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RAYMA HARCHAR OUTSTANDING RESEARCH PAPER AWARD**Women Presidents of Higher Education Institutions: A Mixed-Methods Phenomenological Study of the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy, Transformational Leadership, Gender-Based Barriers, and Support Structures**

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In the United States, fewer than 30% of university presidents are female, and among SACSCOC-accredited institutions, only 23% of university presidents are female. The lack of women in senior leadership roles at higher education institutions mirrors other industries, and research has shown institutions and organizations which lack female representation are less effective (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017). To ascend to senior leadership roles, including the presidency, women persist through existing macro, meso, and micro levels of gender-based barriers. As women overcome these obstacles and adversities, a higher sense of self-efficacy is developed. Research (Eagly, 2007) also has found women to demonstrate characteristics of transformational leadership more frequently than men. Through a series of survey and interview questions with women presidents in higher education, this mixed-method phenomenological study explored relationships between self-efficacy, transformational leadership, and existing gender barriers and supports.

The study's purpose was to understand experiences of women who serve as presidents of SACSCOC-accredited institutions. Women, generally, navigate barriers during their leadership journey, and each obstacle contributes to a deeper sense of self-efficacy. This study included both quantitative and qualitative research methods, and the sample population included women presidents, chancellors, or chief executive officers (or interim) representatives of SACSCOC-accredited higher education institutions. Specifically, this study explored experiences of women who have ascended to the role of president in higher education institutions in relation to (a) demographics of women presidents, (b) perceived self-efficacy, (c) factors influencing self-efficacy development, (d) characteristics of leadership self-efficacy, (e) gender-based leadership barriers, and (f) lived experiences of women university presidents.

The primary research question was: What factors contribute to the self-efficacy of women presidents in higher education? The following research questions supported the primary research question:

- Research Question 1. What are the demographic characteristics of women presidents in SACSCOC-accredited higher education institutions, and what are the characteristics of the institutions in which they serve?
- Research Question 2. What are the perceptions of self-efficacy identified by women university presidents?
- Research Question 2a. What experiences and sources influenced women presidents' perceived self-efficacy?
- Research Question 3. What are the characteristics of leadership and leadership self-efficacy most frequently exhibited by women presidents?
- Research Question 4. What gender-based barriers do women presidents face most frequently at the macro, meso, and micro-levels?
- Research Question 4a. What strategies and support structures are used to overcome gender-based barriers?

This study resulted in six major findings: (a) Women presidents in higher education institutions are highly self-efficacious yet aspire to even greater levels of efficacy and professionalism; (b) Women presidents in higher education institutions are authentic, relationship-focused, and goal-oriented; (c) Women presidents in higher education institutions experience a multitude of gender-based barriers on their leadership journeys and in their presidencies; (d) Mentoring and leadership or professional development programming are essential components of the leadership journey for women presidents in higher education institutions; (e) Misalignment exists between gender-based barriers and support structures identified by women presidents of higher education institutions; and (f) Women presidents of higher education institutions are committed to supporting the next generation of leaders.

The Persistence of Black Men Striving to Get a Seat at the Table at Higher Education Institutions

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Black men intellectual and academic abilities have been underestimated from the time they were born. According to Ladson-Billings (2011), between the ages of 3 and 6 Black males are viewed as “cute” but not intelligent beings. By the time they are 8 or 9 years old, their childhood evaporates, and they are no longer viewed as “cute” but as problematic. As they continued their education, they were held to a different standard, punished harsher than their White counterparts, and are expected to excel athletically and not academically (Howard, 2013). As adults, they are faced with similar stereotypes, discrimination, and disparities that hinder their career advancement in higher education leadership.

According to previous research, the lack of representation of Black men in executive leadership roles in higher education are contributed to the educational pipeline, lack of qualifications, and interest in other career fields (Jackson & O’Callaghan, 2009; Jackson, 2011; Rolle et al., 2000; Wolfe & Freeman, 2013); however, recent studies have indicated otherwise. Wolfe & Dilworth (2015) mentioned the lack of Black [male] administrators in higher education is due to the lack of minority recruitment, retention efforts, and historically institutionalized racism from society that is mirrored by colleges and universities. Scott (2016) indicated that most of administrative positions are obtained through the “good old boy” system. He stated that higher education leaders tend to ask their friends or colleagues within their network to refer an individual for the position. Furthermore, the decision to hire or promote in higher education is not based on the qualifications of the candidate, but on how well the candidate fits in with the dominant group (Wolfe et al., 2015).

Other factors that hinder the career advancement of Black men in higher education is the glass ceiling effect, societal and internal structural barriers, and the unwritten policies and rules of the department. These are significant factors that impact Black men in obtaining leadership roles regardless of their qualifications and achievement (Airen, 2017; Kagan, 2019; Whitehead, 2017).

A recent study indicated that persistence and resilience is the key to Black men success. Black men are aware there are different expectations and standards that are placed on them in this field; therefore, they must be strategic and intentional on how they move forward in their career advancement. For example, they seek networking opportunities on their own and rely on their personal connections they have created inside and outside of their institutions for career opportunities and advancement. Black men understand they need mentorship, sponsorship, and networking opportunities to obtain executive leadership positions in higher education. They are determined to work hard and break down the stigmas and stereotypes that are placed on them so that the next Black male will have a chance (Roman-Gregory, 2021). The influence and power of visibility of Black men in executive leadership roles in higher education will motivate others and send a message “that they too can be equal participants within the educational enterprise” (Cruse, 1994, p. 18).

How Happiness, Self-Concept, and Locus of Control Relate to Student Achievement

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Fundamentally, the aim of education is to empower students to live better lives. By “better” it is not merely meant that students will find gainful employment and be more civic-minded, but also that on an individual level a student will engage the examined life and fulfill their potential. This process of self-discovery addresses three essential questions one must face in life: who am I? am I happy? and what shall I do with my life? The focus on test scores and data-driven curriculums that began twenty years ago with the implementation of high-stakes testing has ushered in a new generation of students who do not appear to have a strong sense of identity and have, at best, a tenuous grip on their emotional well-being. If educational leadership genuinely wants to empower students to live better lives, the focus must not only be on what kind of worker-bee it produces and whether that future employee is fighting for social causes or not—beyond those two things, education must equip a student with the skills to find and empower themselves, heeding Horace’s injunction: *Sapere aude, incipe*. The overarching question guiding this

literature review is this: What is the relationship between student achievement and happiness, self-concept, and locus of control?

A Qualitative Analysis of Evidence-Based Writing Instruction in Dual Enrollment Composition

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Background: Extensive research in K-12 writing has generated guidelines for evidence-based writing instruction. Likewise, studies of first-year composition (FYC) in higher education provide myriad potential methods for teaching for transfer. At the same time, dual enrollment composition studies clearly point out the mismatch between the aims of K-12 writing and FYC. Thus, for DE FYC, it is important to understand which instructional methods are utilized in DE FYC courses, which tend to vary by instructor credentials, course content, physical location, and student demographics.

Objectives: The aim of this study is to better understand students' perspectives of the instructional methods they experience in DE FYC and the perceived effect those methods had on their writing ability.

Methods: In this qualitative study conducted at a research one institution in the southeast United States, 86 DE FYC students responded to open-ended survey questions to describe the most helpful aspects of their DE composition courses, and 14 participants shared their ideas about the same in one-on-one semi structured interviews.

Findings: Survey and interview participants frequently described teacher feedback, revision opportunities, and modeling/models the more helpful aspects of their DE FYC courses. On the other hand, they cited peer review as the most inconsistently used and inconsistently effective instructional method. To some extent, students' perspectives of DE FYC instructional methods seemed to be predicated on their overall writing ability, with interviewees who rated themselves as good or exceptional writers pointing to the general effectiveness of their DE FYC instruction and interviewees who rated themselves as below average writers more likely to cite ineffectiveness of teaching strategies.

Discussion: Given the existing research and the findings from this study, the implications are several and varied. For instructors and students, it is important that DE FYC students and instructors engage with evidence-based instructional practices so students at various levels of writing proficiency might benefit from DE FYC participation. In addition, it is important for DE FYC instructors, including high school teachers and college instructors, to communicate and collaborate to develop courses, etc. Mixed methods research that includes surveys, interviews, and analysis of student writing might yield more well-rounded information of how students' writing experiences relate to their writing performance. These studies might include measurements of writing ability at the beginning and end of DE FYC courses to better measure any potential effects.

Grit and Student Achievement: A quantitative analysis

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This paper examines the construct of grit, defined as the persistence a person has to complete his or her goals, even when obstacles are present (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007). Specifically, it analyzes the relationship between students' level of grit and their achievement on high stakes testing in reading. The data are from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Control variables are student socioeconomic status, race, and gender. If there is a correlation between grit and student achievement, implications would include intensive training for educators in order to develop and build the characteristics that are identified as variables that are known to affect one's grittiness within the reading curriculum.

Introducing the Framework of Leadership for an Ongoing Crisis

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Problem Statement

At the onset of COVID-19, as schools throughout the United States were suddenly shut down, school leaders were confronted with teaching students through online instruction and providing training for their teachers to conduct remote learning. Research indicates that the support principals provide for their teachers with professional development, continued assistance, and opportunities for self-care helps teachers adapt to the changing situation during uncertain times such as natural disasters.

Although there was limited research about managing schools in a prolonged crisis and no handbook to guide districts or school leaders through the lockdown, some schools were successful in delivering online instruction while others were not. In a previous mixed methods study, the present researchers surveyed teachers throughout Louisiana about their perceptions of their principals' professional and emotional support and about their own support for their students. In that study, the quantitative and the qualitative responses of the teachers were very positive. The original purpose of the present study was to ascertain the kind of leadership style that is effective in a prolonged crisis based on the qualitative comments of the teachers and aligned with the components of several leadership approaches.

Theoretical Grounding

The theoretical grounding for the present study were several leadership theories: transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, crisis management, and leadership in uncertain times. Transformational leaders inspire the followers to expand their capabilities and to transcend their own needs for the attainment of the vision. Adaptive leaders prepare and encourage followers to adapt to change. Crisis managers assess the needs of the situation, make and communicate a plan, problem solve with others, and use adaptive strategies to accomplish

the plan. Uncertain times leadership is a hybrid model of transformational leadership and the use of self-development and context for the advantage of the organization.

Summary of Methodology

Subjects were Louisiana public school teachers who completed the Likert survey with an option for an open-ended comment after each question. Sections of the survey included questions regarding teachers' perceptions of professional and emotional support from administration. In the original study the open-ended responses were analyzed using inductive, open coding to classify conceptually similar responses.

After further analysis of the extremely positive qualitative teacher responses, the researchers recognized distinct features of all four leadership approaches. Therefore, in the present study, the researchers analyzed the qualitative responses using deductive, predetermined coding, and aligned them with the components of the four leadership approaches.

Results

Results indicated that most qualitative responses indicated which principal behaviors were effective and which desired behaviors were lacking in their principals. However, although many qualitative teacher responses aligned with the components of the four leadership approaches, none of the leadership approaches captured the essence of a leadership style that could satisfy all needs during a prolonged crisis.

Conclusions

The present researchers designed the Framework of Leadership for an Ongoing Crisis - the components of which are Concede Reality, Communicate, Consider Solutions, Care for Others, Coordinate Efforts, Conduct Contextual Training - which will be introduced.

The Impact of Digital Archives on Scholarship and Universities

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Digital archives have transcended the scholarly landscape. In addition to using digital collections as research, scholars are also taking advantage of the data-driven aspects these archives provide, fueling the digital humanities field. Scholar-librarian partnerships end up being a beneficial

method for supplying the resources for scholars in diverse fields, as well as knowing how and what to prioritize for preservation (Green & Lampron, 2017).

Due to limited research regarding utilization and benefits of digital archives in higher education, universities often limit or underfund these archives. Scholarship is constantly evolving, and libraries need to be able to meet researchers' needs. As Green and Lampron (2017) state, digital collection resources will need to "grow exponentially" (p. 762) in order to serve fields that are continuing to "expand in complexity and diversity of methodological approaches" (p. 762).

The purpose of this literature review is to examine research on digital archives related to the following areas: (a) evolution of digital archives from physical form; (b) technological methods used for augmenting digital collections; (c) best practices for utilizing digital archives; (d) scholar-librarian relationships formed to increase use and relevance of digital archives; (e) innovative opportunities linked to digital archives; (f) the enhancement of scholarly work; and (g) use and relevance to influence university status. An overarching question drives this literature review: How are digital archives used to enhance scholarship and increase the academic standing of universities? To explore the literature, there are several supplemental questions guiding the research: (a) How have archives and digital archives evolved? (b) What best practices and technological advancements have been developed to further expand digital archives? (c) How have scholar-librarian relationships influenced the collections being placed and preserved in archives? (d) How are scholars using and deriving opportunities from digital archives? (e) What scholarly fields have grown out of the use of digital archives? (f) What is the relationship between enhancing scholarship through digital archives and university status?

The conceptual framework guiding this review presents themes and factors that can lead to understanding the impact of digital archives on scholarship and university status. While archives are used as a way to preserve the past and provide access to valuable research, digital archives have the ability to transcend scholarship and provide new opportunities for researchers to explore their field. This review addresses past and current studies and theories of archives and digital archives. These subjects include archival history and practice, the evolution and work of digital archives, the use of digital archives in education and research, and theoretical foundations relating to archives, digitization, and changes in educational environments. The researcher will share gaps found in the literature and next steps for the research study.

An Examination of Literature on Culture, Climate, Change Process, and Leadership on Teacher Performance

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All organizations, including educational institutions, exhibit a type of culture. These organizations attempt a stable climate representing their overall existence. When groomed to tailor the organization's needs, a positive culture can impact student success (Ng'ang'a & Nyongesa, 2012). Culture offers shared beliefs among faculty members in conjunction with social norms brought in with the climate's appearance. When culture and climate are combined, the environment shifts, making it suitable for students in a shared educational structure (Schein, 2004). The system is just one of the successes contributing to a positive climate and culture. However, with the appearance of success, the change process may arise and require a commitment from the organization. Change in school leadership, staffing, new curricula, or professional development for faculty members can influence the overall culture and climate of the school. Since change is inevitable, efforts to manage the change process and the influence on culture and climate, are important to understand and the realization of the impact on teacher performance is essential.

In the current national education system, educators face various challenges potentially affecting school culture and climate (Armenakis, 2020) including endeavors to establish a change, changes with curricular materials, school leadership decisions, and teacher performance. In particular, the challenge of creating a change with curricula within the system weighs heavily in the balance of producing one of the most significant challenges to overcome (Cuban, 1992). Fullan (2001) suggests that a positive culture is identified as the most influential factor for change in teaching and learning. Factors such as the climate, educational change, and leadership can influence school culture, which would affect teacher performance.

This research examines literature relating to influences of teacher performance including (a) professional school culture, (b) school climate, (c) educational change, (d) leadership, and (e) the Montessori model. The leadership aspect reviewed in this paper will focus on the visible

leader (Fiore, 2000), transformational leadership (Bass, 1998), and participative leadership (Cameron, 2003). Specific theories supporting the impact of educational change on teachers reviewed include Change Theory (Fullan, 2008), Implementing Change (Hall & Hord, 2015), Leading Change Model (Kotter, 2014), and Lewin's (1960) Three Stages of Change. Curriculum shift specifically related to the Montessori Method (Gross, 1986) is addressed within this literature review.

The overarching research question guiding this literature review is, how do the constructs of school culture, climate, educational change, and leadership influence teacher performance? To support the primary question, the following guiding research questions explore previous research:

- What are the primary components of school culture, climate, and educational change?
- How do school culture and school leadership influence educational change?
- How does the Montessori Model curriculum influence teacher performance?
- How does curriculum change influence teacher performance?

The literature review's conceptual framework guides literature presented in the paper which highlights relationships between culture, climate, leadership, and the change process and the impact of these relationships on teacher performance. The authors offer conclusions linking the major constructs reviewed and recommendations based on the overview of the literature.

Lessons Learned in LEAP Scores

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Standardized state tests are administered every year to determine whether students have mastered predetermined standards set by the government. Every year schools are determined to produce high standardized test scores for various reasons. For some it may be to remain known as one of the best, while for others it may be to remain open. Regardless, schools make decisions that affect both students and teachers based upon the results of state tests. That is, more professional development, adjustments in students' schedules, and even termination is dependent upon data from test scores. The question is, what do these scores really tell us? Are the test scores analyzed

correctly? Should schools make decisions based on the results of one test? School administrators, policymakers, and curriculum developers are intended audiences for this discussion of standardization. As we continue to discuss the magnitude of diversity, standardization remains. In other words, how can we continue to stress the importance of differentiating instruction, the multiple intelligences theories, or even the various methods of assessment while continuing to base the reputation of schools and success of students on one standardized test? While there are benefits of testing students, we have to take into consideration that scores may not tell us everything that we need to know. When analyzing data multiple components must be considered. This includes information such as, has the student grown academically? Does the student possess test anxiety? The ability to understand and analyze data is important when taking the results of standardized test scores into consideration. After all, we could be punishing a student for growing (academically), but not enough.

A Literature Review of Race to the Top as an Educational Reform Initiative

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Educational reforms have occurred throughout the history of public education positively impacting student achievement. In 2009, the federal Race to the Top initiative was born and included many educational reform models. To have these reform models gain traction at the state level, the U.S. Department of Education (Race to the Top Program Executive Summary, 2009) called for states to submit applications to receive funding to address areas needing change. States were required to address student standards and assessments, reform teacher evaluation systems to include student performance as a measure, implement merit or performance-based pay calculations to reward teachers for their positive effects on student achievement, and turn around consistently low-performing schools. Eighteen states and one jurisdiction met this challenge and created legislation and policies which were shown to be worthy of funds (Race to the Top Fund, 2016).

This literature review examines reforms addressed within Race to the Top and research-based best practices associated with the educational reforms. Specifically, the purpose of this

review was to examine research related to the Race to the Top educational reform initiative including: (a) the evolution of educational reform initiatives; (b) an historical analysis of Race to the Top; (c) an overview of the jurisdictions awarded Race to the Top funding by phase; (d) a review of the 4 Core Principles of Race to the Top; and (e) the models of educational best practices implemented on the state level. Thus, the overarching research question for this literature review was: What was the influence of Race to the Top on educational reform practices and policies on models implemented at the state level? The following guiding questions utilized to examine the literature included: (a) What is the evolution of educational reform? (b) What were the key features and foundation of the Race to the Top initiative? (c) What jurisdictions were awarded funding? (d) What were the 4 Core Principles of Race to the Top? and (e) What models of educational best practices have been generated from the Race to the Top educational reform initiative at the state level?

The Race to the Top educational reform was developed around four core principles required to be addressed within each jurisdiction's application to receive funds (Race to the Top Fund, 2016). "Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA" (Race to the Top Program Executive Summary, 2009, p. 6) was a key measurement of state success after implementing their Race to the Top application. Of the four Core Principals of the Race to the Top Initiative, the study's conceptual framework centers on Core Principles 2 and 3 and their impact on state policy adoption and model implementation. The framework highlights major educational reforms within the context of the Race to the Top Initiative including measuring teacher effectiveness, value-added model, teacher performance pay, teacher retention, teacher recruitment, and teacher development. The researcher identifies gaps in the literature and offers recommendations for future research.

Highlighting Multilingual and Multiliteracies Frameworks and Contexts in Louisiana

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In Louisiana, language-related aspects of education present numerous, formidable fields of interest in the preparation of students for success. To meet students' language needs, education must be responsive to the current student population and to the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. In recent years, the number of English language learners in Louisiana public schools rose from 15,500 in 2014 to 27,200 in 2021 (Juhasz, 2021). Presently, close to 100,000 students across Louisiana study French (Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, 2021, para. 1). To support multilingual learners, preserve Louisiana French, and due to the global importance of Spanish, French, and Mandarin, the number of language immersion schools and programs in Louisiana has enjoyed significant growth. In Louisiana there are at least 32 French immersion schools/programs, 26 Spanish immersion schools/programs, and three schools with Mandarin immersion programs. Students, educators, and stakeholders in these schools need targeted support and professional development.

According to Louisiana's Superintendent of Education, nearly "...half the students in our elementary and middle grades are reading below level in Louisiana." Statistics from The Louisiana Department of Education align with this statement, demonstrating that "only 40 percent of Louisiana kindergarteners, 42 percent of first graders, 48 percent of second graders, and 50 percent of third graders are on or above grade level in literacy according to the statewide fall reading report. This represents multiple years of literacy declines. Further, only 46 percent of students have mastered ELA content by the end of their third-grade year" (Louisiana Department of Education, 2021, para. 3).

Language and literacy are often viewed narrowly as simply learning how to read, write, and speak in English, though it is much more complex. Teachers, teacher educators, administrators, community members, families, and other educational stakeholders need to understand that languages, literacies, and culture are inseparable, and that this connection can be leveraged in order to accelerate children's academic, linguistics, and global competencies. Beyond supporting all children's print literacy and English language development, we must also

prepare teachers, teacher educators, administrators, and families to support students' participation in the racially, culturally, linguistically, technologically, and textually complex world we live in, highlighting multilingual and multiliteracies frameworks and contexts.

Presenters will discuss the overarching goal of the Louisiana Center for Resources and Education on Languages and Literacies (LA CREoLL): to support, enhance, develop, and transform multilingual language and literacy education in Louisiana to empower teachers, learners, families, and communities. Presenters will describe their areas of expertise and nascent collaborative research projects that are being generated at the center through professional development opportunities and outreach focused on languages, literacies, and family and community culture(s). These include interrelated topics such as: child/adult language acquisition and development, reading and writing as components of literacy, children's diverse/multilingual literature, dual language/immersion and bilingual education, family/community language and literacy practices and outreach, digital, critical, and multiliteracies frameworks, asset-based approaches to teaching and learning/funds of knowledge, and civic literacy and community engagement.

A Quality Education for All: A Literature Review on Understanding and Supporting Students of Poverty

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Poverty is a topic that can cause significant discomfort, especially when the issue is broached among educators. Some educators immediately begin to make assumptions about what students of poverty can and cannot achieve. Researchers (Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Grinion, 1999) have proven there are strong connections between a child's socioeconomic level and their level of academic achievement, with the majority of these connections being negative.

Lawmakers have passed acts such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002, calling for more strenuous accountability standards to close achievement gaps for all students. Every day educators are charged with the daunting tasks of making miracles happen to meet these increasing demands.

Often not factored into the equation are the non-school components that can affect the achievement level of low-income students. Schools should not be considered the only contributing factor in educating students today. Poverty has a long-lasting effect on students' academic achievement as well as their overall success in life. "Poverty is a chronic and debilitating condition that results from multiple adverse synergistic risk factors and affects the mind, body, and soul" (Jensen, 2009, p. 6). The research on poverty and student achievement has spanned generations and caused many educators to recognize this problem in today's schools.

The purpose of this literature review is to examine previous research related to the effects of poverty on the academic wellbeing of at-risk students. A twofold approach is taken to understanding poverty and then to identify strategies to support students of poverty. The overarching research question guiding this review is: What factors regarding poverty must be understood and what conditions must be in place in order to provide a quality education for our most vulnerable students? The following research questions guiding this exploration of the literature include:

1. What are the causes of poverty?
2. What academic effects does poverty have on students?
3. What influence does poverty have on the brain development of children?
4. What best teaching practices influence academic achievement in students?
 - a. What best teaching practices influence academic achievement in at-risk students?
5. What influence does school culture have on the academic achievement of students?
 - a. What impact does school culture have on the academic achievement of at-risk students?
6. How does the principal influence academic achievement in at-risk schools?

The review offers a conceptual framework that illustrates the primary constructs included within the review related to academic achievement and the overall well-being of at-risk students. The framework emphasizes the need to understand poverty, including causes, effects, and brain research. In addition to developing an understanding of poverty, it is also essential to examine support systems for students of poverty, including best teaching practices, teacher-student relationships, positive school cultures and climate, and the influence of the school leader. This conceptual framework illustrates that understanding poverty and specific supports can influence

academic achievement and overall student well-being. The researcher identifies gaps in the literature and offers recommendations for future research.

Barriers and Support Services for International Students at American Higher Education Institutions

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Due to the significant value international students add to the U.S. higher education system, there is a need to understand international students' challenges and barriers, as well as the support services offered to this population of students. International students are defined as those individuals enrolled as full-time students at a U.S. four-year higher education institution on a temporary visa (F1 and J1 visas) and are not considered permanent residents or green-card holders (IIE Open Doors, 2020). Upon arrival to the country many international students go through an overwhelming transition process while trying to adapt to a new academic system and a new culture. Some of the challenges researchers have identified for international students are language barriers, cultural shock, financial stress, and homesickness (Jung et al., 2007). However, many students choose to pursue post-secondary education in the U.S. because of the desire to pursue a higher standard of living, quality education, better job opportunities, and personal advancement. International students account for 4.6% of all college student populations in the U.S. (Institute of International Education, 2021).

The purpose of this literature review is to examine: (a) barriers and challenges faced by international students in higher education institutions; (b) support services provided by higher education institutions as well as social and community support; (c) immigration policies and procedures affecting international students; (d) acculturation and adaptation of international students within the college and community; and (e) the influence of Sense of Belonging and Schlossberg's Transition theory on international students in American higher education institutions.

The overarching question guiding this literature review is: What support services offered by higher education institutions assist international students in successfully adapting to college?

Additionally, the following guiding questions are designed to explore the literature: (a) What are the primary challenges and barriers faced by international students entering and pursuing higher education degrees? (b) What are the primary support services offered to international students entering and pursuing higher education degrees? (c) What are the immigration policies impacting international students entering and pursuing higher education degrees? (d) How does the acculturation process affect international students in the United States? And (e) How does sense of belonging theory and Schlossberg transition theory impact international students entering and pursuing higher education degrees in the United States?

A conceptual framework related to international students in American higher education institutions provides a guideline for the literature review. The first component examined is the challenges and barriers faced by international students including immigration policies, socio-cultural challenges, and linguistic and academic challenges. The second construct, student support services, focuses on institutional services, student engagement, and social and community support. The third factor reviewed is acculturation since adapting and moving to a new country can often be stressful and difficult (Fritz et al., 2008). Finally, sense of belonging, the feeling of belonging to a group or community (Banat & Rimawi, 2017), is examined in connection with Schlossberg's Transition Theory (Anderson et al., 2012). The researcher identifies literature gaps and offers recommendations for future research.

Mixed-Methods Study: An Examination of the Initiation, Implementation, and Sustainability of University Campus Food Banks

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The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has studied prevalence and severity of household food insecurity for the last 20 years. Data from 2019 reveal 10.5% of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during the past 12 months (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2020). While the USDA measures overall U.S. household food insecurity, little is known of the experiences facing college students. Researchers with the Wisconsin HOPE Lab (January 2016, Data Brief, 16-01) found low-income students and even some moderate-income students struggle to provide

for their basic needs of food and shelter. Common challenges of food-insecure college students include the ability to eat balanced meals, reducing the size of meals, and skipping meals, demonstrating the food students bought did not last and they could not afford to buy more (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2018).

Food as a basic human need is considered part of a theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1943). The physiological needs, which include food, are the most prepotent of all and must be met before other higher needs. A student who is hungry or worried about not having enough to eat may be unable to fulfill higher needs including love, safety, learning, and self-esteem. This could ultimately affect a student's ability to learn and succeed in college. The College and University Food Bank Alliance acknowledges little evidence exists that demonstrates which campus food bank approaches are effective or preferable to support students (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2018).

The purpose of this research study is to examine how the University of Louisiana (UL) System Universities adhere to the College and University Food Bank Alliance recommendations when initiating, implementing, and sustaining a campus food bank and the effectiveness of their approaches. The study's overarching research question is: Has the implementation of campus food banks in the University of Louisiana system schools addressed the basic needs and success of students? The following research questions are addressed within this study: (a) What were the determining factors in establishing campus food banks in the University of Louisiana System? (b) How do University of Louisiana System university campus food banks evaluate utilization of services and effective operation? (c) How does the University campus food bank address the basic needs of the student clients? and (d) Does participation in the University campus food bank enhance perceptions of student success?

A mixed-methods research design is used to evaluate initiation, implementation, and sustainability of campus food banks in the nine UL System universities and to examine perceptions of food insecurity of students utilizing the campus food banks. The study's qualitative design includes university food bank document analysis (campus food bank policies and procedures, handbooks, forms, training materials, cooperative agreements, brochures), while administrator interviews aim to gain insight into the campus food bank services and how the university is meeting the needs of students. The quantitative design utilizes the Student User

Survey to obtain information from students utilizing the campus food bank. The researcher will share initial study findings and implications related to leadership and practice.

Student Success: A Qualitative Study Exploring a Guided Pathways Approach at a Four-Year Public Institution through Living Learning Communities

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The latest generation helping shape our world and becoming young adults at this time is Generation Z, or those who were born between 1995 and 2010. Among the many characteristics of today's generation, they generally pay attention to planning and preparing for their future to prevent issues with debt and unemployment. Education and employment are some of their top concerns and they are more likely to look for programs to improve their academic performance.

Despite these characteristics, today's student will still find themselves struggling with the decisions and ideas they had at the beginning of their post-secondary career, and they will experience because of it. Students are encouraged to make important decisions early in their higher education journey without fully realizing their identity and what career is the best match for their interests. These important decisions, if chosen wrong, could lead to difficulty in academics, adjustment issues, and lack of commitment which may challenge today's student enough that they decide to drop out of college. Students changing their academic major only makes these difficulties worse they reevaluate their decisions.

The problem with changing academic majors is students stay in school longer than if they stayed on track with their original choice which can potentially cost more money, time, talent, and the student's commitment to their college aspirations. Unnecessary courses are more likely to be taken by students who change majors which results in wasted time and energy for both the student and the institution. While changing majors is not inherently bad and can be beneficial for students, persistence in a major is still very important to stay on track for graduation and to prevent dropping out.

At four-year institutions, these problems persist especially at the freshman and sophomore level. As freshmen, students are encouraged to choose majors early and before they

may realize they are not prepared to make important decisions yet. At the sophomore level, the repercussions of those decisions begin to appear if students did not choose a major right for them. In response to the issue of persistence, some colleges have introduced Living Learning Communities (LLCs) to their programs which require students to live together, share common classes, and participate in co-curricular activities as well as receive special mentorship from their faculty. While LLC's are high impact practices that are assisting with improving retention and graduation rates, they are just one example of what colleges are implementing to improve graduation and completion rates.

In my proposed presentation, I will discuss the findings of a qualitative research study on the effects of Living Learning Communities on academic major persistence at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. The research study consists of twelve individual interviews with students that have participated in either the Biology, Nursing, or Engineering LLCs at UL Lafayette between the Fall 2018 and Spring 2021 semesters. Interviews focused on academic major persistence and how their experiences within the LLC affected it, if at all.

The Underrepresented Student, the Role of the School Counselor, and the School Culture in Relation to College Readiness

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In American society, earning a college education is considered the key to achieving economic success and social mobility (Engle, 2007). Not all students are equally afforded this opportunity. Research suggests there is a wide gap in college enrollment and graduation rates between underrepresented students in four-year universities and their peers. Underrepresented students include those who are first-generation, African American, Latino and students living in poverty (Schaeffer et al., 2010). First-generation students, or students whose parents did not earn a college degree, face several disadvantages with attaining a college education (Engle, 2007). Research indicates that only 56% of first-generation students have earned a credential or were still enrolled in college for six years after initially entering college, while 74% of continuing-generation students earned a credential or were still enrolled (Radunzel, 2018).

According to the Post-Secondary National Policy Institute, only 25% of first-generation students attended four-year institutions in 2011-2012 and are 1.3 times more likely to leave within their first year (2016). Literature also indicates that there are significant differences in the academic preparation of first-generation college students (Bryant, 2011). First-generation students have lower grade point averages and lower standardized test scores and are less likely to take college entrance exams (Bryant, 2011). Researchers have also found that the courses taken in high schools have the strongest effect on the completion of a four-year degree (Trust & Niles, 2004). With this being considered, high school counselors play an essential role in college and career planning for first-generation students.

High school counselors have been recognized as pivotable advocates for students when preparing them for life after high school. In her book *The Use of Data in School Counseling*, Hatch indicates school counselors have access to real time and historical data and can regularly target students in need to be successful (2013). As later discussed, a comprehensive counseling program that aligns with the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model can provide structure to reach all populations of students.

Organizational culture theory has been noted as an "umbrella concept" for a way of thinking which takes interest in cultural phenomena or the way in which people interpret events, ideas, and experiences that are shaped by their environments (Schein, 1985). With this being considered, organizational culture theory is pivotal in the overall college access of underrepresented students. It guides the role of the school counselor, the college readiness within a school's culture and the overall college readiness of underrepresented students.

How Teacher Preparation, Teacher Professional Learning, and Efficacy Support Teacher Effectiveness with Elementary ASD students

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There is a lack of research that shows that teachers are adequately prepared to teach students with Autism. There is also a lack of research that shows that teacher preparation programs train future teachers to work with students with Autism. The purpose of this study is to understand

how teacher preparation, teacher professional training, and self-efficacy relate to teacher effectiveness in teaching elementary students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The research will delve into the teacher preparation programs in Louisiana and professional development opportunities offered to teachers that prepare them for working with students with Autism.

More research regarding the self-efficacy of teachers in educating students with ASD is needed in order to influence changes in current teacher preparation programs. The increasing numbers of students with ASD in the school systems signifies that there needs to be an increase in Autism professional development as well. Although ASD is being discussed more often in the school systems, there is still a deficit in PD opportunities for teachers to gain access to important information about ASD. In today's school systems, students with ASD are being included in the general education classrooms at an increasing rate. General education teachers, oftentimes, have no knowledge or limited knowledge about what ASD is and how to properly educate students with Autism. There are no known teacher preparation programs in Louisiana that fully address ASD with all aspiring teachers (general education, special education, and ASD teachers). This study is an opportunity to identify current deficits in teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities in order to restructure these programs to fully meet the needs of teachers working with students with ASD.

For this research study, a quantitative research design was used to develop survey questions on the following topics: teacher preparation programs, teacher professional development, and teacher self-efficacy. All participants in this study will contribute to this research by providing important information via survey that will shed light on current deficits in teacher knowledge and training of working with students with Autism. The goal of this research study is to provide a framework for the proper training for teachers involved in the education process of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRT) for cultivating an inclusive learning environment & the evaluation of attitudes toward computer science of students in 2-year applied science degree programs at community colleges.

Trent Dawson & Kristin Hollins

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Our presentation covers two topics situated in the fostering and promoting of equity in the classroom. First, how do pedagogical practices, such as culturally relevant teaching, cultivate equitable learning experiences for underrepresented student populations? Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is “using cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of salient encounters that are relevant to students” (Gay, 2010). Teachers must model inclusivity as having receptivity to students’ strengths, interests, and opinions (p. 31). Inclusive educational opportunities do not necessarily align with established institutional structures; instead, CRT advocates for shifting mindsets and attitudes for stakeholders. Next, a presentation of data from a quantitative study examined the relationship between prior programming experience and affect toward computer science (CS). BIPOC (Black/Indigenous, People of Color) students’ affect toward CS is the primary demographic under evaluation given their underrepresentation in both four-year degrees (CS) programs. Shockingly, in 2018, 80% of four-year CS degrees were awarded to white males, only 20% to BIPOC students (Kahlon et al., 2019, p. 803). We imagine that community colleges will become credible and viable pathways to CS careers, with lucrative salaries that foster upward social mobility for students underrepresented in CS careers. As Lyon and Denner (2016) argue, community colleges will become an essential starting point of defined CS pathways for women and BIPOC to successfully traverse the computing landscape into high-quality careers within the technology sector.

Donald Trump and the Failure of American Education

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The thesis of this paper is that the rise and political success of Donald Trump is to an important degree the result of the failure of K-20 American education to prepare citizens to understand and cope with as opposed to contribute to the politics of resentment. Because of its overwhelming focus on cognitive development at the expense of socio-emotional and moral development, K-12 education fails to provide especially poor students the freedom and support for self-discovery and self-development. As a result, they lack the personal resources to succeed in secondary education, end up resenting their schooling experience, opt out of higher education and spend their lives struggling to achieve the “American dream” in the lower levels of the capitalist economy. Higher education fails to provide a liberal education that makes students aware of the dangers of the politics of resentment wherein political opponents are seen as “enemies,” political polarization is the norm, leaders promote and voice cynicism, and economic dislocations are allowed to give demagogues legitimacy and a platform from which they can appeal to populist and authoritarian tendencies.

Exploring Perceived Barriers to Campus Involvement Leading to Student Leadership Opportunities for First-Year Freshman from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

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According to Watkins (2018), developing students into future leaders remains a priority for colleges and universities throughout the United States. Taking the position that leadership is a learned process, institutions of higher education are uniquely positioned to develop and promote effective leadership programs and opportunities for their students. Much of the leadership development and training is accomplished via co-curricular or extracurricular activities. Haber-Curran (2019) posited leadership opportunities and co-curricular experiences can be formal or

informal such as participation in student organizations, athletics, Greek organizations, or formal leadership programs. Involvement in such experiences influences students' educational experiences and development and allows students to cultivate skills preparing for their future experiences.

First-year freshmen participating in campus opportunities and leadership programs have the unique circumstances to foster their personal and professional growth and development (Havlick, 2006). Such opportunities can assist students in cultivating leadership skills, teamwork, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and conflict resolution skills. A positive institution-student fit has many benefits including an increase in feelings of satisfaction with one's college experience, an increase in sense of belonging, and increase in student persistence.

The purpose of this study was to identify the perceived barriers for first-year freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds to campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities and to determine the support systems needed to increase their participation in those existing opportunities. This study helped identify the specific barriers that may have existed at a university within the University of Louisiana System (ULS) when it came to campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities for this population of students. It also sought to strengthen existing or establish new support systems needed to assist them in overcoming those challenges so they may pursue all extracurricular and leadership opportunities available to them as a college student. Students who are first-year freshmen and from disadvantaged backgrounds have two distinct challenges in common: difficulty making the transition from high school to college and being ill-prepared for the rigor of college-level coursework. First-year freshmen may also face psychological and social difficulties such as feeling homesick or like they do not belong or fit in with others. Being a first-year freshman already comes with its own set of pressures and expectations. Being a first-year freshman from a disadvantaged background further complicates one's college experience.

This qualitative study sought to answer two research questions. The first question examined what first-year freshmen from disadvantaged backgrounds perceive as the barriers to their campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities at a university within the University of Louisiana System (ULS). The follow up question explored the support systems needed to increase campus involvement leading to student leadership opportunities for first-year freshman from disadvantaged backgrounds at the same university. Major findings and

implications of the study will conclude at the end of February and will be available by the date of the LERA meeting.

Understanding and Using Data: Methodology for Collecting and Analyzing Data to Affect Change

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Proponents of school improvement stress the importance of using data and incorporating research principles in making decisions in the ongoing process of improvement. Yet, plans often fall short of delivering desired results. Knowing first *how* to identify factors causing less than satisfactory measures of a school's overall effectiveness is a critical step.

The school improvement process begins with the collection and analysis of various types of data: demographic, school process, student performance, and perception data. A discussion of these four data types and the benefits of applying root cause analysis to determine the area(s) on which to focus are discussed by practitioners working collaboratively to lead the improvement process in a school. Subsequent actions to address concerns and close gaps happen when school leaders and teams are well equipped to apply steps in the research process with special attention to reviewing the literature related to the concern or research questions. The process continues with crafting a meaningful school vision and designing action steps for improvement to close the gaps revealed in the data analysis.

In this discussion, aspiring K-12 school leaders illustrate how to effectively use data and the research process to improve achievement at the grass roots, the local level. The presentation will showcase aspiring school leaders as consumers and designers of research, leaders actively engaged in using different types of data with action research practices to inform and guide improvement. The discussion culminates with a preview of action steps to directly address achievement gaps and areas of need indigenous to the learning environment. It showcases the overall process of leading and making meaningful instructional and administrative decisions to improve teaching, student learning, and overall school effectiveness.