and the same: To prepare the next generation of leaders who will carry the social and racial justice commitment as they attempt to increase the opportunities of Students of Color that continue to be historically disenfranchised by schooling practices. The degree of complexity of this task will depend on where the adult being trained is positioned on the social justice Pyramid. For this reason, social justice Faculty of Color are very intentional in how they design their courses in order to provide the methodical steps to develop a critical mindset necessary to sustain social and racial justice work, especially with Students of Color in historically marginalized communities.

Knowing your audience. Faculty are very aware of the challenges they are working against. They understand that a high percentage of professionals in education are white

and unfamiliar with Communities of Color they are preparing to serve, or are already serving. From the ontological point of view, faculty identified the lack of critical awareness as a challenging factor rather than race alone. With every new students coming to their university programs, faculty have to differentiate for students that have an ontological gap, because they cannot understand the *sacrificio* or the relational responsibility of People of Color. Faculty have to truly educate these students in a different paradigm. At the other end, there are those while having the ontological formation, need reassurance about the importance of their relationality to their communities, particularly regarding becoming social justice leaders. Faculty are also clear that being a Person of Color does not guarantee the level of critical understanding needed to work for social and racial justice. *Profesora* Silvinus best illustrates this division that goes beyond skin color, and possessing the critical lens conducive to the work of social justice:

There is even another division between Students of Color and white students. Students of Color already have these critical lenses, who come from ethnic studies or social science backgrounds. Often times they are more open to acknowledging and accepting systemic isms, and then there are white students who come from poor backgrounds or from the LGBTQ communities who are marginalized, who have to grapple with the difference between whiteness as hegemony and as policy, versus being a white individual, and they really have to be open to learn that this is systemic, this is policy, this is history, these are laws, rules in schools versus white individuals being racists.

According to *Profesora* Silvinus, the critical lenses are a direct result of the epistemological formation of the individual. In her experience, for some university Students of Color this epistemological development is influenced by the educational formation gained through ethnic studies or social studies. She also distinguishes how

experiencing marginalization influence disenfranchised white students from low socioeconomic backgrounds as well as those from LGBTQ communities, and considers this a contributing factor to their willingness to develop their critical views. Both groups have been historically dehumanized and casted as outsiders of the groups privileged by white hegemony. On the other hand, *Profesora* Silvinus also recognizes that being brown does not equate with being social justice oriented. Some People of Color have internalized hegemonic American values:

And then we have the Students of Color that come from business, from H.R. perspective, or just from another countries that come here just for the Ed.D., who don't have that social justice lens, as much. They want to do good in the system but they are very engaged in this meritocratic practices, who don't believe in affirmative action, [because] we should get the best candidate.

As *Profesora* Silvinus explains, these university students have noble intentions but have adopted the American hegemonic narrative of colorblindness and equal opportunity that continues to perpetuate inequities. The largest issue for *Profesora* Silvinus is how critical the lenses are for her students. How do they bring these to her classroom, and how they have come to develop their beliefs in education:

They themselves go through a process of learning and grappling and changing their epistemology and shifting a lot. As much as these white students who have these layers of marginalization. Not as much, but almost as much because the white students have to acknowledge their white privilege and accept it, own it and look forward to use it for good.

Profesor Triano agrees that the critical stance of college students bring into their classrooms is the main issue, rather than the racial division. *Profesor* Triano, explains how some Students of Color have been absorbed by the system:

I think one thing is to not belong or be of that population. Another thing is to really not be in support. I mean, I look at folks who are from the same communities that

produced them, but I also think that—I mean, we can't talk about schooling being white supremacist and racist and all that stuff, and expect people to go through it, get degrees, get certified, and get that kind of education, and then come out and say, "Well, all of a sudden, you're going to be transformative." I think part of that contradiction is the fact that many folks, in particular, even Students of Color are going to come out, out of institutes of higher education *blanqueados* -- you're gonna get bleached out. There's going to be an element of it. I think part of what happens is that there's a certain kind of pain that we go through to conform to these institutions in ways that elements of your culture, elements of your soul, in some ways, are targeted and attacked.

The term *blanqueados* (bleached) is used to refer to People of Color that have fully assimilated and embrace hegemonic narratives of meritocracy and equal opportunity.

The point that Professor Triano makes about this group is that they have surrendered to adopt hegemonic views through years of indoctrination to believe one sided truths in order to be accepted within these academic spaces.

Profesor Leal, concurs with his colleagues about the different audiences attracted to educational programs, particularly in institutions that serve large number of school districts:

Some [students] come with a very high social justice conscience. That's why they wanna come to our program. Others, they just wanna get into a program. Others, they just wanna get credentialed, and they want to be a principal, or they want to go into administration. We're the biggest program here. We're a state institution, so there's not—we do have competition, but we're the biggest program.

I think some people just say, you know what, I want to just get into a program because I want to get promoted. They don't really give it a thought. When they get in our classes, it's like oh, man. They're making me think about different things. I think some people do grow a lot. Others come in and they're ready to jump in, and they already get part of it, and they want to get better. It just depends on the student.

Professor Leal recognizes the fluctuating results they achieve depending on the degree of the critical lenses of the students, and their intentions when they get into an education program.

Profesora Milagros also describes her students' intentions and the contrasting and deficit way they express about the population they intend to serve:

One of the main things that's really surprising from the students that come here, is that they all come in talking about how much they care about children, and how much they want to help children develop, and how excited they are to help children learn. I want to start there because I think that that genuine enthusiasm is very present, so I'm able to use that to help them see, hopefully, children with a much broader or assets-based light. The biggest struggle, I think, is still that our program reflects the trends across the country about most of the people going into teaching are middle-class, white women. They're also very young. A lot of them don't have very much experience with diverse communities. In particular, I think growing up in this area, I'm not quite sure how many of them—this is an assumption. I'd have to go back and trace it, but they come from very affluent areas. That's been a huge challenge because they don't understand. They don't understand, and they make assumptions. They don't want to see that their assumptions are racist. They don't want to see that assumptions are classist. There's a wall there.

Profesora Lazo concurs with her colleague in teacher education about the deficit ways exhibited by some of her students when referring to the population with whom they work:

They make sweeping generalizations about students, based on phenotypes, what they are seeing, or what they are thinking about the students, their last names, their accents, and most teachers kind of stop there. But if we don't teach them to see them as human beings. Real complex people, then I see that is going to very hard for them to move to the next step as social justice educators.

Profesora Lazo expressed very succinctly the challenge that lays ahead for faculty working for social justice is:

To teach all their students how to see the populations they serve as human beings of complex nature by letting go of the biased assumptions they have internalized given their own upbringings.

Through their personal experience, once as students and later during their years of teaching, social justice Faculty of Color have come to understand the effort they invest to

expand critical lenses in order to prepare students to towards social and racial justice is inversely proportional to the degree of criticality new students bring to the institutions.

Developing Critical Lenses 101. Faculty of Color strategize the way they will challenge deficit thinking because they understand educators do not come with an embedded lens of social justice. In order to fulfill these needs, faculty challenge hegemonic beliefs as a crucial first step to develop the critical lenses for those needing to develop these. Faculty of Color are deliberate about how they frame their courses so that practitioners understand the structures, institutions, and practices embedded in schooling. Faculty of Color affirming institutional oppression in school are real. For this reason they employ concrete data, as well as personal reflections and counterstories, to challenge white privilege, and create possible *arrebatos* to propel students to develop their relationality and political clarity. These *arrebatos* are especially necessary to work with Communities of Color.

Concrete data. *Profesora* Silvinus explains the construction of this critical frame by including warranted reading material and assignments that include history, policies, and law cases to illustrate how deficit thinking is constructed:

I [prepare] strategically with the readings, knowing that students come with these notions of hegemony and working from there. I don't assume that students are going to come with this critical lens. Nor that they know it is systemic, that know that parents are amazing, that kids are amazing. I come from the lens that we are going to learn from history first, the policy, the law, cases that have happened in the past. To start to see how they are happening again at one level or another. I guess, I am very intentional from the very beginning as I am drafting my syllabus, the assignments, and the requirements for the assignments. Not just what are your five principles that guide your philosophy and what research back up those principles. Really emphasizing on where is your evidence. You have an argument but where is your evidence. What reading say that? What chapter says that? What article did you get that from? What research backs that up? Also because these students are going to be

writing dissertations so really training them to think academically and scholarly, so they are prepared. Not just rambling about things that are broken and should be fixed. Everybody has already talked about that. Inequities are not new. So show me your evidence.

By studying the history, policies and laws, *Profesora* Silvinus is highlighting concrete and institutionalize methods that built and sustained inequities for marginalized populations. Her scholarly preparation to engage deficit-minded individuals is representative of the proactive stance Faculty of Color take in order to hold critical processes in the classroom. This is particularly important to help deal with the deficit stances from students that have yet to develop critical understandings. Data and critical readings to explain institutional disparities are a resource of division in the United States., Part of the arsenal or responses these *profesores* bring to their classrooms are necessary, as we can witness with the following narrative:

We go back to data, and statistics, and readings... [I ask] where does the history come from [to capture] different understandings, and really emphasize systemic resources. In terms of how do we set that? Where are the majority of Students of Color and low income students that are under-resourced in terms of teaching, staff, turnover rate, in terms of the resources that are available? In the community colleges, which are full of Students of Color in California. A community college student is worth X amount of dollars, but a UC student is worth twice that amount, how do we go through that understanding? So going back to facts and throwing some statistics, really pushing back... I say: OK let's go back to the reading. What does Espinoza say about that? What does Howard say about that? What would they argue? So another student can challenge and try not be the one to challenge right away. I think that has been my biggest struggle in learning to allow other students to speak up, so that other students can have that critical lens, and I can support their push back efforts too.

Profesora Silvinus poses real and hypothetical situations to help university students analyze those situations through a critical social justice lens. By soliciting and engaging students to provide evidence from empirical data, university students are forced to rethink their statements and deconstruct their thinking process. The process allows students to

logically evaluate their thinking, and reconsider what is at its source. Armed with new knowledge, they can reshape their positionalities and move toward a new epistemological understanding.

At the other end of the spectrum, *Profesora* Milagros, who is in teacher education, explains how she approaches social justice issues in her multicultural education class.

This provides context in order to develop an asset view of different cultures. She explains her thoughtfulness to avoid stereotypical generalizations:

One of the things, I think, is that multicultural education can be really domesticated, and just be like, “Oh. We’re all different. Isn’t that great?” For me, I use it as an entry point because it’s something that they’re comfortable with, and celebrating diversity is a way into it. I don’t want to stop there. Like I said, my books, often, are coming from perspectives of different cultures, but then I always lean in on the social justice issues.

Profesora Milagros points to the sustained concern about multicultural education not going beyond curriculum voiced by Sleeter and Grant (1987) and Ladson-Billings (2014). To be engaged in culturally relevant pedagogy requires for it not to be watered down, it needs to be critical and unapologetic. *Profesora* Milagros also expressed how she is careful to not pigeonhole different ethnic groups:

For example, I’ll bring *Show Way* by Jacqueline Woodson. There’s a very strong presence of slavery in the Civil Rights Era within that, and you can’t not talk about her family history without addressing those [issues]. It’s foregrounding race. It’s foregrounding more societal ways of analyzing. It’s not shying away from racism in there and naming it, all the time, within the books. I also don’t want the books that I share with them to be the only, you know, if it’s African American, it’s slavery. If it’s about Latinos, it’s about the immigrant experience. If it’s Asian Americas, it’s just the internment camps. It’s not just that, but it’s about bringing in children’s literature, in particular, having kids of color just doing things and not, necessarily, having to do, specifically, with those issues. I think that’s important too.

Profesora Milagros also pushes university students to venture out of their comfort zones and start seeing language code-switching as a regular expressions of communities that live in between two languages:

I think it's an essential part of doing the critical work, as well, so they don't see their kids as unidimensional. There's a certain aspect of trying to normalize difference that I work on, too, so making sure that I bring in books that have different languages integrated more seamlessly and not in artificial ways. A lot of the books that I bring will have code switching within the books, and we talk about that. They, inevitably, are like, "Well, if I don't speak the language, I don't feel comfortable reading this book," right, and trying to poke at that and push at their comfort level of being able to engage in areas that they're not feeling comfortable, as well.

Profesora Milagros uses the curriculum to expand students' critical lenses in teacher preparation program. She focuses on academic standards of the teaching profession about includes different perspectives to intersect social justice issues and move students out of their comfort zone:

I really push social justice issues with social studies and keep talking to them about how important it is to infuse social justice as they talk about history, social studies. The way I've started is really leaning on perspective because in the standards they talk about you need to pull out perspective, so I use that as my bait like, "Oh, well, the standards say," right, and "What's the best way to do that?" We talk about bringing in alternative stories and, I think, some of the students, also, bring that perspective. So pulling that out, as well, is something that I'm trying this semester, in particular.

Though her curriculum focuses mostly on preparing teacher candidates on the Teacher Performance Expectations, *profesora* Milagros considers it important to expect university students to consider other perspectives.

We learn that in her multicultural course, *profesora* Milagros does not have the opportunity to address hegemony head on. In her book *Feeling White*, Cheryl Matias (2016) notes teacher Educators of Color and white teacher educators who teach topics of race, racism, and white supremacy rarely delve into the power dynamics of racism. Since

these requirements are reduced to one session, within a semester-long diversity course.

We will see this further when we address how these *profesores* address whiteness.

Reflections & counterstories – humility to deal with difficult issues. Another strategy used by these *profesores* to assist students become more critical educators are reflections about social justice issues as a method. Faculty model how to reflect with humility, have difficult conversations, and use counterstories. *Profesora* Silvinus shares how she employs reflection to connect theory to practice:

I use reflections a lot, where they have to reflect and write. One writing session, a reflection was about: What teaching strategies would you have preferred as an undergraduate and what teaching strategy would you now implement as faculty? This takes from the reading assignment, and having to reflect on that and their teaching practice. We finished the book on Pivotal Moments for Educators, and I asked them reflect on how good of a pivotal moment educator are you? Do you bridge students with resources or do you say, you should go to college, superficially. So it was mandatory to do a section... and they had to reflect on their positionalities. It was a written reflection and students had a choice to speak up about that, and it was very powerful because one of the students spoke up and said: "I realized that I am not a pivotal moment educator. I am there but I need to push the resources to institutionalized support systems so they can continue on their pathway. I need to work on that." That was really powerful. It was a good moment.

Profesora Silvinus uses reflections to critically engage students to reflect on their own education trajectory and see how this can help become pivotal moment educators. By doing that, she forces them to see whether they were really taking on one of the most important aspects of social justice work: taking purposeful action to provide opportunities for the students they serve. The connection between being the beneficiary of a strategy versus providing it also illuminates the perception of received privilege. This privilege has to be acknowledged before own the responsibility to provide now within a position of power. This reflection is important to debunk western narrative of self-made individuals,

particularly without acknowledging institutionalized disparities and privileges provided to individuals in different communities.

Profesor Triano also uses reflection, but he makes it a collective experience, where counterstories can be shared. He explains how he handles these difficult conversations:

My own pedagogical style is not one where I approach it as if I know and I have everything. But more so where we, as a collective, try to create. I invite others to chime in—but it's difficult. It's difficult in what it requires a lot of humility and a lot of reflection. I see some promising results, but when you go through the process, it sometimes feels like you're failing as an educator. I think those moments, in the end, validate you in the sense that what you end up doing is modeling, anyhow, the process of how it should be. That you're reflective and reflexive about it, and that you're seeking to modify and incorporate.

Then I look at some reflections or I have conversations with students, and I see them talk about their evolution from having really difficult conversations with their family members. Some of these white students are really grappling with it, and what it means, "I went home during Thanksgiving and we had some really deep conversations. I'm realizing that there's a lot of racism in my family, in the ways in which they talk about people or they say things."

By using reflection in a collective way, *Profesor Triano* models a process that requires humility, enabling students to learn the effectiveness of reflection as a tool towards change. *Profesor Triano* recognizes that showing this level of vulnerability often evokes doubts in his pedagogical delivery because he risks being perceived as less professional. Regardless, these doubts are diluted when students demonstrate the development of critical lenses. This also goes to show that *Profesor Triano* still struggles with internalized notions created by the structure of whiteness in traditional banking system of education. These powerful forces continue to dictate faculty must know all the answers. Contrary to this standpoint is pedagogy of liberation (Shor & Freire, 1984) that he employs, which purports the creation of knowledge in a dialectical way. These open

discussions about social justice including the professor's own reflection seem to be a universal tool employed by these faculty.

Profesora Lazo requires students to write observations of their respective high school students in order to teach adults how to reflect about their use of high inferences. After they write many generalizations about high school students, she then highlights how these high inferences are often based on their biases. From biases she guides them to understand how to engage in low inference observations. She also engages students to reflect on their orientation towards young students:

I like to start with that mindset so we are not thinking on what the students don't bring and deficit [orientations]. It is [more] funds of knowledge but it is more closely related to the teacher [positionality]. For example, today we [assessed] videos. Having taught students about how to unpack their assumptions and to assume responsibility for what is happening in the classroom, I was happy to hear them talk about the biases they see in these teachers. They did not like the video, they did not like the behavioristic model. They said this is all white teachers, teaching Students of Color and all they are focusing on is these discreet surface level behaviors. Hold your hands like this... Track the teacher... But I find that if I don't start in how we see our students when they see the videos, all they see are disruptive, unruly students. Instead, they are seeing a biased teacher who is making assumptions about the students, and approaching teaching in that respect. That was today, that was pretty cool.

Once these teacher candidates learn how to see their students differently, they can assess what is happening in their classrooms and realize their biases are a critical part of the way they see the students in their classrooms. Once students develop the capacity to reflect and recognize biases, they are in a better position to address historical privilege and how that has affected their own privilege and positionality.

Addressing white privilege. Developing courses strategically allows Faculty of Color to decenter the discomfort that often gets triggered when white privilege is challenged. This allows faculty to establish a protocol to address challenges critically, focusing

instead on the structures that have produced deficit views of Communities and Students of Color. *Professor Leal* explains how he approaches this discussion:

Just giving a lot of feedback, and being open to the discussion with them is the way I learned how to [engage] with people who did not agree. that's how I approach them [and the situation]. The major topics that I always talk about are deficit thinking and privilege. Those are two of the ones that pretty much in all my classes—and I always use myself as an example. I talk about my own privilege. Most people, they don't want to talk about white privilege. They're more comfortable talking about male privilege, but they don't want to talk about white privilege.

Professor Leal's technique to ease university students into the conversation is to start the discussion with male privilege, and then work into white privilege. This is a strategic way to avoid the resistance commonly ensued when discussing white privilege or deficit thinking. *Professor Leal* also frames the conversation, normalizing the discomfort, university students experience when talking about whiteness in education. He then appeals to their right to choose to engage or not in the conversation:

I just invite them to think about it. I tell them you're going to be uncomfortable. That's part of the class. You're just going to be uncomfortable. Most of you have not been exposed to this. If you're feeling discomfort, then that's natural. That's what you should be feeling. You can either engage with that, or you can just not engage, and you're not going to get as much as you can out of it. When I explain it that way, people get it. They still might not agree with me, but at least I'm upfront about it with them.

Professor Leal makes a clear invitation to the discussion as a way to provide students with the tools to identify their biases and expand their epistemologies. This is important work to engage in before pre-service teachers work with Communities of Color:

I'm not telling people that they are wrong because they just get resistant. You decide if you're wrong or not. These are research tools, leadership tools. It's a master's program or a doctoral program. You don't have to use this, but that's the way I approach it. You can use it for your benefit, or decline it.

I started to learn that I had to be very clear to people. I'm not telling you to do anything. It's an invitation. Now, I can make a strong argument for why you should use it, and I will make a strong argument, but that doesn't mean you have to agree with my argument. If you don't agree, what's your feedback? That's part of the discussion. Disagree with me.

Dealing with discussions about social justice requires preparation and skill to be able to deal with the tools of whiteness that inevitably surface during these conversations. It was evident that *Professor Leal* feels very confident having these difficult conversations in order to spark the development of a critical lens. This in part is due to his own privilege as a male professor, but also to the fact that he offers students the opportunity to choose to engage in the discussion. This highlights the benefits of engaging and willingness to have a discussion, even when students disagree.

Profesora Silvinus also works to build student knowledge as a foundational prerequisite in order to address whiteness,

We do a lot of theory, a lot research, a lot of methodology, method learning, but I make sure that the books I use are practice-based. While we read a lot of theory, history, data and statistics in the articles, the two books that we read were examples of successful programs; what collaboration efforts had to take place, what institutional support had to happen? What role did the students play? We have to apply all of that to education. What does this mean? Let's translate this to education. What does colorblindness mean? What does it look like in the classroom, in higher education, in human resources? What is meritocracy, what does it look like? What are all the ways to be colorblind and what are the implications for Students of Color, or in your area? Also having the example of a successful partnership where critical researchers challenged these colorblind practices and meritocracy in a very social justice way and a very critical way, so they are applying the critical race theory into a program. This is what it looks like, feels like in the real world, in the education world.

Profesora Silvinus is also very strategic in the way she challenges comments by redirecting students to measure their opinions against class readings. By doing this the challenge is not personal and it can be addressed by tapping into research credibility:

We go back to the readings, and again since I have handpicked the readings to show community cultural wealth, to show inequities, it is easy to go [refer] back. What did Espinoza say? What did Yosso say in affirmative action? It is easy when you have a Student of Color telling a very deficit story about his parents don't care or his parents don't know. Ok, but what did that one reading say? What did the statistics say, what did that national study show? Or we go back to: "That is one experience but on the broader scale, 85% of Latino students want to go to college, so how does that make sense? How do you position your statement right now? So it is not the norm."

By thoroughly delving in theory, definitions, providing examples of people and places challenging the tools of whiteness, *Profesora* Silvinus gives her students a roadmap to deconstruct the power relationships. It is incredibly important as these power relationship continue to exist in education which continue to grant privileged status to particular knowledge, practices and groups.

Profesor Triano also agrees you have to be strategic in evaluating whether classroom conditions will enable one to have a deeper conversation:

I try to depersonalize things so that I can then—if it's a direct attack and I feel it, I can either do different kinds of things. I can then shift the attention and ask other students to chime in, if you're somebody who I think approaches a classroom in a critical perspective, you try to be reflexive. Then exchanges, and you try to promote dialogue. I think it's great, but I also think it works best when people in the classroom are operating from a context of love, the idea of wanting to look out for each other, and they're really immersed in wanting to go deeper. When we're not in that context, it's really hard to push conversations deeper because it's hard to trust. If we don't feel that kind of trust or connection, then I think politically, we're—we could potentially be foolish in the sense that we're putting ourselves out to be attacked.

Profesor Triano explains that there are instances when the discussion becomes a really politically charged, when students will begin to share deficit comments:

I've had reactions where I've pushed and said, "Yo, this is totally unacceptable. This is wrong," and have students really freeze. Then I've also had opportunities where I asked, "Well, tell me why you feel, or what makes you think, or what other ways might be ways that we can respond?" You get an assortment of different types of responses.

Some of them are individualized. “Well, I would do this, or why, or you cannot like—it’s unhygienic, that’s un-this, and that’s un-that.” Then, you ask other questions about, “Well, what does it mean, then, to live in that lane, and escalating rents, and being, perhaps, here as an immigrant, undocumented, and then having an artificial ceiling on your salary because of your documentation?” You can ask questions that deepen people’s possibilities. That doesn’t mean that they’re going to agree with it or—but it creates windows.

Profesor Triano is referring to how he has to adapt to the level of deficit-thinking and on occasion his response has to be stern when a comment is offensive. The point is that every microaggression or biased comment has to be addressed with a series of critical questions. This provides students a window: of opportunity to reflect and reframe their thinking.

Profesora Lazo also shares an example of how she has dealt with students who feel their white privilege being challenged:

A couple of weeks ago, a white male said: “You know, I am so tired of these classes, they all have the same message, yeah it is a racist institution and I am not going to participate. I am so weary about being hit over the head, social justice, social justice.” It was such an interesting comment because I do see that, there are some European American students who feel that they have been hit over the head with all this social justice and they get all defensive and bitter. It was interesting. The argument, “I am colorblind, I don’t see my students’ color, I just want to teach them.” Ironically, when we practice classroom management strategies in the classroom he was very lackadaisical. I had to point out to him that part of learning all these structures is about social justice. If you are going to have order and safety in your classroom that is going to help all your students. That is as much social justice as having these conversations about racism. Not letting your students sleep in class, for example. He is not disrupting, but he has his head down, so I am going to let him be because, thank goodness he is not disrupting. That is just perpetuating the same issues, so where we go from all this. The end result is I want them to be very conscious of the culture they are developing in their classroom. I use the word culture not to say ethnic culture. It is the culture, the participatory culture in the classroom. And if it is going to be an inclusive participatory culture, you have to be determined to include everyone. Even the more recalcitrant student, who is having a hard time with the subject, and because of that is pushing behavioral issues that are related to the difficulty with the subject.

For *profesora* Lazo, social justice is about inclusion and having access to participation instead of being relegated and ignored altogether. In her handling of this particular situation, she did not address whiteness head on but she indirectly challenged the student to provide equal access to all students.

When *profesora* Milagros recognizes tools of whiteness, like white fragility and white comfort, she reframes the situation by offering a suggestion that fit acceptable behaviors:

For me, that's one of the hardest things. Like I said, I'm not confrontational, so it's even harder. I'm always second, triple, quadruple guessing myself if I'm going too soft and letting them off the hook, right, but I try and ease into it. Especially since I have them over the course of the semester it's like, "oh, can I repeat back what I hear them say back at them?" I'm like, "Oh, well, I'm wondering if you could consider X?" I talk about this, in general, especially when I teach the social multicultural foundations is that the way that we're going to have conversations here and create the safe space is that we need to be accountable to people's intentions, acknowledge intentions, but it can't stay at the level of intentions. It is intentions and impact, right?

One strategy used by *profesora* Milagros is modeling for her students by addressing biased comments without having confrontations. When she poses questions, she is not calling students on their comments directly, but in a very subtle way notes this is not an acceptable comment. She works to develop a classroom safe space where people will be accountable for their intentions and the impact they cause. She reinforces this idea throughout the semester:

We talk about it in terms of, "okay, when people say things and we're trying these things out, we're coming from our experiences," right, but I want to just skip them from the get go that I'm going to accept and trust that your intentions are coming from a good place, okay, the baseline. With that understanding that you're coming from a good place there's also a responsibility, vice versa, to also acknowledge the impact of your words. Right? I put that out there. It sounds like it's just words, and it's hard to get people to really trust to be able to participate in that way.

She explains to teaching preparation program students that good intentions are a baseline, but more important are the impact of said intentions particularly impacting Students of Color they will support:

I don't know how successful I am with that, but that's the way, the spirit, in which I engage students. I worry that, maybe, I take it too much on the giving them too much credit sometimes with their intent. *[Laughter]*

Profesora Milagros reflects constantly about the impact of her pedagogy to address entitled comments and expressions of white privilege. Though she is aware of her non-confrontational style, she also understands her responsibility and accountability to respond to various intentions. The various constraints of teacher preparation curricula are evident, and feels she may be tilting towards a superficial discussion of race and racism.

Profesora Milagros further reflects on how difficult it can be to address her students' white privilege,

It's finding that balance about being able to poke at it, and get them to examine their assumptions, and recast them in a more assets-based light with the defensiveness that, sometimes, pops up.

I think my general approach is a lot gentler. It's not very confrontational. I try with poking with questions, and probing with questions, or just coming out and—the way I talk to them is assuming that—taking them at their word that they're trying their best and that they really care. I coach them, "I know that you really care about your students." When people bring things up, it's like, "Wow. Do you see what that kid did," so when they take an instance and reframe it. I think that they, at first, take on that language. It feels like it's like, "Oh. I know that the professor wants me to speak in an asset-based way, so I'm gonna try that." Right. At first, it comes across, sometimes, really shallowly, but we work at it and push at it. On the comments that I write on their assignments of the way we talk about things, and I gently push. Sometimes, I wish I could be a little bit more like calling them out, but it's not my style. Then, I also have a hard time, then, dealing once the walls are up. That's a place where I crumble. It's really hard for me once the walls are up to be able to do anything because then I start reacting in anger too and that's part of it.

The difficulty *profesora* Milagros speaks about, might stem from the limited material about white privilege, race and racism that is covered in teacher preparation programs. Matias (2016) notes there is a vast limitation in how race, racism, and white privilege are taught in teacher education programs. Faculty may also experience a limitation in not knowing how to adequately teach these topics as well. This may be reflected on how *profesora* Milagros has difficult time handling race conversations. This difficulty may also reflect the “pain that People of Color go through to conform to these institutions in ways where elements of your culture, elements of your soul, in some ways, are targeted and attacked” as *profesor* Triano help contextualize when referring to the levels of individual’s critical lens.

We begin to see commonalities and differences in the approaches used by Faculty of Color to address white privilege. All the faculty address white privilege critically through inquiry, providing critical feedback and referring students to empirical readings and data in order to avoid creating resistance. By doing this they help students acknowledge they are the beneficiaries of a system that has granted privilege to particular knowledges, practices and affluent folks. Faculty of Color also frame their courses strategically, choosing materials that will facilitate the conversation about institutionalized oppression or those that have produced deficit views of People of Color. Deficit thinking and privilege are major topics covered in higher education spaces. Some faculty address additional levels of privilege, like male privilege, before they addressing racism and white privilege. They normalize discomfort as a way to acknowledge biases and prepare students to expand their epistemologies before they go engage with

Communities of Color. Two of the faculty in teacher education programs address white privilege indirectly. They do so through discussion of inclusion and having access to participation in a safe environment. Both participant highlight pre-service teachers' intentions as a baseline and focus more on the impact of those intentions. One of these two faculty feels real constraints within teacher preparation curricula, and her own pedagogical style are tilting towards a superficial discussion of race and racism.

Developing relationality with the communities. Faculty understand that guiding their students in the environment where they will be working is critical. This provides an opportunity to develop relationships and the relationality necessary to practice social and racial justice work in education. *Profesora Lazo* explains why she feels this is an important component in developing a social justice educator:

One thing I have learned through the years is that I have never seen a racist teacher go into something like an advisory, learn all about their students, visit their home lives, hang with their sisters and brothers of the kids and come out of that process being racist. I don't see it. I see that teachers learn everything that there is to learn about the students [and] a lot of these preconceptions disappear. Not completely, but enough so that the teacher can see the child as a human being, as a full human being, not having any deficits.

Profesora Silvinus for example, requires her graduate students to establish relationships with other members of the community to develop a deeper understanding with a wider critical lens:

I try to develop relationship-building [by] creating partnership outside of the classroom so they have to interview either a student or a parent, a staff or faculty person who works with college access, for example. So they were forced to learn about this individual. By learning about this person, they become more invested in supporting this individual. In another class they have to interview an instructor in the community college. Focusing on higher [education], so they can learn from different colleagues or different areas. So they can start to see different experiences and interpret that.

Profesora Silvinus is also starting to draw on the alumnae network:

Right now, I am working with one of the Alumnae, who we are bringing as a researcher to work with the data and how to keep publishing together. This year in the winter, we have the second annual writing retreat. This year we are inviting alumnae who are interested in publishing journal manuscript from their dissertations to come back to provide a workshop on how to do that but we also expect them to mentor the current doctors. To continue with that relationship. Some of the alumnae are in the doctoral steering committee because of their position as education leaders.

This support trickles down from the Professor to alumnae that also obtain mentoring and tools to publish their dissertations. Alumnae also support current students who get mentored and support to finish their dissertations.

Other opportunities to connect students to the communities in which they will serve is through partnerships between their universities and schools. Particularly efforts with a social justice commitment to give university students the opportunity to do community service learning. These opportunities to be placed in schools who employ critical pedagogies centered with decolonizing curricula are instrumental for pre-service teachers.

Profesor Triano explains:

One of the things that we do is that we take our students for service learning to a school down the block which is social justice-based, very critical pedagogy, critical race theory, decolonizing—all that stuff is in the curriculum. Part of it is, how is it that some of these students can get exposed to some of the theories that we're reading in our class, and looking at them in action. It is a fairly new school with really strong teachers. They have really strong pedagogical practices. They're really strong specifically with the cultural pieces. It's a dual language school where young students are able to get that cultural armor to protect them from the digging and questions of their self-worth and those things.

These experiences in the classroom allow graduate students see how these critical pedagogues develop the critical skills, what he calls “a cultural armor” for K-12 students.

Graduate students can then take these practices with them to their permanent placements in hopes they replicate these approaches.

A more involved partnership between universities and schools incorporates parents and students, through a community-based research, which is where *Profesor* Leal has focused his energy:

Community-based activism or community-based partnerships is an approach where higher educational faculty and administrators partner with communities, partner with neighborhoods, partner with schools, not to be top down, but to be more horizontal. How do you work in a way that building educational pathways, so that you break down the barriers between K-12 and higher education, in a partnership framework. You go into the community and you do the research. A community-based approach is you're supposed to give some of that power away. As a community-based researcher, you're supposed to sit down at the table, and let's have a conversation. I don't come in with all the expertise as a researcher—it's not top down, sometimes you don't have the control. That's hard. You're supposed to be reciprocal. You're supposed to share power. I just try to use more community-based approaches, where you can, to help engage families, to engage students.

Profesor Leal provides a horizontal support to the university students that work collaboratively with the community and the school in order achieve his social justice mission:

We have procured funding to work with Latino and Chicano communities and families, to change the culture of the school, to get rid of deficit thinking, and to help center the experiences of the families that we were working with. The partnership was with the school site, and the neighborhood. There were families involved, and parents. The funding allowed us to do research and provide a fellowship for a doctoral student. She started learning how to be a researcher, a community-based researcher, over the four years that she was there, she coordinated program activities for the school and the kids. She set up meetings with teachers. She did her dissertation there, with Latina mothers. That's what she—that's what she was interested in. She did testimonials with Mexican mothers, who were involved with the schooling of their kids. We have continued doing this work with more doctoral students.

This kind of experience connects the Faculty of Color and graduate students, the school and the community in a sustaining interconnection that collectivize the assets of each member of the community. This brings them to the table in an equal partnership. There is a constant collaborative co-creation, including parents and graduate students that is working to develop research. These experience will inform teachers of the local school and will benefit the students in the long run. This reciprocal relationships are mutually beneficial and build community and partnerships overtime. For graduate students it is an opportunity to build relationships with the community they chose to serve and, in turn, learn also about the reciprocal nature of Communities of Color. This level of field work is a long-term, sustained investment, with the purpose of engaging the community and bringing social change (Baudry, 2015; Chang, 2015; Horton & Freire, 1990). Simultaneously, however, this helps develop a *conscientization* among graduate students. This kind of in depth and long-term field engagement is what research notes to be the more effective and successful in developing critical educators.

Developing ideological and political clarity. A final approach to help develop critical lenses among graduate students is the appeal to ethical values that drive educators to the field of education, working with students. The next quote highlights how *Profesor Triano* appeals to his students to attain an ideological and political clarity to respond and support the humanity of students in the classrooms:

As educators, I think we owe it to the communities that we teach in, and have a responsibility to push them to be more open and more just. By that, I really think about *Freire's* notion and *Lilia Bartolome's* notion of having ideological and political clarity. Who are the communities that you serve? Why are you serving them? What is required for us to be in alignment? By that alignment, I mean, not that we agree lockstep with everything that gets said, but that we're in support of their humanity.

That at the end of the day, that what's happening not only in our classroom spaces, but in the broader school community, is a place where we're really supporting the students to advance. Not to necessarily just score higher on a test, but that we're really thinking about their wellbeing. Some of these school districts are 80-90 percent Latino, and immigrant, or quote end-quote minoritized schools. It's like, you're either going to jump onboard and go and support, or transfer out and be in a different space—or leave the profession. I say all that to say that we need the kind of educators that are really going to be about humanizing students in these spaces.

Profesor Triano frames the conversations around the humanity of students but also about the social responsibility to act to benefit students being served by these educators. This honest stand is a challenge to educators to be brutally and unapologetically committed to social justice. The alternative, as he posits, move out of the profession.

Profesora Lazo, also appeals to the social responsibility of teacher candidates in her classes. When students use the line “I just want to teach those that want to learn,” she responds:

I tell them that they abdicate their responsibility as a teacher. And that [response] is sloppy teaching. It is a pet-peeve of mine when a teacher lets a student slide. Letting them fail, letting them sleep in class, not caring if they are absent. Because you just want to teach who is in front of you and not worry about anything else.

So what I tell them is this job is way too hard if you want a paycheck. Don't do this job, do something else, because you are way too important as a teacher to come up with that sloppy mentality, you are hurting the kids.

Profesor Leal also believes the importance of being transparent with new graduate students about the social justice mission in the program to attract those candidates.

Candidate needs to want to achieve an ideological and political clarity mentioned by

Profesor Triano.

We try to tell people. Anytime we recruit, we're saying this is what you're going to learn. We're going to challenge you on these issues. It's face-to-face... There's always one or two students that say, “Man, all you guys do is talk about social justice.” Well, Yeah! That's how we recruited you. That's what we talk about.

Professor Leal makes compelling arguments to his graduate students about the ethics required to best serve diverse Communities of Color, and the opportunity these students have to prepare themselves by engaging in critical discussions:

When it comes to make the argument, the strong argument that I try to make is that more and more of our schools—if you're going to be in public schools, or in public higher education—they're more and more diverse. If you don't—if you want to deny that—if you want to deny that you have blind spots, you're not going to be effective. That's my argument. I'm basically doing you a favor, by giving you tools that you can use that'll help you be more effective.

You want to be the best principal out there, but you're going to work in a Latino community and you don't want to see your blind spots, as a white male, then you're not going to be effective. Here's the literature that shows it. If you want to deny what people are feeling about immigration, about racism, about language issues, if you want to deny all that, then you're not serving your community.

That's how I approach it. I'm an expert in Latino issues. I've had training in that. If you don't want to listen to me, then don't listen to me.

Professor Leal is clear to explain the need to address diversity in and out of the classroom context. Given these graduate students are in the process of being trained to serve Communities of Color, how can they not address these issues. Formal schooling and educational systems continue to warrant educational leaders to be very critically aware of their positionality and their epistemological beliefs about the populations they serve. Their effectiveness as leaders will depend on how well they know their constituents and how to serve them effectively.

Summary of Findings for Question # 2

In general, Faculty of Color are careful to distinguish the ontological formation of graduate students training to become K-12 teachers. Through their work they differentiate between the difference within populations they train and the goal of

challenging dominant epistemologies that reinforce institutionalized hegemony. Faculty of Color teach and engage with concrete data, as well as critical methods such as reflections and counterstories. To prepare the next generation of educational leaders who will carry the social and racial justice commitment, Faculty of Color use several strategies and innovations. They do this in order to challenge white privilege, and create the *arrebatos* that will propel graduate students to develop the relationality and political stance required to serve Students of Color equitably. Social and racial justice are more than a way to improve their teaching practice. It is a political stand to challenge white privilege as the center of dominant ideologies that continue to shape educational opportunities in disenfranchised communities.

Faculty of Color are aware of the odds that they are working against. They understand the importance to employ real data and demographics of the communities serve to contextualize the need for a paradigm shift. This shift goes beyond skin color, it requires a critical understanding and possess critical lenses to authentically practice social justice education. Faculty of Color understand this is a direct result of the ontological and epistemological formation of new teachers. Their job is then to address hegemonic narratives of colorblindness and equality that continue to perpetuate inequities. Further, as white privilege often continues to lead dominant narrative, these faculty want to prevent new teachers to approach underserved populations with a deficit lens. The challenge for these five *profesores* is to provoke and support the *arrebatos* that will teach new teachers a way to see Students of Color as complex individuals. By letting go of

prejudices and biased preassumptions, often internalized given their own upbringings, social justice teacher training may help develop critical lenses instead.

In order to develop the critical lenses, our *profesores* frame their courses deliberately to ensure graduate students understand the structures, institutions and practices embedded to affirm the oppression of others. They do this by using data, history, policies and law cases to demonstrate how deficit thinking is constructed. By soliciting graduate students to critically engage with reading material and data, this helps reshape their positionalities. This shift moves them to a new epistemological understanding. One of the *profesores* uses curricula to expand the critical lenses of students in teacher preparation programs. She focuses in the traditional standards of the teaching profession about includes different perspectives to insect social justice issues. She acknowledges this is a critical way to support graduate students and future teachers to move out of their comfort zone.

Another strategy used by the *profesores* to support graduate students become more critical educators is the use of self-reflections on social justice issues. Faculty of Color model how to self-reflect with humility in order to encourage graduate students to own their education trajectory. In reflection, this moves them into purposeful action to benefit Students of Color they serve. Some of these reflections are part of observation exercises, and others are followed by open dialogue about social justice.

A great deal of feedback and discussions address white privilege. One of the faculty members engage in conversations about male privilege as a preamble to the discussion of white privilege. This enables the opportunity to avoid resistance from students, and to normalize the discomfort that race conversations often may cause. Faculty of Color

attempt to provide students with a methodical roadmap to deconstruct power relations that exist in education. These power dynamic often sustain privilege to particular knowledges, practices and affluent groups.

Faculty of Color in educational leadership programs were unapologetic and direct to address white privilege. Our two *profesoras* in teacher education programs were indirect in their approach to addressing these important issues. They emphasized inclusion and access, while insisting programmatic limitations do not allow for an in-depth discussion and learning about multiple levels of oppression.

Another tool used by Faculty of Color to help widen the critical lenses is requiring graduate students to engage in the environment where they will be teaching. This is key to afford them an opportunity to develop relationships and the relationality necessary to carry on social and racial justice work in education. This field work varies in terms of the length of time and the depth of the relationality, however, it encompasses observations of students and service learning projects, particularly in schools with social justice missions. The most promising outcomes of this particular field work are experiences for graduate students to collaborate with local school and community. These experiences connect university faculty and graduate students to local schools and the community. This bridge initiates an interconnectedness to collectivize assets among various members of the community. In sum, these collaborations brings all stakeholders to the table in an equal partnership. This level of work requires long-term sustainable commitments, with the purpose to engage community to bring social change.

A final approach to develop critical lenses is the appeal to ethical values that drive Faculty of Color to work with graduate students. The premise here is to attain an axiological and political clarity to support the humanity of students in the classrooms. This also requires an acceptance of social responsibility required to best serve diverse Communities of Color. Given the real diversity in population growth in the country and particularly in education, teacher candidates and educational leaders, in general, need to be aware of their positionality. Their epistemological beliefs about the Populations of Color they serve impact the quality of service and outcomes K-12 students will experience. Social and racial justice are more than a way to improve their pedagogical practice. Teaching is a political opportunity to dismantle white privilege and other hegemonic, dominant ideologies that structure educational achievement among disenfranchised Communities of Color.

Findings for Question #3 Navigating Whiteness in Academia

The *profesores* understand the important role of supporting the development of critical lenses among graduate students. While this work has to be done in the classroom, faculty understand there is “white surveillance” in academic institution. These too often set the hurdles preventing them from achieving any long-term changes in social and racial justice in education. The academy has privileged dominant ways of teaching, research practice, and thinking in general that guard and protect white supremacy. The pedagogical expertise Faculty of Color bring to their teaching practice threaten academia by simply supporting a mission centered in social and racial justice. This contradiction is evident even when the academia hires and brings our “*profesores*” to campus as a way to

increase racial representation, and improve racial climate. Some of these are fallacies but Faculty of Color learn to navigate these contradictions while teaching a new generation of social justice educators.

Colleagues. Academic colleagues can become obstacles when there is a lack of support for Faculty of Color, depending of the level of criticality they possess. Academic colleagues can be influential in the way our *profesores* react and redirect their actions to continue their commitment as social justice Faculty of Color.

Lack of criticality. One of the hurdles our *profesores* had to navigate was the lack of criticality among their colleagues. The following excerpt exemplifies the challenge that *profesora* Milagros had to face when her teaching a colleague who does not have the same social and racial justice inclination:

The person that I team with, is a little bit more—she doesn't like to delve into social issues as much. I lean on her a little bit. We have great conversations back and forth. I know that in the beginning, because I'm new to it and I don't really feel confident in teaching social studies methods, because my background is literacy, primarily, and language, specifically, I let her take lead. I noticed this year I'm able to take on a little bit more and really push on social justice issues with social studies. I keep talking to them about how important it is to infuse, right, social justice as they talk about history, social studies.

In a covert manner, *Profesora* Milagros has to “sneak in” her social justice message instead of talking openly about it because she does not feel these align with her colleague's beliefs. This colleague curtails *Profesora* Milagros's ability to have open conversations about race and whiteness. These would have an instrumental impact in education but because her colleague doesn't “like to delve into social issues as much,” they are voided altogether. In a social science methods class this statement points to her partner's own level of discomfort and inability to address U.S. and world racialized

history. The next example illustrates how her teaching partner is not an isolated case, but instead representative of the majority of faculty:

I think that my colleagues are very receptive, and they're good people with their hearts in the right place. [However] they are at differing levels of consciousness, I guess they lack focus as far as how much they privilege race and issues of social justice, or which ways they want to work toward it.

Profesora Milagros is very diplomatic when talking about her colleagues but her comment about how much they “privilege race and issues of social justice” gently pulls the veil. Faculty become the status quo in her institution, remaining unchallenged in regards to issues of race and social justice. Their “niceness” protects and avoid delving “into social issues as much” similarly to *profesora* Milagros’s teammate. The institution embrace “nice” attitudes to let ignorance thrive. This puts a burden on *profesora* Milagros to address race and issues of social justice in an unapologetic way. This behavior privileges the comfort of, often, white colleagues, and acritical graduate students. This also leaves *profesora* Milagros with a contradictory feeling of guilt for betraying the “good people” that she works with, and for betraying herself by not allowing herself to be strong enough to confront them.

We can see there are unwritten rules to protect whiteness in education when *Profesora* Lazo, also in teacher education, believes that, in theory, the teacher education program has some elements of social justice but do not practice as such. There are faculty who celebrate hammering students, particularly white male students, in the head with their biases about social justice teaching. This is how she spoke about one of her colleagues:

We have one professor that taught multicultural for many years, and she considers herself kind of a leftie, on the side of social justice. What she did is she hammered her students in the head with all her biases and they all came out from that class as bitter and angry, especially white males. So to me that was not social justice teaching. Because they didn't want to learn [at all]. There is the... I won't learn from you because she wasn't learning from them. She didn't listen to them. She assumed: white male, you must be racist. Let me tell you how not to be a racist. That goes against everything we are teaching in learning communities. She wasn't seeing them. She had all these high inference observations from her students and that derailed the multicultural program. That is what I say "in theory," but it depends on the teacher. And she was well meaning but she couldn't see her students like humans. She was tenured. The only reason she is not teaching is because she retired. She could've continued teaching that class and torpedoing the class. The students complained mercilessly every year about that class. They would walk out of the class. They would go to the dean to complain, and nobody could do anything because she was a tenured professor, and one who thought she was social justice oriented. So I just find that individual people can undermine a program if they don't understand the pedagogy of seeing students. Your white students need as much the teaching as your Students of Color. I find in theory the program is well put together. I find in theory that the program is missing a few pieces.

Profesora Lazo, shines a light not only on where she stands in the social justice spectrum, but also on the effects of an aggressive approach when a professor addresses race and privilege in a class. As students' sensibilities rise, complaints against the critical professor ensue, and the professor is vilified. This professor stayed in the program because she was "tenured," which also illuminates what is at stakes if a professor fails to cater to the sensibilities of "white male students" or the rest of the professoriate.

Silence. Faculty of Color can be pushed into silence about addressing issues of racial and social justice. Some faculty are pushed into silence with supposed kindness and lack of engagement. *Profesora Milagros* provides an example of how a professor can internalize these feelings as her own:

Like I said, they're good people. My department is a bunch of good, white people. With that, there's a lot of limitations, and on their end, they have blind spots, huge blind spots. I get along with everyone. I'm a team player kind of a person. I get along

with people. I wonder if a lot of it is self-silence, too, and not speaking up enough. Part of it was I came into this job wanting to learn, and absorb everything, and feeling like I had so much to learn across the board that, I think, coming from that place of more insecurity and timidity was a huge part of it. I take responsibility for that. The other thing is it's harder to have seen this more readily because everyone's so nice. Everyone's so kind. I'm coming to realize it was really hard, really a barrier for me in being able to grow more fully because everyone's so kind, but not engaged.

Everyone's really nice, but they don't have the time to really sit, and collaborate, or really push on things. In general, because we've been so busy doing so much stuff, there, also, hasn't been the energy to reach out. Again, this is on me, but earlier on, trying to get connected across campus, for example, because our department is fairly white, I tried to get involved with other faculty. We had a couple colleagues come in, but they left *[laughter]* very quickly, that were more critical of Colored Folk. Last year, a group of people tried to start up a Women of Color Faculty group. It was hard to sustain that energy to be able to go out there because I felt so underwater here, just the work. Our course load is crazy. The supervision demands are a lot. The service is a lot. It's just that feeling of being like more work.

Profesora Milagros internalizes blame rather than blaming the system for “not speaking up enough.” She admits to having a timid and insecure personality and, as a result, she has internalized feelings of inadequacy. We can also understand that she does not have a support system due to critical colleagues immediately leaving the institution. Further, the heavy load of work and obligations she holds are overwhelming. As a result of all of these realities, she is isolated. Collegiality imposes rules of silence as we will see in the next episode where *Profesora* Milagros offers when she was probed upon speaking up on issues of race:

There'd been instances where I've spoken up around—again, because everyone's so invested in being kind that I think it gets like, “Oh.” I feel like, sometimes, my contributions are like, “Oh,” pat on the back, or another instance that shocked me (referring to a discussion about admitting a black student)...we were talking about it, and I brought up race. I was like, “Look, she's exactly the kind of student that we need in the program. Her commitment is to go into the communities that she grew up in and work with students there. We need her. We need to support her.” Then, they blame me for being racist by saying that, “Well, you just see a black person. Maybe she's not the right black person for our program.” *[Laughter]* It's just like, “Whoa.”

These two reactions are direct examples of microaggressions. *Profesora* Milagros endures these microaggressions too frequently. The first one shows how her contributions are being dismissed with a “pat on the back,” and the second reaction shows what happens when she crosses her colleagues’ comfort zone for pointing the potential contributions of a “black person” versus “the right black person.” This reaction shows that the institution does not value the assets of an incoming Student of Color that is interested in giving back to her community. *Profesora* Milagros shared this student needed more support as she had challenges to overcome but *Profesora* Milagros saw this as part of the social justice work that produces social justice educators. Instead, her colleagues saw her as “not the right person for the program.” This example leads us to understand the institution is interested in tokenizing *Profesora* Milagros just as Students of Color. The institution is also willing to admonish her when she disrupts the comfort of whiteness among her colleagues. There is a lack of relationality with her colleagues in spite of the obvious superficial collegiality. She cannot be herself and she has to be careful to not raise the same wall that she fears when talking to her students: the wall of whiteness. She is in a no-win situation as her silence does not support her work in social justice, and her speaking up places her in a more vulnerable position. *Profesora* Milagros feels silenced and isolated because she does not have a critical support system.

By contrast *profesora* Silvinus shares how having a critical support system has contributed to her not being silenced:

My colleague and I started together, so we make sure that we don’t feel isolated. We talk about everything, and we relate notes on like, “How is this student doing? Did this happen in class?” And then I know that the last quarter she went through this

process, and she is in a different stage. Or she is not in a different stage and we are still dealing with the issue. I know what to expect. So isolation is not an issue. I collaborate as much as I can. I can't work in isolation so I am glad she is there with me. If she is not there, then I reach to other folks to avoid isolation, but I think I am at that point because I work that way. I don't work at home. I work at coffee shops. If I have student issues or issues in academia, I have a community I talk to. And we also have a skype group.

Profesora Silvinus uses her community supports very efficiently to bounce back from negative occurrences in class, and also professional issues. By sharing her experiences and discussing them with other critical and social justice-minded colleagues, she can normalize her experiences. This helps avoid feeling isolated and the loneliness that *profesora* Milagros experiences. She is aware of the risks of speaking up, but *profesora* Silvinus feels that she needs to speak up, in spite of any consequences. She is fulfilling her obligations by researching, publishing and teaching, and she expects these activities should to be the measure of her competence:

Other faculty say when I get tenured then I'll speak up, but I challenge people when I speak, and I don't care. I am not tenured, but I just challenge people. I just did it last week. Challenging a group of tenured professors at different times, multiple times in three hour meetings because I wouldn't let it go. I think my first year, I might've let things go and just process it. But now, you are going to fire me because I don't let things go. I am doing my work. I am teaching. I am researching. I am doing surveys. What are you going to do to me? I don't buy it. I don't know, maybe I am wrong but I don't buy it. Maybe you can block me from certain things, from department chair. But when it comes to other faculty, I don't stay quiet.

Profesora Silvinus also has spoken up against injustices in the community at school board meetings, where she has voiced injustices against the Latino community. We cannot establish the support system as causality for *profesora* Silvinus' courage to speak, but we can point to this relationality as a contributing factor.

For *profesor* Leal, silence is an indicator of the lack of stability of the teaching positions for Faculty of Color. Faculty of Color become very aware of the political consequences at stake for speaking up and challenging the status quo, particularly in regards to issues of race and social justice:

There were some issues. Sometimes, I bite my tongue, just didn't say anything. You could look around the room, and you don't have the numbers, even if you wanted to vote. Sometimes it wasn't worth going there with some people. I just didn't feel like using the energy, when there's five of them and one of me, or five and six of them and two of us. We would leave the office and then talk about it, with my friend or whatever. I always reminded myself that if I don't get tenure, I can't help anybody. I can't even help myself. It's a combination, just being committed to who you are, but also being realistic.

Profesor Leal experienced the same feelings of frustration, but he had the same advantage as *profesora* Silvinus, a colleague to engage and vent when needed. This can be a saving grace when it comes to working against the grain, and in order to avoid racial battle fatigue.

Racial battle fatigue. *Profesora* Silvinus establishes that at the root of racial battle fatigue is the power dynamics that places a Professor of Color in a vulnerable position, particularly in academia when one is critical about race and racism:

Racial battle fatigue, that might be why sometimes I just stay silent, but I would not say I have racial battle fatigue. I have not experienced that way with students. It is more with academia. With other faculty or when somebody says: "Did you see what so and so said?" That is when I pick my battles. I am not one to go to racial battle fatigue. I pick my battles and I know how to disengage, when am not going to do it. If I am not in the mood, I can care less about challenging you. I am not here to change your mind if you have been in the field for 40 years. I am not going to waste my time. I don't take it personally.

Profesora Silvinus avoids racial battle fatigue by strategically remaining silent, and by choosing when to engage in discussions. She has learned that her discussion is not

going to change the positionality of a senior colleague that is part of the institutionalized racism imbedded in academia. Yet she hints that at some point of her career she felt she needed to engage in the discussion:

I used to think you are saving the students, but we can't change your minds. I am not going to waste my time. I am going to the students and the faculty where I know I am going to make an impact. We are dealing with administrators, so I guess there is different levels of racial battle so that I don't stay quiet. It is who I am.

Becoming aware that racial battle fatigue is another form of self-preservation. She has learned instead, to use her position of power in the classroom to educate her students, administrators in schools, to work for social justice in their own organizations. This job poses another set of racial battles but she recognizes that she has better odds of succeeding when knowing how to avoid warfare.

Professor Leal corroborates how Faculty of Color working toward social justice become victims of racial battle fatigue when they do not disengage:

I think, with battle fatigue, microaggressions, as you get older, you get more strategic with that, too. Early on, it could be personally destructive. It's not very productive for you. Then, they actually get you when they tell you, or they get you the way they treat you, and then they get you because you're still thinking about it. You're still doing something that's unproductive.

As microaggressions continue, Faculty of Color realize that they have to protect themselves from the destructive cycle that results in racial battle fatigue. As *profesora* Silvinus, *profesor Leal* also opts to focus his energy on something productive to counteract the negative effects of the academy. Institutions are system push Faculty of Color into submission, or pushes them completely out of the Ivory Tower. He chooses to dismiss the microaggressions and focus his work to benefit his community:

When you're facing battle fatigue, racial battle fatigue, it's like I'm just not going to work with you. Some people might look at that as arrogant or selfish, but I'm going to dedicate my time in my community. Yeah, I'm going to publish about it, so you can't tell me that I'm not doing my work. That's what I'm going to write about. If I'm going to volunteer my time, and if I'm going to do community service, I'm going to do it there. I'm not going to do it anywhere else.

Recognizing that racial battle fatigue is the result of institutionalized racism, like microaggressions, this is key to understanding how to handle both. *Profesor Triano* points to other forms of institutional racist practices that can result in racial battle fatigue:

Racial battle fatigue is also being in this profession, getting a Ph.D., and being in line with a WIC voucher, and in another hand the Ph.D. Being in that context and saying, "Well, I've gotten all this education. I've gone to well recognized universities. I've done all these things that people say you're supposed to do. Yet, I'm still here."

He refers to the system that presents education as a way to obtain economic mobility, but instead creates an economic layer of debtors that benefits financial institutions. When graduates face the unsurmountable amount of accrued debt, they get discouraged when half their wages have to go to repay their student loans. Furthermore, some Faculty of Color sadly realize their disposable income is not enough to survive in the towns where they find employment. Despite their formal education, they are forced into financial shackles of social assistance that they originally wanted to escape. Often they are forced to abandon the profession to seek more profitable employment outside of education. This was the case for one of the Faculty of Color initially approached to be part of this research. This is partially happening to *profesora Lazo*, she experiences the intersectionality of racism, sexism, and classism. Another point that *profesor Triano* notes is the low percentage of Faculty of Color, generally, and the disheartening feeling

of not being considered for professional opportunities in spite of having impressive credentials:

I think about racial battle fatigue when you apply for positions and you wait another year, and you wait another year. You're like, "Well, was my education worth it in this sense?" I think a lot about that in terms of what it means to come out with degrees and have high levels of debt, educational debt, as a result of investing in that process at the time when the University of California and Cal State and others began to raise tuitions at insane rates. I think about those things as an ongoing process of racial battle fatigue. It prevents you from having the ability to acquire wealth in terms of buying a home.

Professor Triano explains how Faculty of Color cannot disengage from the economic system that marginalizes People of Color from the American dream. These Faculty of Color focused on achieving their educational dream, but owning a house and providing for a family becomes unrealistic. If they decide to continue the work in social justice education, they have to accept financial marginalization that comes from institutionalized oppression. This is a system that does not allocate the financial resources to make education affordable and accessible, which is another form of social injustice against Faculty of Color.

Tenure. Out of our five faculty, one decided not to go pursue tenure because she knew she would not obtain it. Another professor will not attempt to go file for tenure because she has a side business that provides a higher income, one with more personal satisfaction. Two of our *profesores* are on track to gain tenure, at some point. Only one, *profesor Leal*, is a tenured faculty. He explains the process as follows:

When I first started, I just wanted to get tenure. I didn't want to affront anybody. I didn't want to endanger my tenure process. A lot of times, I just did what I needed to do. I published. I tried to teach as much as I could, as well as I could. At the beginning, I was learning how to explain myself. I was in a different university, which was even more white and more conservative. Trying to figure out a way so the

students wouldn't run me outta there. I was worried that these people were going to go after me.

Professor Leal's demeanor at that point of his career was more cautious, being aware that he had certain institutional obligations. He focused on completing those requirements to achieve tenure, and was more guarded in what he said, and when he said it in order to achieve tenure even in the face of the inevitable microaggressions:

I remember experiencing microaggressions as a junior faculty member. I had some senior faculty that would—there was two Latinos in the faculty, and they would always call me the other guy's name. They would always do that. I'm not saying that I didn't get frustrated or angry, but I think, for me, my approach was always I would try to prove people wrong.

Professor Leal brings up an important point that helped him push forward, the desire to prove white people wrong. He also explains how he focused his energy strategically, and the importance of a support system:

You also have to be strategic, and you also have to be smart. You have to have allies, so that, on some issues, yeah, we're going to push this. It's important. We're going to—we're going to have a discussion about that. Other times, is it worth—is it worth even going there? Is it isn't worth—I'm not going to change their mind. Plus, I'm going to use all my energy. I'm going to get frustrated. It's not going to be—in the long run, it's not going to benefit me.

Up to a certain point, *Professor Leal* had to be selfish and act for his own benefit until he had tenure. He sums up what has to be done to achieve tenure:

I think each person needs to—if you're about social justice, and if you want, if you want to advocate for more equity, and if you want to advocate for students of color, then being strategic, leveraging your assets, your allies, using your role, depending on what stage of your career you're in, is really important. Because nobody wants, as an assistant professor, you don't want them—you don't want them to not—you don't want not earn tenure. That's the number one thing. I think, depending on what stage of your career you're at, and depending on what level or what position you have, and depending on what allies you have on a certain issue, you have to make a political decision, a strategic decision, about how to push it.

At the other end of the spectrum, we have *profesora* Milagros, who was silenced, and kept in line. She acknowledged that the institution where she serves is more concerned with the staff addressing everyday business over providing leadership with a clear vision. Being worn out contributed to her not obtaining tenure:

In general, I mean, the university as a whole, is not a very conducive place for collaboration. Part of it is I get swept up in the day-to-day of what I gotta get done. Because of our lack of leadership, the work has just been overwhelming like the things that's going to get done. We all need to step up because we haven't had a chair in a position for a while, and just the overall assault, I think, on higher education has really worn us down collectively.

Profesora Milagros explains how she was burdened with more work, since they were short staffed, yet other colleagues in her institution received their tenure during the same time. She is kind to explain the variables in the process, but clearly there is a palpable feeling of disappointment:

We like each other, but we haven't had the time or the energy to be able to really solidify, still. I still feel like we're really isolated and siloed into doing our own things, and not necessarily speaking to each other in a really cohesive way. Another thing that's been a challenge for us is that we've had a lot of retirements and a lot of people leave. We're depending on the time, a lot of adjuncts of which I am one, actually, because in the process, I didn't get tenure. I withdrew and didn't go up for tenure because it didn't look like I was going to go up, but if I went up, I would've been denied. If I was denied, that's it. I'm out. They can't hire me back. Because I resigned, and then got rehired as a lecturer, I'm able to stay on as a lecturer as long as there's spaces.

Profesora Milagros knew that she would have been denied had she gone for tenure. She did not explain how she knew this, or why she is good enough to be a lecturer in an institution that does not consider her good enough to be tenured.

Summary of Question # 3 – Navigating Whiteness in Academia

Our *profesores* understand that there are hurdles to overcome in the institution where they work. Colleagues, or the adults with whom our *profesores* work are the main hurdle to overcome as they can create obstacles or give support, depending on the level of criticality they possess. Faculty of Color become very aware of the political consequences if speaking up and challenging the status quo, particularly regarding issues of race and social justice

One of the hurdles that our *profesores* have to navigate is the lack of criticality of their colleagues. The institution has unspoken rules about not disturbing the different levels of consciousness of the group, which privileges acritical students and colleagues. Confronting issues of race and privilege directly can result on rising sensibilities, complaints against the critical professor, and the ensuing vilification of a professor. As a result, faculty feel they have to be cautious about their work, and as result some of them are pushed into silence. Part of this silence can be self-imposed and some could be due to not having a support system. As a result, faculty can feel isolated, particularly when facing microaggressions in the workplace.

By contrast, an effective support system has a positive effect in terms of fulfilling professional obligations like researching, publishing and teaching. These contribute to keep them on track for the tenure process. An effective support system contributes to not being silenced and handling microaggressions by bouncing ideas and venting when needed. This can be crucial to avoid racial battle fatigue after sustaining constant microaggressions in the workplace. As a response to this, *profesores* tend to focus their

energy on something productive, like working for the community they serve. This method helps counteract the effects of institutionalized oppression that pushes them into submission or pushes them out of the Ivory Tower altogether. One of the Faculty of Color brought up the growing problem with student debt faced by many faculty, particularly working-class Faculty of Color in academia. Despite their formal education, they are forced to live in poverty, or are forced to abandon the profession to seek more profitable employment outside of education.

Two of our *profesores* are seeking to leave their current institution once they achieve tenure in order to change their financial situation. Two *profesoras* will not achieve tenure, one because she decided to embrace a side business, and another because she knew she would not obtain tenure. Only one of our *profesores* is tenured. He explains that faculty who are about social justice need to be strategic and leverage their assets and allies because tenure is essential to being able to advocate for more equity, and for Students of Color.

The epistemological struggle is obvious when navigating whiteness in academia because the power structure needs to change. Professors have a better chance to open the minds of students since they hold a level of power as they lead their training. When it comes to dealing with academic colleagues, Faculty of Color are no longer in a position of power. They are at a disadvantage because they have to work within the constraints of the “Ivory tower” and the institutional privilege of white faculty. Discussions with colleagues can be taxing, resulting in racial battle fatigue, particularly when there is not a critical mass of social justice Faculty of Color that can support each other. As a result,

Faculty of Color have to carefully navigate between the two paradigms and overcome obstacles in order to persist in their social and racial justice work.

Summary of Findings

The Social Justice Pyramid was used as a model that goes beyond satisfying individual needs into a more complex structure in which Faculty of Color working towards social and racial justice move along a continuum formed by their ontology, epistemology and axiology. This continuum influences the way they structure their work, as well as the way in which they navigate whiteness in academia.

Findings for question # 1 - Ontology, epistemology and axiology of social justice Faculty of Color. This section highlights the strong commitment and relational responsibility that *profesores* hold towards Communities of Color. Faculty of Color explain their particular ontology is shaped by the sacrifice of the previous generation. These sacrifices create opportunities for the next generation, as well as by the relational accountability deeply engrained People of Color lineage. This ontology differs from the dominant culture of individualism that perceives community relationality in a deficit manner. This ontological divide is the root of deficit view of Faculty of Color, educators at all levels, and Students of Color.

In terms of their epistemology, Faculty of Color experienced *arrebato*s at some point in their formal education. This aided their understanding to come to terms with the power of education, both as an oppressive tool and as a transformational tool. This solidified their social responsibility to take action and become educators to change the system from within.

The *arrebato* is defined as the moment in the epistemological formation of an individual. When the veil of ignorance and colonization is torn, this enables the individual to see social construct that shape a dominant narrative of the status quo. Multiple *arrebatos* are necessary in the deconstruction of the internalized narratives that help shaped an individual psychological formation. Ideally this should be facilitated and supported before the individual develops of a new paradigm to approach life and teach Students of Color.

Faculty of Color are aware of the epistemological divide between their positionality and those who differ from their social justice stance. This stage is where social justice work can be paralyzing if academic institutions do not have a social justice focus. There are instances where institutions advocate for diversification of representation but with no real practice on how inclusive and responsive this will be enacted.

During this stage, Faculty of Color become very strategic about navigating academia. There are several constraints to avoid in order to reach a place where they can help Communities of Color. They are also aware of the different paradigms that regulate Faculty of Color and that are trying to move them to abandon their formation and be absorbed by the hegemony. As a result, Faculty of Color adopt a syncretic way of being, using the tools of the hegemony but keeping a clarity of purpose. In terms of their axiology and even within the constraints of academia, Faculty of Color direct their research to study Communities of Color. This helps find new ways to provide access and expand the possibilities of the new generations of educators and students.

All the participants in this study are at different levels in their academic path, yet, all of them focus their academic inquiry on Communities of Color. This focus becomes the main source of motivation to complete their research and writing. They do this as a source of strength and as a way of institutional resistance. They do it to counteract the racial battle fatigue embedded in academia, particularly to those who are committed to social justice work. Mainly they do this because they feel a sense of accountability for Communities of Color. This engagement benefits them, as scholars, along with Communities of Color by legitimizing their voices, experiences, and by giving opportunities to those that come after them.

Findings for question # 2 - Strategies and innovations used in teacher training and credentialing of educational leaders. From the ontological point of view, Faculty of Color identified the lack of critical awareness as a more challenging factor than race alone. Faculty have to differentiate which students have an ontological gap. Professors of Color often reassure those that possess the ontological background about their relationality to their communities. Faculty are clear that being a Person of Color does not guarantee the level of critical understanding needed to engage and practice social and racial justice.

Through their years of teaching, and through their own experiences as students in the classroom, Faculty of Color have reached an understanding that the degree of criticality held students vary. When graduate students enter teacher training is inversely proportional to the level of effort that they as faculty have to put in order to expand the critical lenses of these future teachers.

In terms of the epistemological development of new teachers that come to their education or teacher training programs, faculty are deliberate about how they frame their courses. This way, new teachers understand the structures, institutions and practices that often affirming and sustain oppressive practices against Students of Color. For this reason *profesores* use concrete data, as well as reflections and counterstories in order to challenge white privilege. The point here is to create the *arrebatos* that will propel students to develop the relationality and political clarity necessary to work with communities of color.

Findings for question #3 - Navigating whiteness in academia. The *profesores* understand the important role of supporting the development of critical lenses among graduate students. While this work has to be done in the classroom, faculty understand there is “white surveillance” in academic institution. These too often set the hurdles preventing them from achieving any long-term changes in social and racial justice in education. The academy has privileged dominant ways of teaching, research practice, and thinking in general that guard and protect white supremacy. The pedagogical expertise Faculty of Color bring to their teaching practice threaten academia by simply supporting a mission centered in social and racial justice. This contradiction is evident even when the academia hires and brings our “*profesores*” to campus as a way to increase racial representation, and improve racial climate. Some of these are fallacies but Faculty of Color learn to navigate these contradictions while teaching a new generation of social justice educators.

The epistemological struggle is obvious when navigating whiteness in academia because the power structure needs to change. Faculty have a better chance to open the minds of students since they hold a level of power as they lead their training. When it comes to dealing with academic colleagues, Faculty of Color are no longer in a position of power. They are at a disadvantage because they have to work within the constraints of the “Ivory tower” and the institutional privilege of white faculty. Discussions with colleagues can be taxing, resulting in racial battle fatigue, particularly when there is not a critical mass of social justice Faculty of Color that can support each other. As a result, Faculty of Color have to carefully navigate between the two paradigms and overcome obstacles in order to persist in their social and racial justice work.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiential knowledge of five social justice Faculty of Color in their quest to develop social justice educators at all levels of the educational system. One of the goals of this research was to find out how to sustain the impacts of these faculty in K-12 schools in order to increase the educational opportunities and outcomes of Students of Color.

This dissertation delves into: (1) the ontological, epistemological and axiological principles that shape the ways that five social justice Faculty of Color approach their work, (2) the strategies that they use in the professional training and credentialing at schools of education at the colleges they work, and finally (3) the ways they navigate with the racial dynamics in their academic institutions.

This chapter will provide an overview of the way this study was conducted, followed by the main findings and contributions of the study. This chapter will continue by explaining the limitations and implications of the findings for the different levels of the educational system. Finally this chapter outline recommendations for future research before closing with some final thoughts.

Overview

This study used a qualitative approach with the use of *testimonios*, rooted in the tradition of oral cultures in Latino, African and Native American communities (Burciaga, 2007; Delgado Bernal, Villalpando, 2002), Anzaldúa's (1987, 2002) Mestiza Consciousness, and the path of *conocimiento* as an inquiry cycle. The iterative analysis of the *testimonios* was conducted with the addition of several lenses that started with

Critical Race-Grounded Methodology (Malagon, Perez-Huber & Velez, 2009), followed by Indigenous Methodologies (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Weber-Pillwax, 2001 & 2004; Wilson, 2001 & 2008) and Chicana Feminist Epistemology (Delgado Bernal, 1998). The final lens added to this process came with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. The use of multidisciplinary lenses resulted in the Social Justice Pyramid (*Figure 3*), a model which was explained in detail in chapter 4. This model was used as a roadmap to explain the ontogeny of social justice Faculty of Color, and how critical this ontogeny is to develop social justice and racial educators at any level of the educational system.

Contributions and Main Findings of the Study

The contribution of this study comes from the use of different lenses that allowed the researcher to look at the formation of social justice Faculty of Color not through the gaze of the established methodologies of academia, but through the gaze of our indigenous ancestors' methodologies and those of our own academic ancestors. The resulting Social Justice Pyramid illuminates a roadmap highlighting the ontological, epistemological and axiological principles that shape faculty working towards social and racial justice. This research found a correlation between these principles and the pedagogical approach they employ in the training and credentialing of new teachers in schools of education. These principles determined the ways they navigate the racial dynamics of their respective institutions.

The use of several paradigms also illuminate the complexity of the experiential knowledge held by these social justice Faculty of Color. This provides them unique skillset to successfully prepare future social justice teacher, regardless of their different

backgrounds. Also evident were the skills, adaptability, endurance, and patience possessed by social justice Faculty of Color to carefully navigate the obstacles that the status quo poses in order to carry out their social and racial justice mission. The end goal is to fulfill the relational accountability they have towards Communities of Color they serve

The Uniqueness and Strength of Social Justice Faculty's Ontogeny

Social justice Faculty of Color are resilient and dedicated educators in the educational system. After navigating institutional oppression to become a professor in education (only 2% of people of color become faculty, according to NCES, 2017), these faculty place themselves within the same institutions that attempted to oppress them from obtaining these degrees. In order to overcome these challenges, they had to strategize their way along their own professional path. Acknowledging these challenges and admitting these white institution would hold unforeseen hurdles to prevent them from achieving their missions, they were aware these institutions could push them out of the system altogether. For this reason, they built cultural armors around themselves by becoming experts at leveraging their assets. This would help propel them to the point where they will achieve tenure, and have the opportunity to tilt the mission and vision of their institutions towards social and racial justice.

Social justice Faculty of Color possess a deep commitment to improving the conditions experience by Communities of Color, and to their community and relational accountability. This commitment differs from the notion of individuality and competition of the Eurocentric system of education. Having to function in this oppressive context,

provides faculty working for social and racial justice the ability to maneuver within the Eurocentric worldviews employing their own indigenous worldviews. The complex ontogeny of these faculty elucidated the findings of this study in regards to the ontological, epistemological and axiological gaps that social justice Faculty of Color attempt to fill with their work.

The ontology gap. The question put forward by one of the faculty encapsulates the struggle to achieve social justice. He posed: *“How to engage Latino and immigrant families, acknowledging their knowledge, know-how, history and wisdom, and bring that to the school philosophically with different philosophies?”* Bridging two different philosophies is the everyday challenge of a social justice Faculty of Color. Individuals who grew up with privilege normalize this privilege as individual accomplishment. These individuals cannot understand the relational responsibility that those who have endured struggle have towards correcting the wrongs within a racialized history. As a result, social justice Faculty of Color become an ontological formation, and the challenge for social and racial justice Faculty of Color is to fill this ontological gap in educators (white and colonized) that do not possess it.

From the ontological point of view, our *profesores* identified the lack of critical awareness as a more challenging factor than race alone. With every new cohort of students, social justice Faculty of Color have to differentiate between students that have the ontological gap, to those that hold an ontological formation. In order to fulfill the needs of these different graduate students, faculty challenge hegemonic beliefs as a crucial first step to develop the critical thinking. At the same time, social justice Faculty

of Color model this strategy to support those that have the critical lenses and will have to do the same in their own institutions.

What remains as a challenge according to the *profesores* is how to address the ontological gap of academic colleagues in a system, like academia. They experience leadership that is mostly acritical and white, and whose majority of members have not acknowledged their own privilege and biases in regards to communities that are racially and culturally different from them. As a result, our *profesores* find themselves in a subordinate position due to the power dynamics imposed on them, rather than being recognized and placed in positions where their unique skills could be fully utilized strengthen a social justice agenda. They are sedated within a system where they have to careful navigate difficult terrain until they achieve tenure. Until then, they are deprived of the opportunity where they can bring forward their critical skills without becoming a threat to their (white) colleagues and administrators. Our *profesores* have to balance their social justice mission to advocate for a more inclusive and equitable changes. They want to accomplish this without provoking their own furthered marginalization. Challenging institutionalized oppressed may also push out Faculty of Color by acritical colleagues who are in positions of power and privilege. This reinforces the need to reframe the way faculty are evaluated and considered for leadership positions in academia. A careful consideration should be given to the ontogeny of candidates applying for leadership and teaching positions in order to guarantee more equitable leadership opportunities within these universities.

The epistemological gap. In order to change the epistemological views of graduate students, the *profesores* rely heavily on reflections, and discussions. This provides opportunities for counterstories from marginalized students that possess a different ontology, and opportunities for those who feel comfortable in their hegemonic worldviews to consider alternative perspectives. More importantly, these reflections and discussions are designed to create *arrebato* moments, epiphanies to evidence privilege and/or level of colonization.

Discussions about social justice issues require preparation and skill to be able to deal with the tools of whiteness that inevitably surface during conversations about race and privilege. There is no training to prepare social justice Faculty of Color to deal with these difficult discussions, which highlights another need in the field. In spite of this, Faculty of Color carefully and intuitively develop strategies, with the support of like-minded colleagues. Creating activities that enables them to address biased comments with data and inquiry. Faculty of Color use these difficult conversations as an opportunity to frame internal and external conflicts, resulting from graduate students' own positionality and epistemologies. Once biases are challenged, graduate students can expand their epistemology or reconsider their perspectives. The understanding is that deconstructing biases and owning privilege is a process that can only be done willingly.

A finding of this study points to our two faculty members in teacher education programs. They present how differently they challenge biased beliefs compared to *profesores* at the educational leadership level, who teach courses about race and racism in education. This might indicate the need to develop curricular offerings within teacher

education programs. This is especially critical given the teaching profession are not only the largest group in the education field, but the ones with direct contact with student, and in particular Students of Color.

Empirical data indicate that multicultural education, which is heavily used in teacher preparation, has been diluted with regard to social justice issues (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Teacher preparation is also limited by the academic standards. As a way to push students to widen their critical lenses, there is a need to provide CRT courses, and courses that deal with the opportunity to challenge deficit thinking, white privilege, and hegemony. This is especially important for educational leaders as these concepts continue to be at the root shaping educational practices and discourse. Furthermore, universities would benefit from gathering the expertise of social justice Faculty of Color in the design of courses that directly tackle the ontological, epistemological and axiological gaps of prospective educators.

Another area of need evidenced by this study is the need for universities to provide safe spaces where honest conversations about race and social justice can be held regularly on campuses. These safe spaces can be facilitated by social justice educators whose unique skills can assist less experienced colleagues to self-reflect, to heal from microaggressions, and to experience *arrebatos* that will move them to reevaluate their positionality.

The axiological gap. Faculty of Color attempt to develop relationality with the communities through service projects as these often require richer commitment and sustained field work. The intention with these project are to develop with the purpose of

developing the axiological values at the core of social and racial justice work. The hope is to get to the point of relational responsibility necessary to bring social justice to marginalized communities. Currently, there is a lack of sustained and committed involvement with the community in the current programs of education, which limits the exposure of educators to research in the communities in which they intend to work, particularly in the teacher preparation program. Symbiotic relationships between school communities and universities should be considered to close this gap. The model of community-based research that professor Leal conducted is a model that allowed research in marginalized communities by providing access to know the communities with the help of researchers of color. This unique access can benefit all parties involved. For universities, this is an opportunity to expand their paradigms of research, as well as an opportunity to continue supporting educators that have been trained by their institution beyond the classroom. It is also an opportunity to provide feedback and professional development to schools in the achievement of social justice. For the communities being studied, this offers an opportunity to have equal footing in the process of getting rid of deficit thinking about communities of color and to help change the culture of schools.

Implications of the Study

The implications of this study have potential impacts from higher education all the way to the K-12 classrooms.

Universities. The voice of the participants of this study that are actually doing social and racial justice work in their educational programs, provides a response to the critics of social justice in education, and an opportunity for self-reflection and reconsideration of

their position. Social and racial justice in education is the vehicle to bring equity to education, and as such, universities interested in increasing equity in their institutions should tap into the ontological, epistemological and axiological strengths of professors of color working for social justice. The level of work that they have engaged in order to reach professorship is beyond what is expected of any educator in a university with their official advising loads, plus the unofficial mentoring load of students of color that identified with them. They are tapped to be part of diversity committees, equity efforts and multicultural events. This places social and racial justice professors of color in a unique position in education where they can see and differentiate for different populations of students coming to their institutions. These professors are not only strong models for the next generation of educators, but they also have political clarity of their role in increasing equity in education. Universities should also aim to increase the number of social and racial justice professors of color in universities, particularly in leadership positions, which would also positively impact the strength of the preparation of educators that go through the universities' educational programs. Furthermore, universities need to reframe the way that professionals are evaluated and considered for leadership positions in academia. A careful consideration should be given to the ontogeny of candidates of color and what they have to offer to their institutions in order to guarantee more equitable leadership and practices in universities. Universities can develop their own protocols to evaluate candidates for leadership and promotion considering the ontological, epistemological and axiological strengths of each candidate.

Universities also need to encourage and direct funding to the research of these professors, particularly considering the multiplier effect that this research work can produce in the K-12 settings where their college students will eventually work. With social and racial justice professors at the helm, educational research will include more honest and participatory studies, given the kinship and relationality of social and racial justice professors of color with communities of color. This community-based research can also increase the number of future professors working for racial and social justice, and it can directly impact K-12 schools in the shape of symbiotic relationships that provide continued professional development for the adults working with students. In addition, research provides opportunities for all involved to deal with difficult discussions about racial disenfranchisement, which can be a starting point to address the issue more openly.

As previously noted, there is a need for universities to provide safe spaces where honest conversations about race and social justice can be held regularly. Most universities have an equity, diversity and access office. These offices are mostly in charge of monitoring the implementation of equity and non-discriminatory policies and mandates designed to protect the rights of minoritized groups in the universities. These offices monitor and deal with grievances and conduct campus climate surveys. These offices tend to be reactive, even when they might have plans for increasing equity and diversity in curricular aspects of university life. These offices need to evolve into a more proactive stance in order to support the work of social and racial justice educators. Institutions should provide spaces to offer professional development, counseling, and in

general a place where the direction of social and justice work can be discussed, determined, and critically evaluated. These efforts can be facilitated by social justice scholar whose unique skills have prepared them to moderate and model these conversations. UCLA, UC Berkeley and San Francisco State University, amongst others, have stronger initiatives aimed to increase diversity within their institutions, as well as to support students of underserved communities by strengthening access for community involvement. These initiatives can be used as models and develop scalability processes.

Schools of education. Teachers are not only the largest group in the education profession, but the key members with in direct contact with K-12 students. From our two *profesoras* in teacher education program, we gathered that there are structural and programmatic limits that curtail the progress of social justice education. These have ripple effects as critical training is deprived from millions of K-12 students, mostly Students of Color. Indirect approaches to addressing the role of racism and white privilege in education need to be institutionalize. These are recommended to be implemented through curricular modules in teacher education. By including the analysis of ontogeny of social justice educators, as well as critical race theory in the courses of study, a paradigm shift will occur in academia. The role of racism, implicit biases, and white privilege in education should be part of the curricular offerings at an early stage of teacher preparation. This would assist candidates to evaluate if they have the political clarity required to serve in disenfranchised communities. CRT is particularly important considering that multicultural education has been watered down with regard to social justice issues. Social justice Faculty of Color are uniquely prepared to design more

critical courses to address these gaps in teacher preparation, and universities should tap into their expertise. Critical race classes can develop the competence of teacher candidates when it comes time to complete their Teacher Professional Assessments, particularly in regards to populations that have not benefited from equitable distribution of resources in education. Finally, schools of education should also develop protocols to understand the ontological, epistemological and axiological paradigm of teacher candidates during the process of admission. The response to carefully designed prompts can indicate the level of work the student has to do in terms of developing their social and racial justice competence.

K-12 schools. The social justice Faculty of Color in this study experienced their cultural epiphanies and awakenings (*arrebato*) while in college. These participants credit the shift to learning Critical Race Theory, critical pedagogies in African American history, Ethnic Studies, and in Anthropology classes. Only one professor was exposed to CRT and critical pedagogies in an education program while at the doctoral level. Faculty of Color experienced an epistemological shift at this point as they came to terms with the power of education as a transformational tool. They also embraced their social responsibility to take action to change the system through their work in education.

This moment of *arrebato* should occur earlier in the educational trajectory of any student. Hence, students should have the opportunity to understand and value their own ontology, be it through ethnic studies or similar courses. In addition, an increase in social justice Faculty of Color conducting research through symbiotic relationships with K-12

institutions can provide opportunities for teachers to propel students that have a relational ontology, and to provide awakenings to those that do not.

For K-12 educators and educational leaders, this study provides generative tools to sustain and support the work of critical teachers committed to social justice in schools as a vehicle to change the statistics for Students of Color. In addition, this research provides tools to prepare critical Teachers of Color to fight the narrative of “poor teaching” that is proliferating through neo-liberal policies. These too often present schools in a deficit light in their quest to privatize U.S. public education (Kohn, 2000), or argue against the need for increased accountability measures to ensure schools remain globally competitive (Borman et al., 2009).

Future Research

Future research should take a look at different groups of educators that are doing social and racial justice work in terms of their ontological, epistemological and axiological development. For instance, engage white faculty doing social and racial justice work in order to understand the ontogenical shifts that allowed them to see their privilege and embrace the work of social and racial justice. The Social Justice Pyramid can be tested further if it is used as a roadmap to understand these ideological and epistemological shifts.

Y yo despierta... (Awoken)

In her poem *Primero Sueño*, Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Mexican erudite and feminist *escritora intelectual*, wrote about the intellectual travel that ends in realization. This research has taken me to connect parallels between various struggles experienced by of

social justice Faculty of Color to the struggle of this brilliant woman. Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz was pushed aside and silenced by misogyny and institutionalized hegemony within a patriarchal society. Born ahead of her time, de la Cruz face extreme adversity to gain social justice. I am encouraged by the number of social justice Faculty of Color whose ontogeny fuels their perseverance to accomplish their work, as well as with social movements demanding social and racial justice for all. On the other hand, I am also aware of the current political context that threatens social justice as a vehicle to debunk narratives of individualism by unraveling and imposing the boot straps mentality on racially oppressed groups.

Social and racial justice work is crucial to recognize the historical oppression still thriving in public schooling. As a society, we will not be able to weave a new racial and social justice tapestry in this country until these wrongdoings have been addressed and challenged. Only those that understand the complexity of racial relationships with a history of racial oppression are in position to accomplish this paradigm shift. Social justice Faculty of Color are at the forefront of this work and their skills and expertise should lead as model to change the status quo within educational structure.

After the defense of this study, a colleague made me aware of a blog where an author explained that while attending a conference, the presenter explained that Maslow used Blackfoot beliefs in the creation of his Pyramid of needs. This awareness opens a new door for future research and I am rejoiced to receive validation of my own cultural intuition in the approach and thoughtfulness this dissertation was conducted. I want to give homage to the Blackfoot tribe for their influence on Maslow, and I hope that my

current and future scholarship contributes to bring the knowledge back full circle to its roots.

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Appendix A

Protocol for Data Collection

What drove you to work for social justice?
What informed your epistemology? What is your definition of social justice?
What strategies and innovation have you used to develop and support social justice educators?
How do you teach cultural appreciation and relationship building in a way that is conducive towards critically preparing students? What strategies do you use? Reflections? Counterstories? How do you differentiate for educators of color vs. White educators? How do you connect preparation and practice? How do you provide long term support to your educators?
How have you navigated through conflict in the pursuit of promulgating social justice in education?
How do frame conversations to challenge deficit thinking? How do you handle being challenged? How do you avoid privileging White fragility/comfort when talking about race/racism? How have you dealt with impostor syndrome? How do you handle silence, isolation and racial battle fatigue?