ABSTRACT

Payne, Barnaby Owen, EXPERIENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY IN ACTION: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL. (Under the direction of Dr. Matthew Militello). Department of Educational Leadership, May 2023.

International school leaders face distinct cultural challenges in schools where expatriate leaders serve local students. As a practitioner-researcher in a participatory action and activist research (PAR) study at an international school in Taiwan, I determined the elements for building a school leadership team committed to educational equity through culturally responsive theory and practice and sensitive to the cultural dynamics of the community they serve. In the PAR project and study, I collaborated with a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team of expatriate and local school leaders to fortify our leadership practices through community learning exchange axioms, protocols, and strategies. The group met monthly over the 2021–2022 school year to address educational equity, using culturally responsive theory, frameworks, and practices. I documented individual and collective leadership growth. The findings indicate that the process of equity-centered team building facilitated the professional and personal relationships with team members and accelerated their equity-centered leadership actions at the school. The experiential learning conditions of the CPR team, including leadership identity development and reflective practices, led participants to develop a stronger sense of equity leadership and group accountability to move from beliefs to actions. The Leadership Development for Educational Equity framework supports these methods for building educational leader capacity to act on their equity beliefs and has the potential for application to other educational settings.

EXPERIENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY IN ACTION: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Judy and Silas Payne.

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The love of my family is my passion; your belief in me makes me want to be the best spouse, father, brother, son, uncle, and in-law I can possibly be. Thank you, Jessica Wei Huang, Jayda, and Aaliyah for all your love and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: NAMING AND FRAMING THE FOCUS OF PRACTICE

"Leadership, like a participatory art form, is fluid, flexible, and relational. Community leaders emerge situationally and temporarily to meet the challenges of the day."
(Benham & Napier, 2002, p. 159)

As international school leaders adjust to the changing demographics in international schools, they have a crucial opportunity to steer their schools toward stronger cultural responsiveness. Western-tradition international schools are experiencing cultural tensions related to the shift in enrollment patterns from Western expatriate students to majority local and host country students while not necessarily changing practices in response. Historically, international schools were colonial government institutions in foreign countries that served expatriate students, typically of white, European ancestry, for eventual return to the home country (Pearce, 2013; Tanu, 2018). Since 2000, however, many international schools have shifted to enrolling larger numbers of students from host countries whose families choose English-speaking international schools to provide their children with English proficiency and admission to Western universities. The families believe that an international school experience offers preparedness for a globalized economy and thus a higher standard of living. Therefore, the student population is primarily students whose first language is not English while the teaching staff largely remains white and from Western educational traditions.

As a result, while the families have a clear goal in mind for their children's education, local families and students experience subtle and, at times, explicit messaging that suggest Western ways of thinking and knowing or the English language itself may be superior to the native language, culture, and traditions. Mills (1997) and Kendi (2019) describe how European and North American colonization of the world negatively impacted local economies and the natural environment and aggravated inequality. These factors may affect students as they see

themselves as inferior to a perceived Western ideal reflected in Western cultural standards, imagery, values, and perspectives.

At the same time, many international schools seek to be values-driven institutions and have published vision and mission statements that set goals for multiculturalism, holistic and pastoral learning, critical thinking, humanitarian mindsets, and global citizenship. International schools strive to achieve educational equity, and support students in achieving academic and social potential. Thus, international school leaders grapple with what these concepts mean for school communities that combine Western curricula and expatriate teachers while hosting significant numbers of host country, bilingual students. International schools need to examine the hidden curriculum and its implications, including race, ethnicity, home language, and country of origin so that students see their cultures and identities reflected in the curriculum, teachers, and the school. Hidden curriculum is the implicit messages that schools impart Western/dominant culture and values (Alsubaie, 2015) to students at the expense of alternative views. School leaders can use this opportunity to determine practices that lead students to find strength and identity in their home languages and cultures and, at the same time, achieve the goals they and their parents have for their educational experience.

As I examined my work as a principal in an international school in which 80% of the students are from Taiwan, I pose this question: How might international school leaders confront the negative aspects of the colonial past and vestiges of oppression in international schools to bring communities together in service of a better future for the students? Even for the most skilled school leaders, discussions of the global racial and political context and its influence on schooling are challenging for a diverse school community. One source of guidance for school leaders is in the theory and practice of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) to achieve

educational equity. CRP is a conceptual framework in which educators revise traditional concepts of student achievement to include and value students' cultural identities and critical perspectives of social inequities.

Focus of Practice

The focus of practice (FoP) that I explore in this study is how international school leaders learn to be culturally responsive. International schools can be complex and dynamic places, and using culturally responsive resources and tools, I facilitated leaders in accepting the need for reflection on change management (Fullan, 1995). Through conversations and actions by a leadership support group, I supported other school leaders to value the twin goals of supporting culturally responsive leadership development and preparing students to be members of a global society.

The study took place at the American International School in Southern Taiwan (AISST) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, a private, non-profit Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 school with 800 students enrolled. The school is governed by a charter and board of directors composed of parents and is affiliated with the United States Government through the Office of Overseas Schools. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredits the school, and the school is certified by the International Baccalaureate (IB).

The school was founded in 1989 by U.S. medical professionals working in Taiwan who desired a U.S.-style education for their children due to the limited non-local educational options in the southern part of the country. Within the past 30 years, the school's demographics have shifted from majority U.S. expatriates to 80% local Taiwanese students. Because Taiwan law requires that Taiwanese native students have a foreign passport to attend an international school, many students are dual passport holders. Most Taiwanese students who attend AISST have

second passports from the United States, Canada, Australia, and Hong Kong. The faculty consists of both international and local employees. International teachers are mostly U.S. passport holders, and the average tenure for foreign staff is 5.4 years. The local staff's average tenure is 9.7 years. Over the past 10 years, enrollment has doubled. These characteristics make the school an ideal site for exploring the challenges described in this chapter.

In this introductory chapter, I provide a rationale for the FoP and analyze its potential and challenges. I then explore the study's significance and connection to equity. Finally, I present the research design and questions and summarize the key considerations for the study. International school leaders hoping to change the colonial paradigm may find guidance in a study of how leaders build culturally responsive practices in collaboration with their school communities.

Rationale

Most students at AISST are Taiwanese and are native speakers of Chinese. The administrative team and many classroom teachers are from foreign countries, primarily the United States. The school uses U.S. Common Core instructional standards and the International Baccalaureate framework in the secondary school. In this study, I seek to raise awareness of how we can provide a Western-tradition international school education serving local students while maintaining the students' identities and perspectives.

As the middle school principal at the American International School in Southern Taiwan, my overriding concern was the impact of students' negative views of themselves. Thus, we needed intentional adult and student learning about identity and culture juxtaposed against the greater social, political, and economic systems of the school in Taiwan. The urgency of the FoP stemmed from informal conversations with alumni about how Taiwanese students experienced Western schooling informed the conditions for the study; the school in this case benefitted from

a critical self-examination of practices. In general, AISST alumni felt that the school could better explore the implications of school practices on students' cross-cultural identities as they prepared to navigate the political and economic conditions of the world. Alumni named positive implications as well, for example, the teaching staff's willingness to consider and implement culturally responsive instructional practices.

I had multiple opportunities to determine the level of staff readiness to engage in learning about ethnicity, culture, and identity. At the start of the 2020–21 school year, I facilitated an activity with middle school teachers as part of the faculty's professional development to get to know teachers and to introduce new and returning teachers to each other. Teachers created identity mandalas. In the activity, participants get a set of questions and create a hand-drawn graphic including words, pictures, color, and symbols to demonstrate a meaningful statement about their experiences, identity, and values. I facilitated group sharing protocols so that each faculty member presented their mandala to others.

Teachers appreciated the opportunity to get to know each other and to explore ideas such as racism, open-mindedness, and issues of gender equity. They expressed the desire to continue the conversations. In the next faculty meeting in August 2020, we read and discussed articles on identity-centered education. In their responses, the teachers showed consistent interest in exploring more culturally responsive instructional practices.

As a school leader, I was inspired by teachers' willingness to reflect upon practices, yet many questions remained. How might a school measure cultural responsiveness to achieve educational equity? What might sustain leadership for culturally responsive practices? For example, what methods would ensure that local students were honored in their home language and culture at an English-instruction, American international school?

Analysis of Assets and Challenges

To better understand the assets and challenges we faced in addressing these questions, I had conversations with staff to reflect on how we use culturally responsive practices while remaining faithful to the goals of the parent and student community of English proficiency and admissions to international universities. I wanted to understand the challenges of individual and school culture from micro, meso, and macro perspectives. The micro level in the school setting at the American International School in Southern Taiwan is the classroom—the individual teachers and students and how their identify affects their school experience. The meso level is the school as a whole, including policies and practices that embody a school ethos that either embraces or ignores cultural responsiveness. The macro level is how the school fits into the system of international schools and their historical practices and whether a school is challenging those traditions. I organized the information gathered in the meetings and conversations into a fishbone diagram shown in Figure 1 (Bryk et al., 2017).

Micro Assets and Challenges

Anecdotal feedback from school leaders and faculty suggested that many were interested in and open to exploring issues of cultural responsiveness in our school. I observed some classrooms in which teachers used instructional strategies and curricular inputs that considered students' Taiwanese identity and addressed racial-political attitudes and events in the United States and the world. Many current and former students of AISST described positive and supportive relationships with teachers and administrators, and quality relationships between students and staff are a fundamental quality of CRP.

However, classroom practices have not always matched intentions by individual teachers

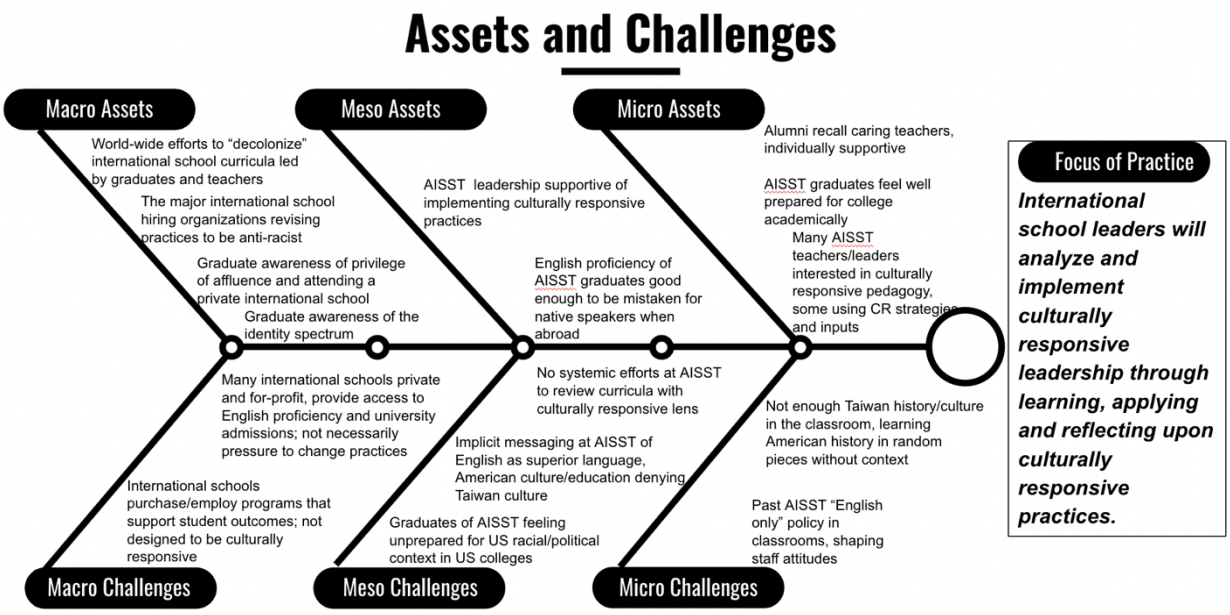


Figure 1. Assets and challenges: Micro, meso, and micro contexts.

to implement CRP. Graduates from a decade ago reported that teachers punished them for speaking Chinese. Although that policy has changed, some veteran teachers, both local and international, may have vestiges of that mindset. Graduates recalled American History lessons in various classes that seemed random and disjointed and not connected to a broader framework. Without class discussion of U.S. politics and attitudes, alumni felt culturally unprepared when attending U.S. colleges.

Meso Assets and Challenges

Taiwanese alumni shared that they achieved a level of English proficiency that allowed for college success at North American universities. At the same time, however, they found being mistaken for English native speakers and American by classmates and professors as insulting and diminishing to their identities as Taiwanese nationals. Oddly, the school had achieved one of its primary purposes—attaining excellence in English—almost too well. Others in the AISST community identified as an asset of their experiences their cross-cultural aptitude, which is a source of strength and resilience for many school adults and alumni and provides a sense of connection and solidarity among AISST students.

The head of school, the team of three school principals (elementary, middle, and high school), and a few governing board members expressed interest in critical self-reflection on institutional policies and practices with a culturally responsive lens. With the three principals' support in the 2020–21 school year, the superintendent facilitated faculty meetings on culturally responsive topics. In one session, he presented resources for considering the U.S. presidential election's impact on relationships with the school community. In another session, we examined the school's revised language policy (formerly an "English-first" policy) that now allows the use of the mother tongue for academic content and to facilitate English acquisition. The school

leadership team supported my efforts as the middle school principal to use faculty meeting time to discuss student and staff identity and classroom impacts, local history and culture, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Despite these school-wide efforts, we still faced considerable challenges in ensuring that students' cultural identities influenced the instructional program. Until recently, school leaders had not reviewed the whole school curriculum to consider how to incorporate a culturally responsive perspective. Several alumni expressed an overwhelming sense that AISST implicitly and explicitly treated American, white, and English-speaking cultures as superior to Taiwanese and Chinese languages and cultures. They felt that AISST could have expressly addressed the cultural challenges of the transition from Taiwan and AISST's sheltered environment to the rest of the world, including the challenges of Taiwan's unique geopolitical status and the frequent misunderstandings of Taiwanese identity in the West.

Macro Assets and Challenges

The macro-level assets and challenges are related to the worldwide international schools' system and the dominant culture's influence on their practices. Recently, alumni and staff have led a movement within international schools to call attention to systemic racism and create change through alumni, teacher, and school leader organizations. Groups such as International Teachers of Color on Facebook, the Organization to Decolonize the Curriculum, and the Diversity Collaborative within International Schools Services (ISS) are examples of the change movement. The leading international school human resources companies such as Search Associates and the Global Recruitment Collaborative have published statements on their website acknowledging a desire to examine bias in hiring, and they have backed up their rhetoric with concrete changes in some practices.

However, international schools often have conflicting goals. For example, many are private, for-profit institutions that provide access to English proficiency and university admissions, and the tuition-paying parents trust that schools will provide their children with language fluency and eventually the economic opportunities that derive from baccalaureate degrees from Western universities. Schools must continue to deliver these outcomes alongside any reforms.

Another challenge is the potential for bias in programs and curricula designed by large Western institutions and for-profit companies for universal applications. School administration and families tend to accept standardized curricula, programs, and tests because of long-established brand recognition even though the educational philosophies behind them have not been examined carefully. Even if these programs claim cultural neutrality, school leaders must examine inputs, topics, and assessments to see how well they reflect a culturally responsive perspective and awareness of the student experience.

In summary of the assets and challenges, students, alumni, and staff within the international school system had a clear will to identify and disrupt international schools' outdated legacy programs and practices and improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, the international school system's allegiance to Western values and mores through standardized plans runs deep and is embedded in the schools' institutional identities. Creating culturally responsive schools is unavoidably a local endeavor of each institution that will require contributions from within each school community in collaboration.

Significance

The research project and study potentially can influence practice, policy, and further research. Many international schools serve local students in their home countries. Some schools

attempt to go beyond the transactional aspect of tuition-based schooling by creating a unique educational culture centered on universal values such as global citizenship and holistic education. Considering how a school may be responsive to the cultural needs of the students they serve could be beneficial to other international schools.

Practice

Through the participatory action research (PAR) study, we investigated the ways school leaders worked together to identify, use, and reflect upon practices that strengthened culturally responsive learning. Since many international schools use standardized programs such as International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement to provide curricula, we wanted to know how to adjust those to include culturally responsive practices. The particular focus of this study was how a group of leaders could learn CRP together through a leadership support group and then apply our learnings to issues of educational equity at our school. These processes may be transferrable to other schools where the conditions are similar.

Policy

The PAR could influence policies that international schools adopt as they consider a school's identity from a culturally responsive perspective. For example, many international schools cite "global-mindedness" or "global thinking" in their mission or vision statements. In addition, many schools have public diversity and inclusion messages on their websites or in handbooks. However, schools may have diverse understandings of the term *global* in terms of cultural responsiveness. The question for the any school policy would be: To what extent have school leaders facilitated analysis of and reflection on these statements and how do those statements manifest within the school community? Thus, this study can provide a process for

other international schools to think about how the school leaders can enact their espoused values of equity, inclusiveness, and diversity as they prepare students as global citizens.

Research

The FoP can add to the research repertoire on culturally responsive international schools. By demonstrating success of school leaders in one school, the PAR study offers lessons for other schools or individuals seeking to improve leadership practices and could provide a basis for additional studies in different settings. The action research methodology is transferable to other schools.

Connection to Equity

The focus of practice is grounded in the equity challenge of shifting an international school toward a more culturally responsive ethos that responds to the host country students' cultural identity. International schools are historically Western-dominant institutions that have supported colonial views of education and have not fully considered local culture and language. While international schools may have similar basic governance structures, power-sharing occurs only to the extent that the leader is willing to allow it (Benham & Napier, 2002). School governing boards and leaders' governance structures generally do not stimulate critical institutional awareness about the historical inequities that many international schools may perpetuate.

Philosophical Equity Framework

International schools are the legacy of European and U.S. colonization of the world. Initially, they provided Western children an education that would ensure the protection of their home languages and culture along with the opportunity for eventual re-entry into the home country. Europeans viewed local educational traditions as inferior. This legacy remains in the

21st century even as majority international school enrollment in Asia and other parts of the world has shifted toward local students for whom English is a second language. Despite the mission in many international schools regarding students' global citizenship, school practices reflect the Western culture on which the schools were founded. The inability to view students' and families' full personhood by incorporating their language and culture as a critical component of the school ethos and life is a remnant of the racial contract in which Western and white culture is dominant (Mills, 1997).

The Political-Economic Equity Framework

The 400 years of European and U.S. military, economic, and political domination of the world have resulted in a deep entrenchment of white supremacy culture and the idea that non-white spaces around the globe are inferior and less civilized unless claimed and developed by white leaders (Mills, 1997). In international schools, the political-economic equity framework manifests as international school ownership has shifted away from the non-profit and government-assisted model of the 20th century and toward private and for-profit ownership in the last 20 years (Broman, 2011; Brummit & Keeling, 2013). Enrollment in international schools has increased five times since 2000 to almost 6 million students worldwide (Keeling, 2019). While the schools' network has proliferated, for-profit money mechanisms such as standardized curricula and educational programs have invaded the system as schools have sought to distinguish themselves from local systems (Hayden & Thompson, 1995). As a result, international schools increasingly rely upon standardized programs to attract tuition-paying families and provide specific outcomes. The central purpose of international school education is to ensure English language proficiency and acceptance to colleges and universities in English-

speaking countries and the United States in particular. Many families believe that Western education will ensure financial success and social mobility for their children (Labaree, 2008).

International schools build school structures that result in English proficiency and college acceptance. The International Baccalaureate program, Advanced Placement/the College Board, and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) standardized testing all reflect international schools' educational entrepreneurship as they strive for post-graduate success (Anderson et al., 2013). However, the Western cultural origins of the various programs international schools employ may not incorporate the experiences, voice, and history of students of color unless intentional checks are included to provide a culturally responsive lens.

International schools can interrupt the political-economic pressure of for-profit schools or educational programs. To do so, they must become aware of how school programs and policies can erase the identity and cultures of the communities that international schools serve. Revamped school governance structures, driven by a community-centered commitment to cultural responsiveness, may disrupt the concept of banking education and transactional knowledge that international schools perpetuate. Ideally, international schools can lead students to build strength from their cross-cultural identities and find their activist voice for social and environmental justice in their home countries and the world (Freire, 2018).

A participatory action research (PAR) design can best address equity challenges by leveraging the community members who are most impacted by the current conditions. I describe the design of the project in the next section.

Participatory Action Research Design

I used a form of participatory action research (PAR) because this methodology best supported me to examine the concepts and processes necessary for our leadership team to rethink

our approach to cultural responsiveness and successfully address equity challenges (Herr & Anderson, 2015; hunter et al., 2013). Action and activist action researchers argue for coordinated reform efforts that measure qualitative change over time as an essential element of participatory action research.

Individual teachers, students, and staff invested in culturally responsive outcomes already have led to many recent shifts at our school, which set the stage for the PAR and increased the possibilities of instituting changes. Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) advocate for deep and systemic reform based on multicultural teaching, knowledgeable and skilled teachers, and democratic decision-making, all promising options for my approach to the PAR.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of the participatory action research project was: International school leaders will analyze and implement culturally responsive leadership through learning, applying, and reflecting upon culturally responsive practices. As a result of this study, I expected to create resources and support for school leaders to develop individual and collective understandings of culturally responsive theory and practices and to apply them to the challenges that we face in our school community. The overarching research question is: *How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices for educational equity?* The research sub-questions are:

- To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders for equity?
- To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' abilities to enact educational equity?

- How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices as equity leaders?

Theory of Action

The theory of action was the following: If a team of school leaders shares a facilitated leadership support group committed to understanding themselves as culturally responsive educators for educational equity, then leaders will enact culturally responsive practices. Decision-making through the PAR process ensured that the actions that arise from the school's strategic plan reflected the school community's values and educational goals. Leadership awareness of the critical aspects of CRP, such as historical injustice and systems of inequity, can cause them to disrupt the conditions that may subtly de-value local students' identity (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Cycles of Inquiry

In the PAR process, we examined the focus of practice—how international school leaders develop culturally responsive practices through professional learning and enact educational equity in the school using a set of design principles and guidelines (see Table 1). However, we wanted to address how international schools traditionally standardized education according to what is needed to enroll in colleges and universities in English-speaking countries while ignoring the host country's culture. In implementing the PAR, I provided a space for leaders to analyze and reflect upon these practices. In the PAR process, over two cycles of inquiry using the tenets of the improvement science process of plan-do-study-act (Bryk et al., 2017), four school leaders and I explored strategies to ensure that the educational program was committed to educational equity for all school community members.

Table 1

Improvement Science Principles and Guidelines

Design Principles	Researcher Guidelines
Make the work problem-specific and user-centered.	Address a specific and targeted issue.
Variation in performance is core.	Focus on what works, for whom, and under what conditions.
See the system that produces the current outcomes.	Make the hypothesis for change public and clear.
We cannot improve what cannot be measured.	"Soon" is not a time, and "some" is not a number.
Anchor improvements in disciplined inquiry.	Use a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA Cycle).
Accelerate improvement through networked communities.	Embrace local wisdom.

The FoP originated from the community's needs as identified by alumni, staff, students, and parents. One of the primary assets in addressing the FoP was an awareness that we should use the local students' cross-cultural experience to inform school practices. Alumni felt solidarity in their shared experiences and tremendous pride in their Taiwanese nationality.

Another asset was the willingness of many staff to consider culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) and their stated desire to improve practices to support student engagement and academic success using identity as an access point. While most of the teaching staff was foreign and from the United States, I intentionally included cross-cultural voices during the PAR process and engaged emergent staff leaders. Facilitating leaders' cross-cultural awareness provided a critical lever for organizational change. The challenges to the PAR started with the long institutional history of international schools and how systems revert to old habits without permanent monitoring and evaluation (Weiss, 1995). In addition, the relatively short average tenure of the foreign teaching staff was a potential obstacle to creating lasting change.

During the PAR process, I sought to raise leaders' awareness about culturally responsive practices and to utilize the community's assets to plan for systemic change. To do that, I engaged a group of leaders as a co-practitioner research team (CPR) that included school leaders in administrative positions. The CPR developed strategies to support each leader's evolution towards a more culturally aware and responsive ethos. We collected and analyzed data to make iterative decisions on how to lead for positive change. The CPR worked to embed and align the FoP within the existing school strategic plan.

Throughout the study the CPR team held regular meetings, and I had regular one-to-one meetings with each team member. As a small-scale networked community, we studied culturally responsive theory and research; members reflected upon their individual and collective

understanding of culturally responsive leadership and actions (see Table 2 for the research cycles). Ultimately, organizational recognition emerged -- of ourselves, our students, and our place in the racial, political, and cultural world as a basis for student actualization and empowerment. I specify these activities and data collection more fully in Chapter 3.

Study Considerations: Limitations, Validity, and Confidentiality and Ethics

The conditions of this study and my role as a researcher were unique and may not apply to all international schools. Although some of the processes may be applied to other schools or future studies, specific aspects such as location, school type, and profile of participants may not be transferable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The CPR team's perspectives, experiences, and judgments may influence the findings. In this case, the lead researcher and the CPR team were administrators and exercised authority in the school that could have affected the outcomes despite our use of specific protocols to diminish our impact (Hale, 2008). To address researcher bias in this study, I employed a variety of controls such as member checks, peer review of data, reflective memos, and bias disclosure (Gerdes & Conn, 2001).

Action and activist research validity is based on the study's results and their usefulness for the study participants (Hale, 2008) as well as participants' prolonged engagement in collecting and analyzing data (Gerdes & Conn, 2001). Internal validity is reflected in our evolving understanding of culturally relevant practices, documented through analysis of CLE artifacts, meeting notes, and interviews. Consistency in my approach to data collection and analysis strengthened external validity so that our conclusions may apply to other contexts or future studies. Using multiple sources for evidence and then consistent and thorough evidence coding based on established qualitative coding practices improves the trustworthiness of the findings (Saldaña, 2016).

Table 2

Project Activities

PDSA Cycles	Goals/Outcomes	Data Collection Activities	Data Collection
PAR Cycle One Fall Semester 2021	Establish the CPR. Analyze CR practices. Identify a specific focus of practice related to a CR school. Implement CLEs. Plan for implementation.	CPR Team meetings Interviews	CPR meeting notes CLE Artifacts Interview notes
PAR Cycle Two Spring Semester 2022	Use evidence from PAR Cycle to inform the second PDSA cycle of inquiry. Implement CRP. Reflect on implementation.	CPR Team meetings Interviews	CPR meeting notes CLE Artifacts Reflective memos

Note. Abbreviations: CPR = Co-Practitioner Researcher; CR = Culturally Responsive; CLE = Community Learning Exchange.

The security of collected data, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were of the utmost importance in this study (Herr & Anderson, 2015). All participants were volunteers and signed consent forms. I protected data and participants by storing the data in a secure and separate location for a total of 3 years. CITI certifications, consent forms for adult participants and consent and assent forms for students, and a letter from the school approving the research are included as appendices in Chapter 3. Key considerations to this project are outlined in this section and described in detail in Chapter 3: limitations, validity, and confidentiality.

Summary

Implementing culturally responsive leadership practices for educational equity may prove difficult for international schools as they involve changes to their programs and standard practices. The climate of educational entrepreneurship is such that international schools look to each other to define school identity without considering the impact of implicit dominant culture messaging on local students. Many schools do not consider the local context when developing their educational program (Hayden & Thompson, 1995). At AISST, however, many community members believed that creating a more culturally responsive environment would be beneficial to their students' success and wellbeing. They believed that everyone in the school community would benefit if we recognized students' home language and cultural assets and created a more inclusive and sensitive school. Thus, our project sought to explore and understand what factors support and hinder the evolution of an international school toward the culturally relevant practices to which its leaders are committed.

In Chapter 2, I review of the theoretical, normative, and empirical research related to the focus of practice. In Chapter 3, I detail the research design as well as data collection and analysis methodology. In Chapters 4, I describe the data analysis and the codes and categories I derived

from the first cycle of inquiry. In Chapter 5, I present the data analysis and themes from the second cycle of inquiry and the project findings in detail based on the data analysis of the combined cycles. In Chapter 6, I discuss the findings further and illustrate the key claims. I present a new framework for leadership development and show the implications. Finally, I reflect on my leadership growth as a result of the project.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

How can we challenge leaders to examine alternative views on education leadership that contrast with the values of hierarchy embedded in Western perspectives? While Western society associates leadership with titles, degrees, or lists of accomplishments, in many indigenous cultures the community bestows leadership on those who best represent the values and beliefs of the culture (Benham & Napier, 2002). Likewise, culturally responsive leaders in schools trained in culturally responsive pedagogy can practice critical consciousness and pay close attention to the sensitivities of the community they serve (Johnson, 2014).

In contemporary international school leadership, tensions exist between historically Western-tradition and English-speaking international schools and 21st century international schools that enroll a majority local students in their home countries all over the world. The challenge in this dynamic is the extent to which Western educational values implicitly or explicitly suggest that local language, culture, and learning theory are less important in a Western success paradigm. Thus, culturally responsive leadership theory and practices are relevant in international schools. Gay (2000) suggests that culturally responsive pedagogy "needs to be nuanced to fit the specific characteristics and needs of these different settings" and that "cultural understanding is the baseline from which effective educational decisions are made for diverse students, schools, and communities" (Gay, 2000, p. 123).

The overarching research question for this study is: How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices for educational equity? I organize the review of literature in three topics and sections:

1. The international school conditions in Taiwan

2. Foundations and implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) and practices
3. School leadership and culturally responsive practices.

In this chapter, I explore research on Taiwan and international schools; as Gay (2000) recommends, leaders need to understand the nuances and dynamics of the school context as they relate to CRP. Next, I examine CRP and its applications to become better informed about applying CRP to the international context. Finally, I examine examples of leadership studies in various settings that set cultural responsiveness as a goal. I conclude by synthesizing key concepts that inform this study.

International American School Conditions in Taiwan

Understanding the various layers of an educational setting is critical for change management or organizational reform (Roegman, 2017). Community learning exchange axioms (Guajardo et al., 2016) and Freirean (2018) praxis indicate that those who are closest to the issues in each organization are best equipped to determine solutions to challenges. In addition, to be leaders of equity as Western education leaders in international schools requires that we understand the connection between culturally responsive theory and practice so that we can apply our understandings in our school. Thus, while key research from the other surroundings will be helpful, examining the specific conditions of this study and how CRP might be used is necessary.

Because the action research takes place at the American International School in Southern Taiwan (AISST) and because Taiwan has a unique historical and cultural heritage, I needed to fully understand the history and culture as a first step in examining what culturally responsive pedagogy might look like. Taiwan's multinational and multicultural history, culture, language, and the role of international schools set the stage for my efforts to introduce culturally responsive

school leadership practices. Inequities in international school dynamics in the East Asia region have emerged in policy and practice, which culturally responsive school practices can help to rectify.

The History of Taiwan

Taiwan's current muddled geopolitical status is a part of a longer history that is a key component of the national identity. These linguistic and cultural conditions are relevant given that over 80% of AISST's students are Taiwanese citizens. On the one hand, the People's Republic of China claims Taiwan, and the United Nations and other international institutions do not recognize Taiwan as an independent nation. On the other hand, Taiwan is a thriving, progressive, social democracy protected from China by a modern military and a defense pact with the United States. In conversations with AISST alumni, some have said they define Taiwanese identity as "not Chinese." Brown (2008) agrees and tracks Taiwan's evolution from a diverse ethnic and cultural heritage to a common political and national identity.

In a comprehensive survey of Taiwan's history, Manthorpe (2008) and Liu (2012) report the intersections of languages and cultures. Fossil and cultural records suggest that Taiwan was the launch spot for the Austronesian expansion of the indigenous peoples to the far reaches of the Pacific Islands and Micronesia. The Taiwanese government recognizes many indigenous tribes maintaining ancient languages and customs despite centuries of marginalization. Over many centuries, Chinese migration from the mainland to Taiwan has occurred resulting in the formation of multiple dialects. In a brief European colonization period during the 17th century, the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese claimed the island. The Chinese Qing Dynasty acquired Taiwan in the same century, which initiated more extensive migrations of Han Chinese people. China ceded Taiwan to Japan after the Sino-Japanese war of 1898, and Taiwan remained a

Japanese colony until the end of World War II. When the Republic of China government took control of the Chinese mainland in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek established modern Taiwan with his son eventually transitioning Taiwan to a democracy after 40 years of single party rule and martial law (Brown, 2008; Liu, 2012; Manthorpe, 2008).

In the 21st century, however, the old divisions have begun to fade. A recent poll shows that 66% of native-born people on the island and 83% of those under 30 years old identify primarily as Taiwanese rather than with specific linguistic/cultural groups (Associated Press News, 2020). A more cohesive national identity is due to Taiwan's emergence as a modern, industrial, socially progressive, and democratic nation combined with the solidarity created by the external threat of Chinese invasion. Because Taiwan is a multicultural, multi-ethnic country, culturally responsive international school practices can have a strong impact (Brown, 2008; Liu, 2012; Manthorpe, 2008).

International Schools in Taiwan and Asia: Challenges of Cross-Cultural Identity

Carder et al. (2018) analyzes the lack of coherence in the international school system's current cultural and linguistic policies and practices. International schools have substantial contradictions and hypocrisies in their stated missions, values, perceptions, and practices given that they serve non-white, global majority students (Carder et al., 2018; Robinson, 2012). Although many international schools espouse internationalism and multiculturalism in their mission statements, the curriculum, policies, and practices are firmly oriented in European and North American culture.

An additional concern is a lack of host government oversight and the ensuing autonomy of international school programs—often in contrast to host country policies for local schools—such as loopholes for enrollment and other benefits. International schools in Asian schools often

operate outside of local government regulations such as standardized testing or curricular content requirements. Affluent parents use international schools to opt out of local systems and gain advantage to Western university admissions. Robinson (2012) and de Waal et al. (2020) explain cross-cultural students as the unique product of international education.

Carder et al. (2018) define an international school by the primary language used, school employees, curriculum choices, and school demographics. These criteria ring true for AISST as an "anglosphere"-based school that uses English as the language of instruction in a non-English-speaking country with expatriate teaching staff, local support staff, and host country language teachers. The school administration is transient and monolingual in English. Many international schools are defined by international standardized curricula such as the International Baccalaureate (IB). By increasing enrollment from affluent local populations, schools have challenges developing students' mother tongues. As international schools accept more English Language Learners, schools tailor the pedagogy and programs to accelerate English literacy. Carder et al. offer frameworks to evaluate schools' linguistic and cultural proficiency to validate and include mother tongue languages and host country culture in international school settings. The frameworks include international students' access to host country language courses in school and visual representations of local language and culture present in the school building to provide explicit and implicit messages about the value of their mother tongue.

The cultural competence of schools and teachers is proven to have influence on student achievement and student engagement. Denboba (as cited in Georgetown University, 2019) defines cultural competence as:

> "a set of values, behaviors, attitudes, and practices within a system, organization, program or among individuals and which enables them to work effectively cross-

> culturally. Further, it refers to the ability to honor and respect the beliefs, language, interpersonal styles, and behaviors of individuals and families receiving services and the staff who are providing such services.

Robinson (2012) explores the cultural competence dynamic between teachers and students at international schools in Hong Kong. Her study of 520 students and 70 teachers revealed gaps between teacher and student perceptions; that is, teachers' self-perceptions of cultural competence did not align with students' responses. In addition, students' perception of their teachers' cultural competence greatly influenced their class engagement. However, Robinson found that teachers can acquire cultural competence through reflection and professional development.

Kim and Mobrand (2019) explain the rapid growth of international schools in Asia as a factor in the cultural disconnect affecting host-country students; local enrollments have increased throughout Taiwan and elsewhere, including at American International School in Southern Taiwan. International school students have access to immersive English language programs and international curricula such as IB, resulting in university acceptance in English-speaking countries that parents may perceive as more prestigious than local colleges. However, the students do not experience the schools as a cultural fit. Private international schools operate outside local government regulations and oversight and allow affluent locals to opt out of government schools. Kim and Mobrand (2019) argue that "[p]olicies on which children can attend international schools are policies on who has the right to leave public schools for a marketized education landscape" (Kim & Mobrand, 2019, p. 311).

The local Bureau of Education does not supervise or mandate international school curricula in Taiwan despite a national public school instructional model. Instead, oversight

depends on the individual school's compliance with IB and other international accreditation agencies. Although the Taiwan government requires international school students to possess foreign passports, most international school students are dual passport holders. Many of these students have never lived abroad except for brief periods of infancy. Kim and Mobrand further suggest that governments need to consider the implications for educational policy and practice in the host countries of the opt-out system that international schools provide and the extent to which they undermine local and national education systems.

Another factor is how international school students' experiences impact their identities as Third Culture Kids (TCK). Tanu (2018) describes TCK as an emic and non-binary concept that is "tempered by factors such as 'race,' culture, and gender" (Tanu, 2018, p. 238). "To be international, students had to have what I collectively refer to as (Western) cosmopolitan cultural and social capital. The ideology of being international was a Eurocentric form of cosmopolitanism, reflecting the 'global currency of whiteness'" (Tanu, 2018, p. 239). The same cultural tendencies seem to play out in the AISST.

Tanu's assertion aligns with Carder et al. (2018) in identifying a unique dynamic in international schools when international school students are English monolingual living in a non-English speaking host country:

> On a visit to an international school where teachers had collected vignettes of students, one was of an English student who 'had been at the school for 15 years but spoke not one word of the host country language.' Such behavior on the part of an immigrant would be lambasted by politicians and the press in many countries but is accepted as perfectly normal in an international school, especially when the student involved is a native speaker of English (Tanu, 2018, p. 17).

There are non-Taiwanese expatriate students and staff at AISST who generally fit this description. Carder et al. and Tanu offer characterizations of TCK and international school students' identities and experiences that are comparable to student experiences at AISST suggests that while external schemes can guide the implementation of culturally responsive practices, they should be driven from within the school community so that leaders closely connect any initiatives to host country values and culture in collaboration with students, families, and local staff.

Finally, Carder et al. (2018) point to the stigma often felt by English Language Learners (ELL) in international schools. While families pay higher tuition for specialized (and segregated) programs for learning English, international school personnel tend to view non-English-speaking students as deficient. English proficiency correlates with students' academic and social status at the American International School in Southern Taiwan. In contrast, if newly arrived ELL students are not provided with adequate support, they may feel socially and programmatically isolated.

Conclusion: International School Conditions in Taiwan

Roegman (2017) analyzes how the social context, including organizational, occupational, and personal aspects, overlaps with and impacts equity-centered change management. To determine what may be culturally responsive school leadership practices, we will need to consider Taiwan's historical multicultural and multilingual profile, linguistic/cultural heritage, and background information on international schools. The assertions of Carder et al. (2018) regarding how schools demonstrate their values and perceptions towards local language and culture in international schools apply to many of the conditions at AISST. As a result, using participatory action research and community learning exchanges as frameworks can identify and

address school challenges related to identity, culture, and belonging. The foundational literature of appropriate culturally relevant practices offers guidance for how I approach the study.

Toward a Culturally Responsive International School in Taiwan

Culturally responsive pedagogy and school practices are central concepts and key drivers of leadership transformation. Because CRP has a well-established history in research and practice (Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995), it provides a theoretical background for investigating, studying, and disrupting educational inequities in multiple settings. Therefore, I frame CRP applications in the context of international schools and specifically in Taiwan. However, because CRP emerged as a North American educational theory, there is limited literature on its implementation in international schools.

Nevertheless, several themes on culturally responsive pedagogy and practices are relevant to the focus of practice for this study. First, effective CRP requires deliberate and ongoing teacher induction and development to support their understanding of systemic inequities and to develop CRP strategies with them, including educator reflection on self-improvement practices. Secondly, effectiveness of CRT depends on educators making reasonable efforts to implement specific strategies. Finally, one benefit of a CRP focus in the study is community-building across differences among school leaders, teachers, students, and families in classrooms and schools. Thus, I discuss the foundations of CRP theory, transfer of CRP to school practices, and CRP in the international and Taiwanese context.

Foundations of CRP/CRT

Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) as instructional strategies to serve marginalized students in the United States through a specific type learning partnership between teachers and students described below. Gay (2000) and

Hammond (2015) further defined and deepened understanding of its key role in improving student achievement. A unifying theme in their work is the importance of educators fully understanding the communities they serve and recognizing the community's schema as an assets-based access point to learning. Each author calls for educators to be aware of how teaching and learning reside within complex political and cultural systems. All three emphasize the power of storytelling at the center of CRP.

Ladson-Billings' (1995) study proposed culturally focused pedagogy as a way for teaching to better serve the needs of students of color in the United States educational system. In a qualitative study of eight teachers who were identified as effective by their community through various measures such as students' test scores and supervisor evaluations. Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that CRP "must find a way for students to maintain their cultural integrity while succeeding academically" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 456). She contends that school systems have forced students of color to assimilate into the dominant culture, sacrifice their identity and home culture, and risk social ostracization to succeed in traditional schooling. In her framing, she concludes that CRP teaching can raise awareness of social and political inequities.

Ladson-Billings identified three broad theoretical tenets of CRP stemming from teachers' beliefs and ideologies and provides a framework for each: conceptions of self and others, social relations, and sources of knowledge. She concluded that educators should use CRP to "problematize teaching and encourage teachers to ask about the nature of the student-teacher relationship, the curriculum, schooling, and society" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 483). She calls for educators to understand culture and expand their view of pedagogy.

Gay (2000) supported Ladson-Billings' critique of the deficit response to students and families; in her view, the educational system blames students of color themselves for poor

academic performance along with their families, home cultures, or languages. Instead, Gay examined how institutional racism and systems of oppression influence teaching and presented culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as an antidote that can disrupt these historical inequities. With explicit details on CRT research, practice, and implementation through classroom instruction and "multi-ethnic cultural frames of reference" (Gay, 2000, p. 36). Gay reframes culture and learning as inseparable and illustrates how CRT can use students' experiences as the basis for establishing rigorous connections to the study curriculum. She defines culturally responsive teaching as formal and informal multicultural curricula, culturally informed classroom discourse, cultural unity in teaching and learning strategies, teacher caring, teacher attitudes, and expectations.

For Hammond (2015), CRT is a method that can create ideal learning conditions within a classroom. She connected CRT to teachers' use of brain science, which ensures students feel safe to engage fully in learning. In discussing learning theories, Hammond described how information processing and cognitive routines build the skills required for independent learning. She argues for using daily rituals, protocols, and strategies that are culturally congruent with the students, and she provides practical examples of CRT for the classroom. She makes a strong case that CRT is fundamentally good instructional practice for all students at any level. In this study of how school leaders can promote culturally responsive teaching and learning, I connect the CRT research to teacher practice.

CRP in Practice

An overarching theme in empirical studies and the normative practice literature is teacher preparedness for CRP. Multiple studies demonstrate the value of CRP implementation in school settings on school leadership and teacher support (Byrd, 2016; Dee & Penner, 2017 Izarry, 2017;

Lee & McCarty, 2017; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014). School leaders' and teachers' awareness of their identities and students' identities and their ability to name and understand systems of oppression and social justice outcomes for communities they serve consistently result in increased student success using various measures (Bucholtz et al., 2017; Dee & Penner, 2017; Keith, 2020).

Dee and Penner (2017) connect CRP to student achievement. They examined the causal effects of an ethnic studies curriculum used with struggling middle school students in the San Francisco Unified School District in California, USA. The SFUSD curriculum used CRP "to engage with students who had previously felt marginalized by the traditional curriculum. Units focused on social justice, discrimination, stereotypes, and social movements from U.S. history spanning the late 18th century until the 1970s" (Dee & Penner, 2017, p. 9). Through the ethnic studies course, students connected with their family histories and personal identities. The study analyzed data from 1,400 students and determined that the use of the curriculum produced increased school attendance, higher grade-point averages, and increased average credits earned for students enrolled in the class compared to a control group.

Dee and Penner concluded that CRP and ethnic studies are potent tools in changing academic outcomes in all courses for struggling students of color of various ethnicities. Although teachers collaboratively developed the curriculum, the results suggest that efforts to use curricular inputs that reflect diverse experiences benefit student engagement across various settings and thus might also apply to international schools.

Intentional teacher development directed toward developing a CRP mindset within schools is critical. An empirical study by Byrd (2016) examined teacher mindsets. She surveyed 315 Grade 6 through 12 students from throughout the United States with questions on learning

about racism, cultures different from their own, and culturally relevant teaching practices. She concluded that:

> Teaching methods that connect with students' real lives and interests and promote understanding of other cultures are associated with better academic outcomes. In addition, encouraging students' knowledge of their own culture and raising awareness about racism and discrimination is related to students' ethnic-racial identity development (Byrd, 2016, p. 7).

Byrd (2016) suggests that teachers and students benefited when teachers build individual relationships, celebrate diversity in the classroom, and explicitly teach about systemic racial or cultural inequities.

Edwards and Edict (2013), Tintiangco-Cubales et al. (2014), Keith (2020), and Orejel (2021) each provide a framework for CRP implementation. They offer evidence that the need for leadership in teacher development is paramount. Edwards and Edict (2013) offer analysis of the culturally responsive relationship between the teacher and student and how teachers may build those skills from the most basic to the most nuanced. Tintiangco-Cubales et al. (2014) provide guidance for teacher development by reflecting on building culturally responsive ethnic studies curricula. They found positive effects of the use of critical autobiography, critical storytelling, and critical life history to raise racial and cultural awareness among white teachers. Keith's (2020) qualitative case study showed that even within the confines of a scripted curriculum, teachers can use specific culturally responsive strategies to build a classroom community of caring.

When teachers build emotionally safe environments, student engagement increases. Based on a quantitative, correlational study of over 200 educators in Southern California with

variables of dispositions for CRP and teacher efficacy, Orejel (2021) asserts that teacher motivation and disposition are essential to CRP and the teachers' belief and ability to implement CRP. She found that teacher relationships within the school community had the most significant impact on teacher efficacy towards CRP: "Teachers with a higher sense of community can have higher motivation attainment in their students than those with a lower sense of community" (Orejel, 2021, p. 92). These authors concentrated on how professional learning and support are essential to culturally responsive school and classroom practices. Given the number of expatriates and ethnically white teaching staff at American International School in Southern Taiwan and in international schools, these studies have implications for shaping faculty mindsets about CRP.

Paris and Alim (2017) make a case for culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). They advocate a shift in the fundamental understanding of the purpose of schooling away from the "largely assimilationist and often violent White imperial project, with students and families being asked to lose or deny their language, literacy, cultures, and histories to achieve in schools" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). CSP incorporates a critique of oppressive systems while emphasizing culturally sensitive ways of thinking and knowing that teachers and leaders should know and use in schools.

Bucholtz et al. (2017) studied bilingualism for emerging English learners using the students' heritage language. Their case studies explored how translanguaging abilities and the concept of "Spanglish" can be seen as a skill and a sustaining and empowering aspect of youth identity and cross-cultural identity. The findings of this study support Carder et al.'s assertions regarding translanguaging in international schools as a best practice for students learning English.

Two case studies examine teacher efficacy. Izarry (2017) studied how teachers can organize youth to engage in participatory action research to explore topics of their interest. Lee and McCarty (2017) examined how teachers must develop a sense of themselves as learners to be effective in communities of color. Being engaged in culturally sustaining pedagogy and practice demands that teachers have a lifelong commitment to learning and inquiry when serving students and families who historically have been marginalized. Lee and McCarty believe that teachers need to develop "supporting positive identities, resilience, [and] a critical analysis of institutional policies and practices that serve as sources of disenfranchisement" (Lee & McCarty, 2017, p. 55) for the students with whom they work. Teachers who take on this responsibility often must be ready to cross boundaries and become advocates for the students and families in their schools.

CRP research has deepened understanding and applications of best practices in teaching and learning. Successful examples of CRP implementation in various circumstances provide useful guidance for school leaders aiming to shift school culture by putting student and community identity at the nexus of reforms (Orejel, 2021; Paris & Alim, 2017). All the teacher practices cited here require that leaders have a parallel learning process, which is the subject of this study. I explore previous applications of CRP in international settings—specifically Asia and Taiwan—to guide us in adapting CRP to our conditions.

CRP in International Schools and in Taiwan

The development of CRP as learning theory and even its terminology is rooted in a North American perspective. Because few studies of CRP apply to the international context, research at the micro level of schools outside the American racial-political context was limited given that CRP was initially developed to address achievement barriers in public school for minoritized

students. However, a few studies of CRP that did take place in international schools and Taiwan reinforce the importance of adult educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions in creating more inclusive and responsive classrooms and are discussed below.

Cavendish (2001) conducted a study using narrative inquiry with three North American international school elementary teachers in China over several weeks, examining their experiences and perspectives on cultural diversity. Cavendish documented the distinct characteristics of international-school classrooms, including cultural perspectives that mix third-culture kids, host country culture, students' home culture, and international American school culture. She found that the teachers were most successful understanding and navigating these differences when using a constructivist approach that directs students to build on their experiences when accessing new material, to examine inputs from multiple perspectives, and to pursue topics within subjects based on interest so that students follow their curiosity. The author advocates for CRP to support learning through reflective storytelling for students and teachers as a central aspect of teaching practice. Although this work is promising and has applications to AISST, what is missing from the text, according to Ladson-Billing's (1995) definition of CRP, is the deliberate naming of social justice and systems of inequity that is critical to authentic CRP.

Deveney (2007) examined how well teachers in an international school in Thailand perceive themselves to be prepared to teach in multicultural settings. Deveney surveyed teachers on preparation courses for working in multicultural classrooms and facilitated teacher focus group discussions. He concluded that teacher preparation programs did not adequately prepare teachers for multicultural classrooms. However, he does assert that teachers can be successfully trained in their mindsets and dispositions to improve cultural competence: "A teacher who is curious, reflective, flexible, caring, optimistic, and genuinely interested in other cultures—a

'Cosmopolitan' cultural type—may have the potential to be an effective teacher without having undertaken training for teaching in culturally diverse classes" (Deveney, 2007, p. 325). He suggested that teachers may increase cultural aptitude through induction programs for teachers new to the school on multicultural teaching, mentoring from experienced staff, and ongoing professional development to support CRP. Despite findings that CRP strategies work in international schools, these studies did not address systemic inequity or the broader cultural implications of international schools serving host country youth.

Although there are limited studies on CRP implementation in international schools in Taiwan, Chen (2016) and Chen (2017) explore CRP from a Taiwanese perspective, and they advocate strategies to support indigenous and immigrant students, respectively. Chen (2016) examined preparation programs for non-indigenous teachers working in indigenous communities in compliance with the Taiwan Education Act for Indigenous Peoples. These programs emphasized social justice and tribal critical race theory development. She drew on examples of similar government programs in North America and Australia. Chen (2017) examined case studies on implementation of CRP in mathematics instruction at a multi-ethnic, public elementary school in northern Taiwan. Her study set fairness and justice goals and used immigrant students' home culture as a bridge to a constructivist teaching approach. Both authors called for teacher preparation on CRP strategies and mindsets and continuous teacher reflection. Although these studies took place in Taiwanese public schools, they demonstrated CRP implementation in a cultural context like our school.

Conclusion: Building CRP in International Schools

The heart of CRP implementation is the relationship between the teacher and the students as supported by adequate curricular content. The most significant barrier to CRP is a lack of

educator readiness and commitment to critical self-awareness and to empowering and validating students and their experiences through explicitly acknowledging inequities. International educators committed to living outside their home cultures cannot take these skills for granted. Next, I discuss how school leadership is essential in supporting organizational reflection and action to shift toward culturally responsive perspectives and practices.

Leadership and CRP: Change Management for Equity

Shields (2004) made a case for social justice leadership and called for building solid relationships in which leaders challenge the status quo. Shields explored the literature that addressed school leadership and CRP, including frameworks to guide leaders. Just as CRP implementation at the classroom level is relational, the leader's relationship with the school community is equally essential. Within the leader-to-school relationship, the theme of building teacher capacity to implement instructional practices surfaces repeatedly. Shields (2010) named the distinction between transformational (action) and transformative leadership (activism). Ladson-Billings (1995) and Gay (2000) determined that teachers and leaders need not only to take corrective actions but also to maintain a social justice perspective and actively advocate for anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices.

CRP Practices and Frameworks for Leaders

The literature on school leadership supports the best practices of CRP. Theoharis (2009, 2010), who has published extensively on CRP leadership, and other authors call for both equity-centered goals and a public pro-equity stance on the part of school leaders. School leaders' influence on teacher development, leadership, and skill sets is a strong variable for teacher change.

In a meta-analysis of the relationship between leadership and student outcomes, Robinson

et al. (2008) examined 27 published studies and determined that leadership practice and teacher learning require deeper calibration. They found that schools with systems in place to sustain their commitments to professed goals in the face of the many distractions produce better learning outcomes for students. They also found a strong correlation between a leadership that promotes and participates in teacher learning and development and positive student outcomes. At AISST, we have examples of CRP throughout the school, yet the extent that community members name, share, and scale those examples has been limited.

Schmid (2020) proposes a framework for guiding international school leaders toward culturally competent school leadership through a study that included interviews with 14 heads of international schools and an analysis of school values documents. Schmid asserted that leaders must take deliberate actions to align school values, strategic plans, and community actions. She identified the gap between school mission and vision statements, international schools' values documents, and school practices and identified the need for ongoing professional development for staff on cultural competence. Although the work to deliver the school mission with specific actions has started at AISST, leaders and staff have not yet explicitly connected those ideas and activities to CRP.

Khalifa et al. (2016) make a case for culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL) through a comprehensive review of literature on expressions of CRSL leader behaviors: "practices and actions, mannerisms, policies, and discourses that influence school climate, school structure, school efficacy, or student outcomes" (Khalifa, et al., 2016, p. 1,274). They identify the school leader action key to CRSL as:

- Critically self-reflects on leadership behaviors,
- Develops culturally responsive teachers,

- Promotes a culturally responsive/inclusive school environment,
- Engages students, parents, and indigenous participants (Khalifa, et al., 2016, pp. 1,283–4).

The authors reaffirm CRP as an imperative for teachers and leaders in communities historically marginalized based on race, language, migration, ability, or other factors. CRSL has many applications to the AISST context in that the school community is poised to reflect upon behaviors based on students' intersectional identities.

Radd et al. (2021) presents a framework for equity-focused school leadership. Their work built on the earlier Shields' concept of transformational systemic change framed within social justice and the disruption of institutional inequities. They argue for five practices to build an equity-focused system:

- Prioritizing equity leadership
- Preparing for equity
- Developing equity leadership teams
- Building equity-focused systems
- Sustaining equity (Radd, et al., 2021, p. 5).

The work provides practical instructions for leaders on awareness, conditions, and tools for disrupting historical patterns of exclusion. The authors demonstrate a model for "equity-focused leadership teams" that emphasizes routines such as "integration of personal experience with systems and trend data" (Radd, et al., 202, p. 125). This routine by educators considers that because personal experiences often contradict data, leaders need to recognize how community stories may connect to or differ from the curricula used in schools and to honor and leverage the truth of both.

We used prior studies and frameworks on culturally responsive leadership for the PAR (Participatory Action Research) at AISST to self-assess equity leadership and the conditions for CRP. The CPT or various school leadership teams might undertake an inventory to identify CRP work at the school. Some of the prior work was directly applicable to our case.

CRP, Community Leadership, and School Site Examples in Asia

Two studies have tangible applications to Taiwan and the international school setting of the PAR. Both aimed to understand how to bring diverse constituencies together over practice and policy. In the first study, the authors examined building a community to solidify school values; the second researcher provides a strategy for including community voices in decision-making.

Adams and Velarde (2020) studied instructional and transformational school leadership at three international schools in Malaysia. They tracked how school leaders built shared values through the school's mission, vision statement, and other school practices. They identified the challenge as building community across Malaysia's multi-ethnic and multi-religious demographics. In their data analysis, they identified the themes of "roles and responsibilities; communicating the school's mission and vision; modeling leadership values; inclusivity programs and policies; integrating international-mindedness in the curriculum and ensuring a safe learning environment" (Adams & Velarde, 2020, p. 25). The authors imply that a focus on school values allowed diverse communities to understand acceptance, respect, and tolerance. The authors conclude that "leadership plays a critical role in the success of a culturally diverse organization" and call for introspection related to the communities that leaders serve.

Richardson Garcia (2019) used community learning exchanges (CLEs) to promote equity of voice in an international school in Taiwan. Richardson Garcia defined the situational cultural

conditions and paid close attention to the nuances of cultural identity within the school community:

> According to Guajardo et al. (2016), CLEs often use circles to flatten implicit hierarchies and promote the idea that all participants bring their wisdom and perspective on a topic. In addition, CLEs are born from the belief that those closest to a problem or issue in its specific local form are best suited to solve it. This belief is particularly pertinent in my focus of practice because the constituents at my school bring a diverse set of cultural experiences and orientations toward the concepts of education and schooling (Richardson Garcia, 2019, p. 99).

The author's action research study centered on homework policy in the middle school division and analyzed data on participant decision-making and understanding throughout three cycles of CLE (Community Learning Exchange) research; however, homework policy was an impetus for participants to explore cultural perspectives. As a result, she determined that CLEs successfully built a sense of connectedness among stakeholders and that participants' thinking shifted based on hearing others' perspectives. The author provided significant evidence of the power of CLEs to create a culturally responsive school climate and showed results in changing school policy for homework.

The micro level of this research serves as a blueprint for change management and process at an international school in Asia. The studies imply that CRP implementation may have the greatest impact when tied to the school mission and implemented using a framework for cycles of inquiry. The mission or strategic plan identifies a common goal, and the framework provides a process to ensure the input of community voice and subsequently action.

Conclusions on Leadership and CRP

In this study of leadership development, I found a connection among Shield's (2004; 2010) call for dialogic and transformational leadership, the CLE processes, and the frameworks of Khalifa et al. (2016) and Radd et al. (2021). CRP leadership involves organizing and lifting community voices and facilitating a method to determine equity-centered outcomes. The leaders in a school must do what is described for teachers and students: examine their identities as culturally responsive persons and leaders, determine how to engage in a school community that may or may not be fully ready to examine their values and practices related to culturally responsive practices, and decide how to work with teachers to promote CRP.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 illustrates a conceptual framework of how the FoP (Focus of Practice), research questions, theory of action, and literature parallel the ecologies of knowing at the level of the self, the organization, and the community (Guajardo et al., 2015). We utilized this framework to guide our data analysis to uncover and identify conflicts, tensions, and ideas during and after data gathering (Saldaña, 2016). The research questions begin with school leaders' understanding of self as culturally responsive leaders through which the CPR (Co-Practitioner Researcher) team developed a collective knowledge of CR practices. In the next band of the organization, leaders applied their learning and thinking in iterative cycles while seeking input from constituents such as teachers, students, and families. Although most of the data collection and analysis resided within the inner two bands of the theoretical framework, leaders in the study considered how their work created opportunities outside of the community in the city of Kaohsiung, Taiwan, to other international schools around the world.

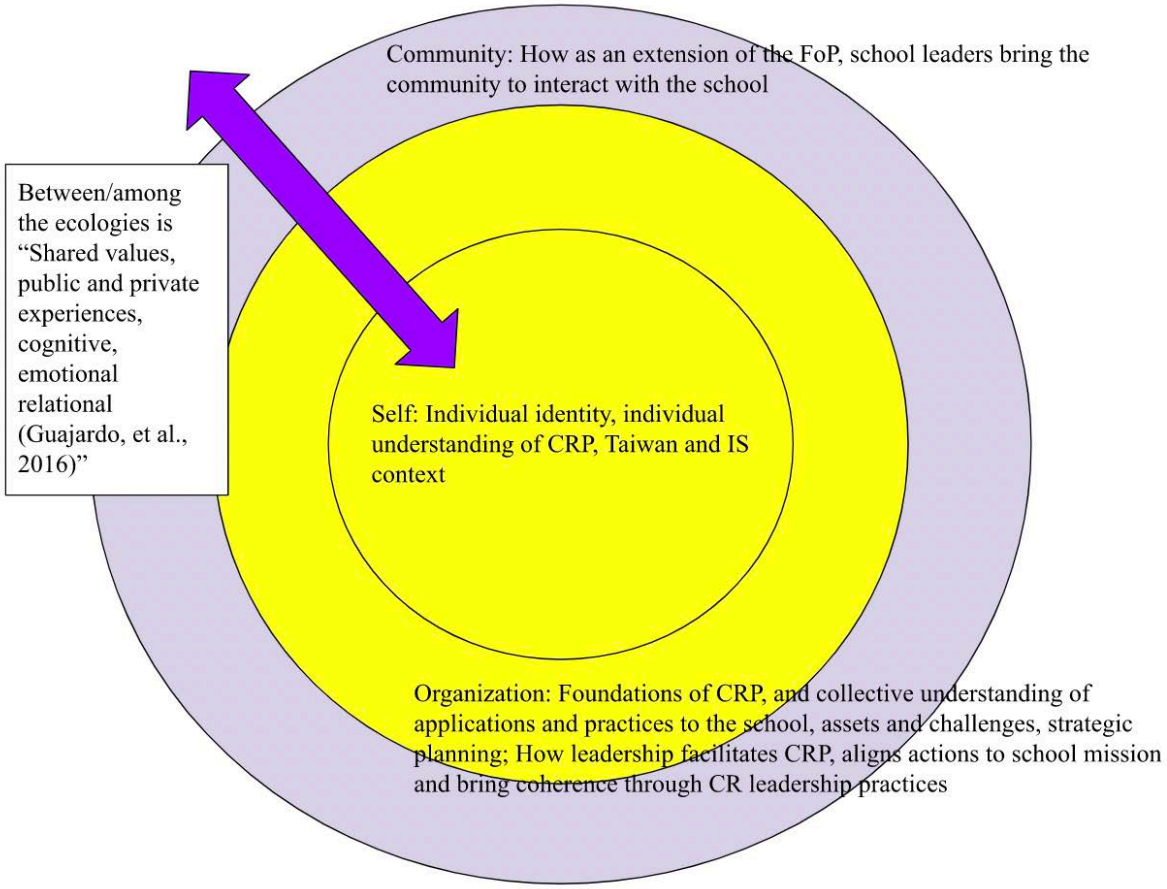


Figure 2. Theoretical framework to the focus of practice.

I girded the research and literature for this study with participatory action research (Herr & Anderson, 2015) and community learning exchanges (Guajardo et al., 2016). The ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) serve as a guide to activist research (Hale, 2017) using a PlanDoStudyAct/PDSA (Bryk et al., 2017) model; I discuss these frameworks in detail in Chapters 1 and 3. In the next chapter, I describe the FoP and connect the FoP and research questions to PAR methodology and CLEs. I show how the co-practitioner research (CPR) team will navigate the cycles of inquiry. I outline the research design, methodology, data collection, and analysis.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided perspectives on Taiwanese culture, definitions of CRP from sources, and how researchers have applied CRP to teaching, learning, and leadership. A multinational sense of identity and history makes Taiwan distinctive. International school policies and practices reflect cultural dynamics that typically occur in international schools when local, non-English-speaking students attend. Culturally responsive pedagogy theory and techniques have numerous applications to international school conditions. Culturally responsive leadership practices provide educators with a framework and guidance for more democratic conditions better suited to address inequities.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

International schools that primarily serve the host country nationals offer a uniquely complex setting for enacting culturally responsive leadership (Fraise & Brooks, 2015; Khalifa, 2018; Pearce, 2013; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2021). The purpose of the participatory action research (PAR) project and study is to co-develop and implement culturally responsive leadership through learning, applying, and reflecting upon culturally responsive practices. The PAR is based on this theory of action (TOA): If a team of school leaders shares a facilitated support group committed to understanding themselves as culturally responsive leaders for educational equity, then leaders will enact culturally responsive practices. Leaders' knowledge of the critical aspects of culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy, such as the dominant culture and the history and systems of educational inequity, will enable them to support school leaders to take actions to disrupt the conditions that devalue the identity and culture of the school constituents (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The PAR was carried out at the American International School in Southern Taiwan, an English-speaking international school serving primarily Taiwanese students and families. In this participatory action research (PAR) project and study, I collaborated with a school leadership team to explore and enact practices that are culturally responsive to the primary demographic of the school, namely, the Taiwanese families and students who represent 80% of the school population. To understand how cultural responsiveness is a vital driver for equitable leadership, I collaborated with other school leaders to identify practices that support participants to become fully inclusive and culturally responsive school leaders.

The collaborative team explored and enacted the focus of practice (FoP) of this PAR: Build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices in an international

school. As there is an inherent tension between Western-tradition international schools serving local students with non-Western identities and perspectives, I established structures to share ideas about this dilemma using culturally responsive practices to ensure that leaders work to engage all community members equitably.

In this chapter, I outline the methodological process for the study, which includes theoretical and practical applications of participatory action research (PAR) (Herr & Anderson, 2015) and the community learning exchange approach (CLE) (Guajardo et al., 2016). First, I describe the key methodological considerations for the research design, outline the action research cycles, and present the research questions. In the second section, I offer my data collection and analysis processes. Then, I conclude by describing the key considerations for the research: limitations, validity, confidentiality, and ethics.

Qualitative Research Process

I used participatory action research (PAR) as the primary methodological approach and developed the PAR using community learning exchange (CLE) protocols and axioms. In describing the PAR process, I emphasize how action research relates to activist research, connect PAR to the improvement science processes, and discuss how community learning exchanges, including the role of praxis, support the PAR research process.

Participatory Action Research

I chose a participatory action research (PAR) method because of the close relationship between culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), PAR, and praxis to achieve social justice outcomes through reflective processes (Freire, 2018; Gay, 2000: Guajardo et al., 2016; Herr & Anderson, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995). PAR is "inquiry that is done by or with insiders to an organization or community but never to or on them" (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 3) and requires a partnership

with those in an institution or organization with an investment in the problem to act upon an identified focus of practice. In this PAR I used an activist form of participatory action research because we are addressing issues of educational equity.

Action Research

I designed the PAR process to be self-critical, self-reflective, and collaborative. In this study of school leadership, the PAR entails two levels of collaboration. The first is a leadership support group, which I term a Co-Practitioner Research (CPR) team because we co-investigated and built culturally responsive practices. The CPR team first acquired a shared understanding of the tenets of culturally responsive leadership. Then, the leaders of the CPR team reflected upon challenges in their roles at the school and applied their learning to the identified issues.

The second level of collaboration was with members of the school community. We gathered information regarding challenges to designing and enacting culturally responsive practices with school staff, teachers, students, and families, so that we could keep the twin goals of the school in mind: the families and students are interested in Western education for educational and economic reasons, but they still want the school to be more culturally responsive to Taiwanese cultural norms. Activist action research tools were best suited to the conditions of the study.

Activist PAR

Activist researchers using the PAR processes are concerned with the root causes of inequality, injustice, and oppression in organizations. They include those most impacted in designing responses that are feasible through cooperation and collaboration. Activist researchers that use PAR processes are "open to contradiction, serendipity, and reflexive critique" (Hale, 2017, p. 4). In contrast to traditional objective or apolitical research, qualitative data are essential

to activist PAR to place within a community participants' empowerment and voice in understanding the problems and possible responses. As activist researchers, we need to view the community as the most potent resource for problem-solving (Hale, 2017). Activist action research most often has a social agenda and sense of urgency. The researchers seek to find those suffering or struggling in each context and to facilitate partnership in finding ways to an end the suffering.

Understanding culturally responsive leadership philosophy helps leaders to name their equity stances rooted in their identity and experience. Furthermore, the ability of school leaders and teachers to articulate and publish an equity stance on systems of inequity is an essential element of culturally responsive school leadership and teaching (Khalifa et al., 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995). The aim of this study is that the CPR team of school leaders collectively understand and then decide how to enact culturally responsive practices that, in turn, provide collegial and empowering accountability for each leader's activist stance within our cycles of inquiry.

Improvement Science

The CPR team implemented the PAR over two cycles of inquiry, using the improvement science PlanDoStudyAct (PDSA) model, which assumes successful change management in a school is best supported by short cycles of inquiry (Bryk et al., 2017; Schmoker, 1996). Secondly, by using the improvement science model of a networked improvement community—in this case, the school leaders as Co-Practitioner Researchers—participants build collective capacity to address the focus of practice. Using collaborative structures within the school community, the CPR team worked together to determine measurable outcomes of culturally responsive school practices. To guide our inquiry, we chose a specific problem and anchored it

in disciplined inquiry. Then in line with activist methodology, we investigated the system that produced the current situation, and used iterative evidence from the cycles of inquiry to improve it. Concurrently, by implementing the Community Learning Exchange approach, we relied on local wisdom to inform our choices.

Community Learning Exchange

"Community Learning Exchanges are about uniting the power of place with the wisdom of the people. This can only be done by bringing people together in conversation" (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 8). The community learning exchange (CLE) is a holistic method for facilitating group or organizational conversations designed to bring voice and action to those closest to issues. For this study, the CLE provided processes and protocols to implement the PAR and the cycles of inquiry. Any organization using the CLE framework assumes that issues are often complex, have diverse members and needs, and require deep understanding. CLE implementation includes a fundamental assumption by community members that each member brings wisdom, value, experience, and assets to identifying problems and solutions to equity-centered challenges (Guajardo et al., 2016).

The CLE is fundamentally a culturally responsive practice as evidenced by its emphasis on social activism, relationships among members, diversity, constructivist facilitation, and reflection (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). For a study on building leadership capacity for culturally responsive practices, CLEs supply "ecologies of knowing," that is, they guide the CPR team in exploring the relationship between the self, the organization, and the greater community. In this study, I asked leaders to explore their identities and histories and understand how they may leverage their leadership positions to build community and enact positive change within the school and the world.

CLE protocols can provide authentic qualitative data on culturally responsive practices. I list the CLE axioms that create a set of norms and agreements for CLE facilitation in Figure 3. Finally, the CLE process relies on the central role of praxis and reflection to enable participants to act with a social justice goal in mind as we engage in the PDSA cycles of inquiry and use evidence to inform the next steps. Freire (2018) described praxis as "reflection and action upon the world to transform it" (Freire, 2018, p. 52). In this study and as a foundational component of culturally responsive leadership and CLE practices, praxis will be evident in the CPR team's many written and transcribed reflections. CPR team members used these reflections to deepen our understanding of culturally responsive practices and to adjust our research plan through the cycles of inquiry. I embedded time for reflection and revision based on this self-examination into the study, CPR teamwork, and documentation of the team process.

Research Questions

The research questions are the core of the PAR and drove this study. I developed the research questions based on an analysis of the school policies, practices, governance and leadership structures, and preliminary conversations with individuals in the school community to understand the assets and challenges facing us. I found a clear need to develop culturally responsive practices to meet the specific needs of an international school in Taiwan. The school serves many local students who possess cross-cultural identities through their English-language instruction and American school education. At play are the dynamics of Western dominant culture and mores and the impact on community members when multiple historical and historical and contemporary perspectives may be unexamined by those who are most affected such as students, parents, and staff.

Community Learning Exchange (CLE) Axioms (Guajardo et al., 2016)
1. Learning and leadership are dynamic social processes. 2. Conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes. 3. The people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns. 4. Crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational process. 5. Hope and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities.

*Figure 3***.** Community learning exchange axioms anchored our work in the CPR group.

School leadership sits at the nexus of student experiences, teacher practices, and the school's values statements and strategic plan. School leaders are best situated to stimulate critical, institutional self-reflection on practices and then guide the use of those practices in the school. This study sought to build leadership skills and capacity through shared learning and purposeful interaction with leadership constituents to identify barriers and opportunities to school equity challenges as we work to achieve educational equity in an international school setting.

Through the research design, I proposed that the research questions would be best answered by examining school leadership development as the primary unit of analysis; however, though I determined the unit of analysis, the RQs were shaped by the group collectively. In the study design, I planned for ample time and space for us to set individual and collective goals as a leadership team in pursuit of equity-centered leadership. The team reflected on the process of leadership actions and adjusted goals within each level of the ecologies of knowing. Therefore, I gathered data from multiple sources and shared the analysis of the evidence with the CPR team for reflection and subsequent actions.

The overarching research question is: *How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices?* The specific research questions are:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders of equity?
2. To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' abilities to enact equity?

3. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices as equity leaders?

Action Research Cycles

Action researchers assume that many dynamic forces are at work in schools, such as the diversity of students and staff, competing initiatives, school structures, and historical considerations. Action research with an emphasis on activist action provides methods to gather information that can be used to improve practices. The data are then used to diagnose, design, and redesign the research as participants' perspectives and learnings evolve in small and large ways (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018; Spillane, 2013). I intended the research cycles in this study to explore the tension between student experiences and school practices at a Western school in Taiwan serving non-Western through culturally responsive leadership theory and actions.

The CPR team used the evidence in each PDSA cycle to think about what we learned after each step towards our goal of creating leadership plans for school improvement. A leadership support group created personal, internal, and collegial accountability, which was much more potent than traditional accountability measures such as checking boxes in an accreditation report. I list the project cycles in Table 3 using the PDSA format (Bryk et al., 2017; Schmoker, 1996).

Participants, Data Collection, and Analysis

In the discussion of the potential participants in the study, the data collection methods and processes, and the data analysis, I provide a rationale for the choice of participants, including the sampling process for the CPR team and other school community members. Next, I describe the data gathering in detail and how the data analysis provided for iterative cycles of inquiry.

Table 3

Project Activities: PDSA Cycles of Inquiry

PDSA Cycles of Inquiry	PLAN	DO	STUDY
PAR Cycle One Fall Semester 2021	● Establish the CPR Team. ● Identify CPR leadership practices. ● Use CRP as a part of all CPR team meetings. ● Choose specific CR practices to implement.	● Facilitate regular CPR Team meetings. ● Co-facilitate CLEs. ● Conduct 1:1 interview. ● Create implementation plans for CR practices. ● Conduct member checks.	● CPR meeting agendas and notes ● CLE artifacts ● Interviews ● Reflective memos ● Member checks
PAR Cycle Two Spring Semester 2022	ACT ● Continue all Cycle One Plans +. ● Co-analyze Cycle One evidence. ● Implement CR strategies.		

Note. Abbreviations: CPR = Co-Practitioner Research; CR = Culturally Responsive; CLE = Community Learning Exchange.

Identifying Participants

In this study, I invited primary participants to be a part of the study. I describe the composition of the participants and the process of sampling for the group. Then, I discuss the role of the CPR team.

Participants

The participants in the PAR are school leaders on the school administrative team. Each participant wanted to improve their culturally responsive leadership practices. I invited the four school leaders who work at the same school and share a professional relationship with me to be on the CPR team. They received detailed written and oral information regarding the purpose of the study and their roles. Each person who chose to participate signed consent forms and understood that they could terminate involvement in the study at any time without reprisal (see Appendix C). I gave the participants advanced information on the study aim of developing a shared understanding of culturally relevant practices and applying our learning to our individual and collective goals.

Sampling

The sample for this study is a small group of people who brought insight into the principles and practice of culturally responsive leadership and educational equity. Thus, this is a purposeful sampling process (Patton, 1990). Because the primary participants are like other school leaders in international schools, their experiences in the study could have broader implications for the applied concepts and ideas (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2018).

I selected the participants of the CPR team by approaching school leaders who could have a significant impact on policy and practice through their multiple opportunities to lead meetings and conversations with a diverse range of school community members. I am interested

in each leader's journey as a social justice educator. I asked each one if they desired to enter a leadership group and contribute their knowledge and skills. The criteria for selection for the CPR team were:

- Has a leadership role at the school
- Interested in culturally responsive leadership
- Willing to commit to regularly scheduled meeting times
- Desires to learn and implement CLE protocols and practices
- Willing to reflect

Co-Practitioner Researcher Group

I invited the school leadership team members to join the Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team. The team worked as a networked improvement community (Bryk et al., 2017) to identify key equity challenges and possible responses. I collected data from our experiences in the networked team. Each team member agreed to participate in the study and to deepen their culturally responsive leadership practices. The CPR team worked closely with me in the study; I shared the evidence with them, and they conducted member checks (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gerdes & Conn, 2001).

Data Collection

I used various data collection methods in the PAR study, including documents from CPR meetings, agendas and notes, CPR meeting artifacts (see Appendix E), interviews (see Appendix F), and Reflective memos. I used multiple methods of data collection so that I had two sources to triangulate the analysis including member checks and Reflective memos. Triangulation is a method for confirming the validity of the research through the convergence of perspectives from

a variety of persons and data sources to understand different dimensions of the same concepts. In addition, I engaged the CPR team in member checks (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Documents

Documents included meeting agendas. Meeting agendas are significant because I wanted to implement a standard plan with rituals and routines to model and deepen culturally responsive values.

CPR Team Meeting Artifacts

CPR team meeting artifacts consisted of any outputs from team meetings such as posters, post-its, and graphic organizers that document team brainstorms or discussion outcomes. Appendix F describes the data collection method for CLE artifacts.

Interviews

I conducted individual interviews with CPR members. I list the questions for these interviews in the Interview Protocol (see Appendix E). I transcribed interviews into a written format for coding.

Reflective Memos

As the lead researcher, I wrote regular Reflective memos; these served as a primary data source for analyzing my growth and development as a leader. I used the overarching research question, the sub-questions, and corresponding data sources as a consistent guide to anchor my reflective memo writing.

Data Analysis

I based coding on the desired outcomes of the study. I established initial codes and then moved toward subcodes or categories as I analyzed the data sources during and following Cycle One. As the data analysis proceeded, I used open coding to categorize, then developed emergent

themes and recognized specific findings (Saldaña, 2016). Finally, I conducted member checks to review evidence at the end of each cycle and ultimately created narratives of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The study data consisted of CRP team meeting agendas, meeting artifacts, interviews, and Reflective memos. My data analysis informed my ongoing decisions about the PAR process, and I analyzed data regularly while data collection was ongoing. I used "first cycle coding methods" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 67), which were best suited for an overview of data to determine patterns. I used eclectic coding in the first to the second cycle of data and analysis. For the second cycle, I used focused and pattern coding to identify recurring patterns and layers of meaning and to narrow and define my initial codes for refinement and categorizing from the first cycle (Saldaña, 2016). My contemplations and those of the CPR team via interviews and Reflective memos helped calibrate and guide the process as themes emerged within the study.

Study Considerations: Limitations, Validity, Confidentiality, and Ethics

All qualitative studies must attend to several key study considerations to ensure data collection and analysis consistency. In this section I address the study limitations, validity, confidentiality, and ethics.

Limitations

Limitations to this study included those typical of qualitative research and required my attention to specifying the conditions and processes used in the study (Saldaña, 2016). Local limitations included researcher bias, positionality, sample size, selection criteria, participant pool, and researcher proximity to the FoP. Much of the data I gathered was based on personal experience, reflections, and individual and group conclusions (Hale, 2008). Because participants were a relatively small group from a single school with narrow selection criteria for their

leadership roles, all had a close connection to the PAR work. Participants' opinions and judgments influenced the study as we strove to be more culturally responsive leaders. These factors can prevent generalizations, that is, the transfer of a study's findings to other settings where the circumstances may be similar.

Nevertheless, one could apply the processes to future studies. Processes included the protocols for information gathering and meeting facilitation, particularly on the strategies from community learning exchange protocols and conversations to answer the research questions. Qualitative researchers are concerned with valid processes more than content outcomes (Gerdes & Conn, 2001; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Quierós et al., 2017).

Validity

In this study of building leadership capacity among a peer group, internal and external validity resulted from persistent observation, triangulation, referential adequacy, member checks, and peer debriefing (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gerdes & Conn, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, a primary responsibility of the CPR group and their close-in participation and feedback was to provide validity to the study. In addition, truth results from the qualitative processes linked to the goals of action research (Herr & Anderson, 2015). Therefore, one goal of the project was to build and create trustworthy evidence.

Internal Validity

In activist action research, the primary criterion of validity is usefulness to the participants (Hale, 2008, 2017). The study aimed to build leadership capacity for the CPR team so that their professional practices are grounded in culturally relevant theory and actions. However, there were threats to internal validity that the CPR team needed to consider. For example, one threat was my own bias as a researcher and my desire for the study to show results.

Another threat was maturation: how could I be sure that the findings were result of the study rather than a coincidence of the team working together as colleagues in a school? A final threat was history: I had to consider the events of the school year and their influence on participants' thinking such as COVID challenges or other specific events that might impact participants' performance. By using Reflective memos and completing member checks with participants, I balanced the internal validity concerns with multiple sources of evidence. By consistently reflecting on my perspective and ontology and analyzing the evidence using well-structured coding practices, I could determine if our applications of culturally responsive practices were feasible (Saldaña, 2016).

The second way I monitored validity was to triangulate evidence with multiple sources that converge to substantiate the evidence or analysis by coding Reflective memos (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Triangulation involves using multiple data sources and methods to confirm emerging findings (Merriam, 1998).

To enhance internal validity, I used member checks, asked colleagues to comment on findings as they emerged, involved participants in all phases of the research from conceptualizing to data analysis, clarified the researchers' world views and biases, and triangulated the data we used.

External Validity

External validity can be established when researchers use methods of collecting and analyzing data that are consistent and transferable. While it is uncertain to what extent the study may add to the general knowledge base regarding a new theory, the processes I used in the study, including participatory action research bolstered by improvement science and community learning exchange processes, are transferable to other contexts (Guba, 1981). Because of the

nature of action research, a limitation is that I may not be able to generalize about the specifics of the project/study to another context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, by the conclusion of the dissertation, our work had provided evidence to sustain a new theoretical framework that could support other studies in similar situations (Guba, 1981).

Trustworthiness of Evidence

In qualitative research like this project, I established trustworthiness with validity through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I ensured credibility via multiple sources, the sampling of school leaders and members of the school community, and consistency thorough data coding. I was able to show transferability in that the research findings may apply to other international schools or as a resource for school leaders elsewhere. Our findings in response to the research questions were consistent and therefore satisfied the condition of dependability. Confirmability rested upon my ability to illustrate that those findings are unimpeded by my own bias and are driven by the experiences and narratives of the respondents in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The following actions in the PAR methodology enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the evidence:

> With greater specificity, the techniques used to establish the credibility of the research and maintain academic and scholarly rigor are collectively assimilated to establish trustworthiness—in other words, do the findings represent "truth" as it occurred for the participants and in their context? These techniques [include]:
>
> Prolonged engagement—the researcher is actively involved in the setting and with the participants for an extended time.

Persistent observation—the researcher utilizes a direct and probing mode of inquiry, over time, to "dig deeper" and uncover something yet unknown.

Triangulation—the researcher attempts to determine if common findings are coming from different sources, much like radio signals can be used to determine geographical coordinates by the points at which they cross.

Referential adequacy—the researcher utilizes an extensive field notebook and logs to document methodological decisions and to make notes of personal thoughts or reflections that might occur concerning the data.

Member checking—the researcher allows the participants an opportunity to clarify their comments, checking for understanding as if the researcher is asking, "Did I get this right when you said...?" or "What I think I heard you say was .....

Peer debriefing—the researcher is "debriefed" by a third party who is familiar with the research but not directly involved. The debriefing is a means for the researcher to "stay focused" and to cross-check aspects of data concerning the evolution of the grounded theory" (Gerdes & Conn, 2001, pp. 186–87).

Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

Three areas of confidentiality and ethical considerations are positionalities of the researcher, researcher bias, and data collection processes. I showed awareness of my role as an authority in the school. Because participants may have felt pressured to participate in the project, I was careful to ensure informed consent without obligation and allowed participants to terminate participation at any time.

I took multiple safeguards against researcher bias in this study. The controls for possible bias I used were member checks, peer review of data, memoing, and disclosing biases. The

security of the collected data and the confidentiality of the participants were of the utmost importance. I took precautions to protect the data and the participants from contamination. I completed The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) certification (see Appendix A), and I have a letter from the school regarding approval to conduct the research. Both are in the appendix of this chapter (see Appendix B).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the research design and methodology for this PAR study to respond to the overarching research question: "How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices?" The CPR team included members of the administrative team at the American International School in Southern Taiwan (AISST). In the PAR, I intended to create a professional learning environment for the team to learn about and apply culturally relevant leadership theories and practices. The study included two cycles of inquiry, one each in the fall and spring semesters of the 2021–2022 school year. I collected data through multiple qualitative methods: meeting agendas, notes and artifacts, interviews with the CPR team, and Reflective memos. I analyzed data on an ongoing basis to help inform next steps in the study and to help each leader identify equity challenges in their work at the school and develop possible solutions. CPR members engaged in member checks to determine the trustworthiness of the data. I ensured validity through the triangulation of evidence. This study strictly maintained individual confidentiality and data security. I followed IRB guidelines and checked throughout the project. In Chapter 4, I analyzed data to determine preliminary categories, and in Chapter 5, I evaluate themes and present findings.

CHAPTER 4: PAR CYCLE ONE

In PAR Cycle One, I utilized participatory action research (PAR) methods to examine the focus of practice (FOP): building leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices in an international school. The setting for the study was an international school in Taiwan, which mainly serves local Taiwanese students. The identity-diverse leadership team faced tensions between neo-liberal and post-colonial forces in a school that relies on the Western educational system. Thus, we had to deeply consider the multiple implications of this cultural dynamic for students and staff. My aim was to support school leaders in developing leadership practices for educational equity in an international school context. To this end, I designed and implemented regular team meetings for school leaders using facilitation strategies from Community Learning Exchange axioms and protocols (Guajardo et al., 2016). I used literature and frameworks using culturally responsive educational theory and practices (Hammond, 2015; Khalifa, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995) to support our learning.

The overarching research question is: How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices for educational equity? The research sub-questions are:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders for equity?
2. To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' abilities to enact educational equity?
3. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices as equity leaders?

I anticipated how the data collection might evolve the research questions as part of the inquiry-action-reflection process embedded in participatory action research (Kemmis et al., 2016a).

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the place and people in the PAR study and discuss how I established a Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team. Next, I share the Cycle One process, the evidence, and artifacts from the activities in which we engaged, and the initial approach for coding the data. Then, I analyze the data and the categories that emerged. Finally, I explain how the pre-study activities informed my data collection cycle and the next steps for the study.

PAR Context

The study takes place at the American International School in Southern Taiwan (AISST), a private, non-profit pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 school with 800 students enrolled. Two years before the start of the PAR study, the elementary school principal and I became new administrators at AISST. As a result of working together on a shared elementary, middle, and high school campus with shared staff and programs, along with a common interest in supporting all students, we took an inventory of policy and practices and their influence on student achievement. We saw a need to evaluate curriculum development and delivery and programmatic approaches, such as how the school supported English language learners and students with cognitive disabilities. With the high school principal and Head of School at that time, we reviewed and revised policies and structures and considered the needs of students, staff, and families. We discussed and recognized the nuanced tension that exists when mostly local, non-English-speaking students attend an "American" school with an English curriculum and Western cultural and institutional norms and values.

Conditions Preceding the Formation of the CPR Team

The conditions that existed before the creation of a support group for the development of culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL) included current AISST school leaders' examination and reflection about various school policies and practices, an interest in CRSL from the potential team members, and input and feedback on their experiences in the school from stakeholders in the school community. The previous and current school heads supported the study and its potential outcomes.

Before the official formation of the CPR team in Fall 2021, each leader had worked together as part of the school's hiring process in Spring 2021. Although we were not using the terminology of CRSL at that time, the elementary principal and I often discussed educational equity and our attempts to understand and respond appropriately to our school's distinct cultural, linguistic, and institutional realities. As new members joined the school's leadership team from within and outside the school community, I recognized a philosophical alignment with team members and an opportunity to bring together a group interested in leadership growth and reflection.

In the summer of 2021, the Head of School, the high school principal, and the curriculum coordinator left AISST and were replaced. The elementary school principal and I were involved in hiring the new high school principal and curriculum coordinator. We co-wrote interview questions and often discussed our desire to achieve an equity-centered approach to the hiring process. In the past there had been a lack of coherence in hiring among the leadership team as each principal did their hiring in relative isolation without coordinated consideration of candidate diversity or discussion of desired candidates' mindsets or experience. Other staff members on the hiring committees were interested in emphasizing diversity throughout the process. We added a

new staff leadership position to coordinate service learning and internships. The candidate we hired was a graduate of the school with a strong personal connection to the student experience at the school described in the focus of practice. After I explained the FoP (Focus of Practice) and the research questions to the returning elementary school principal, the new high school principal, curriculum coordinator, and service-learning coordinator, all were interested and joined the CPR team.

Many colleagues, students, alumni, and families at AISST influenced my interest in studying CRSL. I analyzed the FoP assets and challenges in Chapter 1 and found a collective willingness to critically examine institutional practices to address the needs of our students. For example, the elementary school principal and I co-chaired our school's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) committee. The group formed as a subcommittee of our Child Protection Committee, which dealt with issues of safety and legal procedures, and began to include conversations on student identity, ethnicity, nationality, sense of belonging, gender identity, and sexuality. Given our consensus that honoring student identity is essential to student well-being, we asked, "What is the problem we are trying to solve, and whom do we believe we are in service to?"

In Spring 2021, members of the DEIJ committee organized a student panel on gender identity and belonging at a school-wide faculty meeting. The discussion raised deeply emotional issues for students about their experiences around gender identity, sexism, and harassment. The DEIJ committee then facilitated small-group follow-up conversations between students and adults to better understand the students' perspectives. We learned that we could co-construct solutions with students by listening and working alongside them. We developed a more precise and purposeful way of following up with student complaints in the future and generated support

for forming a student led DEIJ club to partner with the adult committee. Thus, conditions at AISST for CRSL were optimum. Nevertheless, staff turnover and the many competing initiatives in the various schools meant that we needed vision, coherence, and a shared understanding of purpose to sustain this work.

The previous and current school heads were supportive of the PAR direction and provided explicit permission for the study. Independent of the study, both were willing to reflect on school practices and examine school governance with an equity lens. In the case of an international school, that meant a willingness to determine who in the school community may be struggling and how policy and practice might empower or unintentionally harm students, staff, or parents. Both heads had worked with the school's governing board to increase resources to support students and reflect on more equitable practices. In Fall 2021, the new Head of School funded two separate professional learning sessions for the leadership team, one session with a local consultant who coaches foreign businesses on Taiwanese culture and another with Shane Safir (Safir & Dugan, 2021) on "warm demander" pedagogy and ideas from her book, *Street Data*. The willingness of a head of school to better understand the community they serve is a foundational aspect of CRSL (Khalifa, 2018) and was further evidence of support for the study.

Forming the Co-Practitioner Researcher Team

I started the co-practitioner researcher (CPR) team in the early fall of 2021 by extending invitations to possible collaborators. The four people I asked to participate were in school leadership roles, and three were members of the senior leadership team. The team included the elementary and high school principals, the school-wide curriculum coordinator, and the internship/community service coordinator. I had worked closely with three of the four members during the two years before the group's formation with the fourth joining the school for the Fall

2021 term. The elementary school principal and I previously had discussed on many occasions the idea of equitable student outcomes in an international school setting, how we identify and support struggling students, and what factors cause them to struggle.

Another invitee was new to her leadership role as school-wide curriculum coordinator, but I had supervised her for two years as a middle school science teacher. The internship/community service coordinator was new to her position, but I had previously known her as a school graduate and substitute teacher. The final member was the new high school principal, hired in the spring of 2021, whom I came to know through the job interview process.

I felt comfortable inviting each member because I knew them through our working relationships in leadership positions at the school, which showed me that each of them was interested in educational equity issues. I had engaged in many conversations with each potential member on educational philosophy and school policies and practices related to the unique nature of our school and on how to support all students in academic achievement. Each participated in meetings I facilitated and had direct experience with my leadership practices. Each of them agreed to join the CPR team in August 2021. At that time, I reviewed the expectations and agreements for the study and explained that they could decide to leave the study at any time.

In the introductions that follow, I mention the sexual orientation of two participants with their permission. Both members stated that being gay and "out" to the school community impacted their experience as educator leaders due to the historical marginalization of gay people throughout the world.

Co-Practitioner Researcher Team Members

The CPR team comprised school leaders at AISST, including the high school and elementary school principals, the curriculum coordinator, and the internship/community service

coordinator. Each brought unique experiences to their current roles and an interest in culturally responsive leadership.

Participant JC was the elementary school principal at AISST. He is a white, gay man in his 40s from Long Island, New York, in the United States. After his experience in New York public schools, he has been an international schoolteacher and administrator for more than 15 years and worked in the Netherlands, Kenya, and now Taiwan. He was in his third year at AISST at the time of this study and has not renewed his contract for 2022–23. Because he is married, and his spouse lives in Europe, travel challenges that arose during COVID led him to seek job opportunities closer to his spouse.

In his school experience, JC was bullied for being gay although he was not openly gay until college. As a result, he has tremendous passion and empathy for those who experience difficulties in school. In his first two years at AISST, he led significant equity-centered initiatives: he built a published curriculum in the elementary school (where there had been none previously), developed a program for students with cognitive disabilities and for learning support in general, and led the development of a child protection policy for the school.

Participant KC was the high school principal at AISST. She is an African American gay woman in her 30s from the San Francisco Bay area in California. KC was a teacher in Atlanta, Georgia, before working for the Ministry of Education in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, for the last few years. She attended Spelman College for her undergraduate degree and credits her experience at an all-female, historically Black college as critical to her leadership for equity development. She attended the Harvard Graduate School of Education for her master's degree. She is in her first year at AISST. She spent considerable time initially meeting with students to understand the school from their perspectives. She worked with the leadership team on

outstanding issues raised during a recent International Baccalaureate (IB) school compliance report to bring the school into alignment with IB expectations for curriculum development and assessment. KC is engaged, and her partner has worked as a substitute at AISST.

Participant TW moved from a substitute teaching position at the school to a new position as of the 2021–22 school year, Service Learning and Internship Coordinator. TW is a Taiwanese female in her 20s and a graduate of the school. She is bilingual and biliterate in Chinese and English. She attended Trinity College in Connecticut and had planned to participate in a graduate program for school counseling at New York University when COVID brought her back to Taiwan. During the 2020–21 school year, she worked as a substitute teacher and helped coordinate the school's student internship program. TW's experiences and openness provided her colleagues with greater understanding of the native Taiwanese experience. In November 2020, TW helped organize a meeting with recent AISST alumni so I might better understand the advantages and challenges of an American international education for Taiwanese students. TW shares a strong affinity with our current students through her shared ethnicity, language, culture, the shared experience of attending the school, and having long term personal relationships with many students, families, and staff members. TW has articulated the effect of Western culture on our non-white and local students in our school. Her job description was to identify and create community service opportunities for students and manage and facilitate the school's internship program.

Participant SB was the Curriculum Coordinator at AISST. She is a straight, white woman in her 30s. Her husband is also a teacher at AISST. She has two young children, and the oldest attends kindergarten at the school. She was in her third year at AISST at the start of this study and in her first year in the Curriculum Coordinator role. Her prior role was as a middle school

science teacher. Before coming to Taiwan, she and her husband worked in Korea, and she worked in public schools in Virginia before moving abroad. In the Curriculum Coordinator role, SB was responsible for documentation and submission of the school's compliance and accreditation reports for IB and other accreditations while ensuring that school documentation for accreditations reflect the contributions of staff, students, and families. Much of the work on compliance stems from an unrealized, multi-year commitment to publishing a school-wide curriculum for each grade level and academic subject area. SB's leadership has resulted in considerable progress in this area, and as of the Spring 2022 semester, IB validated the school's program for renewed accreditation (see Table 4, CPR team members).

PAR Cycle One Process

After Institutional Review Board approval in Fall 2021, I held individual interviews with each CPR team member and facilitated two CPR team meetings. The goal for these activities was to build trust between myself as the lead researcher and the CPR team members and to begin a process of calibrating terms and concepts. I hoped that team members could develop common equity-centered language and concepts for our continued work together in support of research questions #1 and #2. In this section, I describe the PAR group activities and how the activities connect to the research questions, CLE axioms, and protocols.

Each interview was in-person. I used the Google Voice feature in Google Docs to record a transcript of each conversation. I scheduled one interview with each CPR team member in September 2021 to learn more about each leader's educational background and school experiences. The goal was for each CPR member to practice personal narratives and document their recollections of their schooling experiences. The resulting artifacts for coding were the interview transcripts.

Table 4

CPR Team Members

CPR Team Member	Role	Years at AISST in Fall 2021	Descriptors
JC	Elementary School Principal	2	• U.S. Citizen • Male, white, gay • Former music teacher and assistant principal, U.S. public and international schools, 17 years • Advocate for struggling students
KC	High School Principal	First year	• U.S. Citizen • Female, African-American, gay • Former teacher and administrator, 10 years • Striving to be a leader for equity
TW	Service Learning and Internship Coordinator	1	• Taiwan Citizen • Female, Taiwanese • Alumnus of AISST, attended college in the US, substitute teacher, enrolled in a teaching credential program, first year in role • Shares strong affinity with AISST students
SB	Curriculum Coordinator, school-wide	2	• U.S. Citizen • Female, white • First year in coordinator role after two years as science teacher at AISST, 11 years, US public and international schools • Striving to create the best possible learning experience for students

I had multiple aims for the CPR team meetings: to develop a shared understanding of equity leadership and CRP; to model CRP for team members; and to design activities that could serve as data collection for the research questions. To achieve these outcomes, I used specific strategies including meeting time/location, deliberate agenda design, and mechanics that would ensure the protocols for artifact creation/data collection.

The CPR team agreed that meetings would be held on Sunday afternoons (non-workdays) and at a team member's apartment off campus. For each meeting, I prepared a homemade lunch. My rationale for the time, location, and food was to build trust among team members. I hoped to create a more intimate setting for team members to ensure privacy, to minimize distractions, and to create a relaxed atmosphere for learning and conversation.

To guide the meetings, I used an agenda template supplied by the East Carolina University Doctoral program (Appendix CPR Team Agenda). The template I used for all CPR team meetings was the same throughout the data collection process. Each agenda contains three parts: a framing section, an activities section, and a closing section. I will discuss each of the parts of the agendas and how the parts help to achieve the meeting aims in the next section. These elements were essential to ensure focus and completion of meeting goals within the allotted time. The meeting's mechanics included protocols and activities designed to model CRP and create artifacts for my data collection and analysis after the meetings. CLE protocols were resources for facilitating meeting activities like how we interacted with texts, structured ways of having conversations.

CPR team meetings were intentionally held off campus to give participants the space to reflect on equity concepts, cultural contexts, and leadership experiences. The stated aims of the meetings were to develop a shared understanding of equity leadership and how to apply it to our

work. For the initial CPR team meetings in the fall of 2021, I developed the agendas using CLE axioms, protocols, and other resources (Guajardo et al., 2016). Each agenda contained five activities to achieve meeting objectives and build trust among team members, including methods for collecting data to support the PAR research questions. I used the agendas to model culturally responsive pedagogy and CLE protocols. In addition, I wanted to practice how the CPR team meetings adhered to CLE axioms and protocols.

CPR Team Meetings Agenda Framing

The purpose of agenda framing is to provide clear goals and outcomes to the participants and to set values for how members may expect to engage with each other for the duration of the time together (Guajardo et al., 2016). The frame is most often stated verbally by the facilitator at the start of the meeting so that participants hear the purpose of the gathering, usually grounded in the concept of educational equity. Agenda framing in an educational setting is an example of CRP in that participants know what to expect from the activity and why it is important (see Table 5 for agenda format).

I began each meeting with the framing section and included meeting norms, a written meeting objective, and a dynamic mindfulness activity. As part of the framing, I listed the CLE axioms (Guajardo et al., 2016) described above because CLE axioms and protocols would be a frequent point of reference for the CPR Team throughout the project. I read the agreements and the CLE axioms aloud and asked if there were any questions or comments. We used an agenda template in our school meetings that includes specific outcomes and norms so that the CPR team members could become familiar with the practice of creating meeting frames.

The final agenda framing activity is an exercise in dynamic mindfulness. “Dynamic mindfulness is an evidence-based, trauma-informed program that strengthens stress resilience

Table 5

CPR Team Meeting Agenda Format

Item	Purpose	Components
Framing	• To provide clarity of objectives • To establish relational expectations and • inspire team members about the meeting's equity-centered outcomes • To prepare mentally and physically for the meetings	• Norms • Community Learning Exchange Axioms • Written Objectives • Dynamic Mindfulness
Activities	• To support members in active learning on concepts • To build community by working and sharing ideas and responses together	• Community Learning Exchange Protocols • Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Strategies • Provocative Inputs and Conceptual Frameworks
Closing	• To participate in rituals that help members reflect on learning and bring closure to the meeting space	• Appreciations • Sharing next steps

and social-emotional learning. Mindful action, breathing, and centering are its key elements" ("Shartresa Nixon - UFSA Educator/Mentor Teacher/AVID Site Coordinator ..."). Dynamic mindfulness supports culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) by creating a mental pause and drawing attention to one's thoughts and actions in preparation for learning. I formed mindfulness questions that I hoped would help team members become acquainted with each other's needs (see Appendix H).

CPR Team Meetings Agenda: Activities

I deliberately designed each meeting activity based on the research questions and as a primary source for data collection. During the activities section of the CPR team agendas, I asked members to complete a task or assignment in which team members would react to a reading or conceptual framework that I had selected. The result was artifacts that contained text and images created by team members. For guidance in designing activities, I used CLE-style protocols to encourage active participation from team members. For example, CLE protocols often include personal narrative strategies so that participants make connections between the inputs (literature or frameworks) and their experiences. When participants share individual stories, listeners feel more empathy and trust in a learning setting, especially when voluntary participation is guided by meeting norms (Guajardo et al., 2016). I then asked team members to process information in several ways to connect to concepts and to each other using CLE protocols to guide the interactions resulting in artifacts created by the team and discussion and reflection by team members.

For example, one activity I facilitated using CLE-style protocols was entitled "Equity Stances," which is published by the School Reform Initiative. It is a scripted exercise in which participants "engage in an activity to examine some of the tough questions that arise when

educators act to address equity in student learning but that are often obscured by vague language about equity" (Newlin, 2021). I provided each member with a document from the script that defines, explains, and provides examples of five positions on educational equity. The directions tell each member to read the stances and choose one most representative of their views of equity. Members read and wrote notes in response to each stance and why they agreed or disagreed with aspects of each perspective. I allotted 20 minutes for reading and writing, then facilitated a discussion in which each member shared their poster and stance and received feedback or questions. Later, I coded the posters and the feedback members had for each other on post-its. Figure 4 is an example of a CPR meeting activity.

CPR Team Agendas: Closing

Closing activities serve to summarize meeting objectives, to end the meetings and to leave participants feeling positive and connected (see Appendix H) A hallmark of culturally responsive practices is intentional community building throughout learning activities. To this end, we concluded with a talking circle for expressions of gratitude, appreciation, affirmations, or recognitions. Once I gave the prompt, member-volunteers shared a gratitude statement. I used the closing to thank participants and remind the team of the next meeting dates. The closing and framing parts of the meeting serve to inform members that they are participating in a distinct space and that space will have its own unique culture, created by me, and developed by their participation.

After each CPR team meeting, I completed a Reflective memo to consider what I might do differently in the next meeting and provide evidence of my leadership journey that I could code and analyze later. Reflective memos served as a journal to capture my thoughts,

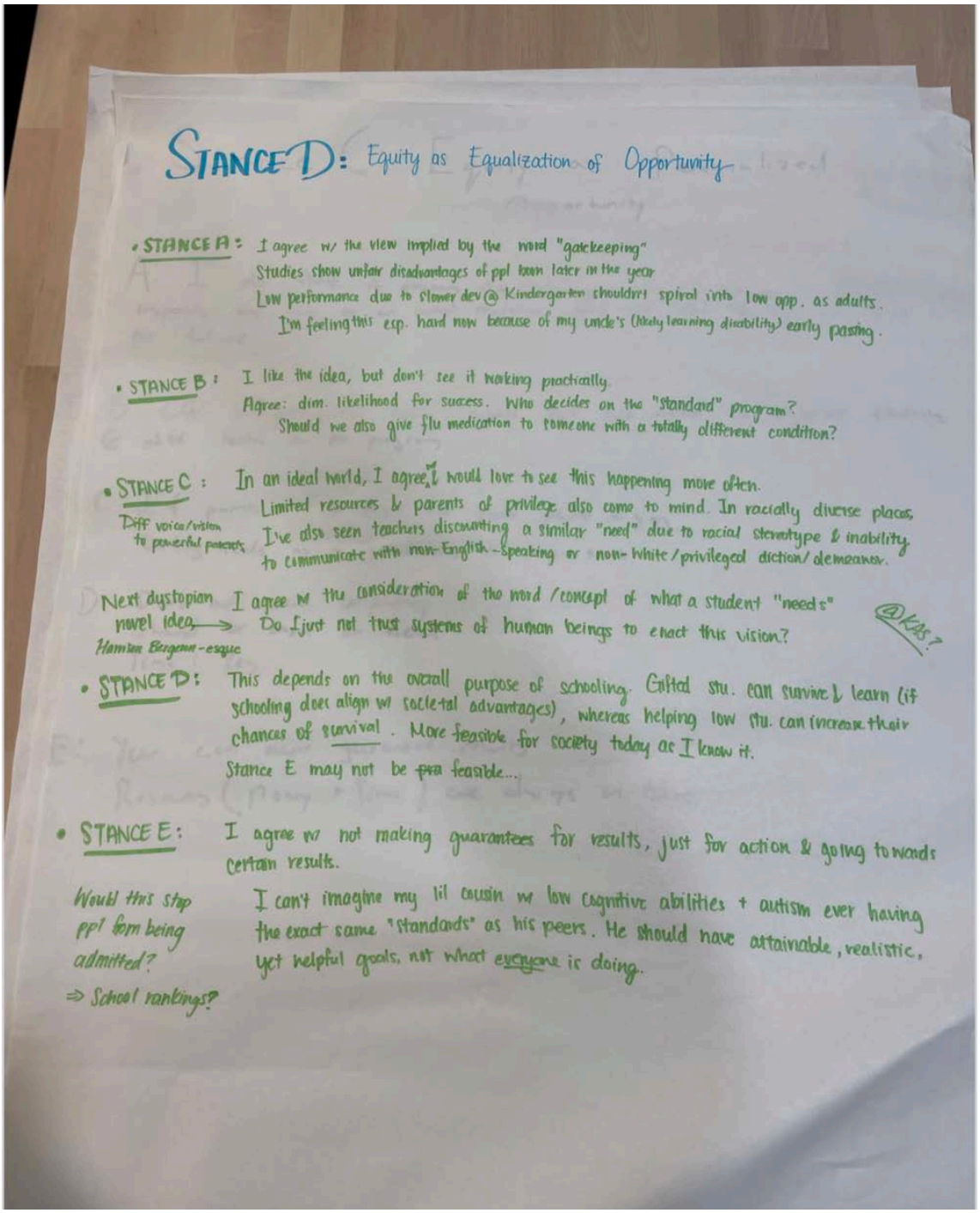


Figure 4. Sample CPR team activity.

observations, and contemplations as a researcher-practitioner through the Cycle One process. I wrote reflective memos before and after team meetings. After the first meeting, I emailed the CPR Team and asked members to reflect. I analyzed the evidence to determine leadership growth. Table 4 shows an outline of the CPR team meeting agenda along with the purpose and examples of each agenda item.

Data Collection and Analysis: Coding and Developing a Codebook

I examined various data types throughout PAR Cycle One, including the artifacts resulting from the initial interviews, CPR team meetings, and the CLE protocols described in the activities in the previous section. I use the reflective memo process to develop the PAR and research questions. I collected data using Atlas.ti software. Depending on the activity, I used different coding methods, relying primarily on open coding (Saldaña, 2016). I built an initial codebook and then consolidated and linked codes as I continued and referred to the research questions throughout the Cycle One process (see Table 6).

Features in Atlas.ti helped me keep documents organized and extract specific quotes for coding later. For the CPR team meeting artifacts in PAR Cycle One, we completed most hard-copy activities during the meeting times. I took photos of those artifacts and saved them as documents in Atlas.ti.

I used various coding methods based on Saldaña's (2016) approach to analyzing qualitative data. First, I pre-coded, looking for participant quotes and passages that stood out to me for any reason and highlighting the passages in Atlas.ti. I then copied and pasted the highlighted quotes to organize quotes into codes and subcodes. The initial coding in the first cycle included "verbatim," "descriptive codes," and some "In Vivo codes." In the second coding

Table 6

Cycle One Emergent Categories, Subcategories, and Codes

Categories	Subcategories (Frequency)	Codes (Frequency)	Subcodes (Frequency)
Leaders' Past Experiences	1. Memories (18)	1a. Fond (12)	Primary years (1)
			Reading (4)
			Nice teachers (2)
			Well-rounded (4)
			Funny (1)
		1b. Challenging (6)	Physical punishment (2)
			Misfit (2)
			Family challenges (1)
			Traditional education (1)
	2.Social/Cultural (18)	2a. Family (5)	Fight mechanism (1)
			Mindsets from family (4)
		2b. Race/Ethnicity (4)	White as superior/non-white as inferior (1)
			White teachers, non-white students (1)
			Exposure to diversity (1)
			Internalized racism (1)
		2c. Socialization (8)	Giving 100% (1)
			Age (1)
			Insecurity (1)
			Alternative school (1)
			Teacher influence (1)
			Dread (2)
			School as insular (1)
	3.Connecting past to present (16)	3a. Values (8)	
		3b. Relationships with students (8)	
	4.Key moments (in leadership development) (31)	4a. Influential people (7)	
		4b. Position (19)	
		4c. Event (5	

Table 6 (continued)

Categories	Subcategories (Frequency)	Codes (Frequency)	Subcodes (Frequency)
Conversations about Equity	1.Equity aspirations (49)	1a. Equity stance (20)	
		1b. CRSL framework responses (7)	
		1c. Equity warrior (12)	
	2.Critical self-examination (13)	2a. Perpetuating inequity (1)	
		2b. Leadership vision (4)	
		2c. Moving towards change (2)	
		2d. Low performing students (1)	
		2e. Identity influences leadership (2)	
		2f. Moving towards change (3)	
		2g. Making connections (1)	
	3.Supportive Learning (12)	3a. Power to influence (2)	
		3b. Being part of a community (5)	
		3c. Vulnerability (3)	
		3d. Affirming (2)	

cycle, I reviewed my initial codes; then, I sorted and pulled ideas through "pattern coding," renaming the codes and categories through clustering related data.

Emergent Categories

I collected evidence from the team through interviews, our first two CPR team meeting artifacts and discussions, and my reflections as a researcher-practitioner. From the coding and analysis of data, two categories emerged: leaders' past experiences and conversations about equity. These categories aligned with research questions #1 and #2. I hoped to explore each participant's leadership journey and share various inputs to help the CPR team develop a shared understanding of educational equity and culturally responsive theory and practice. As both a participant and the lead researcher, I consistently considered the individual data sets and the entirety of data to evaluate what categories emerged.

Leaders' Past Experiences

The evidence from PAR Cycle One demonstrated that participants' past experiences significantly influenced how they see themselves as leaders and how they developed their leadership philosophies. I grouped the codes connected to past experiences into the subcategories of (1) school memories, (2) social/cultural aspects, (3) connecting past and present, and (4) key leadership moments. I show the frequency of codes within the subcategories for the category "Leaders' Past Experiences" in Figure 5.

School Memories

Participants shared distinct fond or challenging memories from their school experiences that stood out as influential or representative of general memories of schooling (frequency of 18/83 instances). All members had fond memories of learning at an early age.

For example, KC shared:

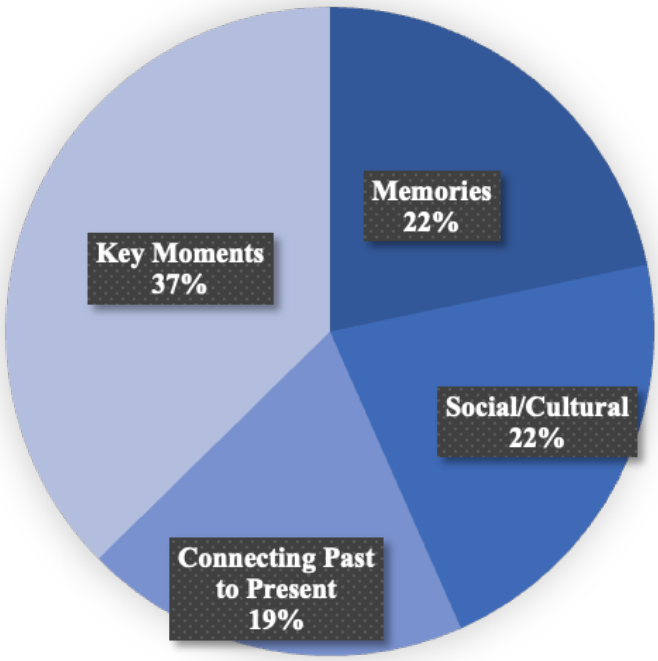


Figure 5. Frequency of codes within the subcategories for the category "Leaders' Past Experiences".

> I also remember being taught how to read. I remember the teacher going through letters and teaching us how to figure out what words say. I can't remember the exact words, but I remember seeing pictures and words in learning how to read in this kind of dark classroom. I think as a student I enjoyed school, and that was one of the things I was actually good at. (KC, interview, September 24, 2021)

In this case, a distinct memory of learning to read led to a sense that KC enjoyed and was successful in school.

Conversely, in six instances individuals' challenging memories significantly influenced their feelings about school. TW recalled an early incident in which teachers in her local Taiwan public school used physical punishment: "They used the 'hand of love' to hit people. I was hit three times in one day for forgetting homework, not finishing lunch, and can't recall the third reason." TW shared that she felt she wasn't "meant" to be in local schools and was far better suited for an international school environment (interview, September 12, 2021).

Social/Cultural

Participants' reflections of the social and cultural influences of education showed awareness of how identity and experience are interwoven for team members. Examples of social and cultural influences included details like family characteristics, race and ethnicity, gender, and understanding of diversity. Participant JC talked about being from New York: "My New York style is often a strength and a liability all at the same time; I have a very strong … fight mechanism, and if I feel like you're coming for me, I want to come back (at you)" (interview, September 4, 2021). Participant TW reflected on her international school experience: "I felt like I was expected to look up to American culture and English and white people because of the nature

of the American school" (interview, September 12, 2021). TW's perspective as the sole Taiwanese team member was unique as the other expatriate team members were seeking to understand local values and culture. The data clarified that the social and cultural aspects of schooling are significant to academic experience.

Connecting Past to Present

The CPR team members saw the influences of their educational experiences on their practices as classroom teachers or leaders. Three participants are former teachers; the fourth is earning a teaching credential, and all are currently in leadership positions. Participant quotes showed the development of their values and their reflections on their relationships to students' experiences. SB expressed a commitment "to live in fascination, not in judgment," (interview, September 16, 2021) when she was asked about her mindset towards her students. Another leader stated, "Giving students the best experience in the classroom is something I highly value, and… I want that to come through my work." I interpreted these statements as evidence that their values had developed through the socialization of schooling.

One quote by JC is illustrative of the values learned through experiences:

> I started becoming a teacher, and a good friend of mine said, you know, if the student hasn't learned, the teacher hasn't taught, and that really resonated with me. So, I've always taught a lesson, and if it weren't successful, I would reflect on it, like what did I do, and it was always about pedagogy. I was always thinking about like student pedagogy and then as I got more into teaching and item? was more into leadership, I realized it was more of my lack of skills and building relationships, and that was hard to own (JC, interview, September 4, 2021).

The participants' discussions about their experiences stimulated thoughts of the type of leader each wants to become.

Key Leadership Moments

In multiple instances, participants interpreted their leadership journeys through critical moments in their lives. Frequently, participants named moments related to a particular position, certain people, or a specific event. Examples were participants' first leadership roles in summer camps, being president of the Black Student Union, or being a student council member. There were 19 instances in participants' narratives to support the idea that youth leadership opportunities for members led to leadership roles as adults. Team members listed more recent positions, such as their first principalship. Participants referenced numerous people—mentors, spouses, and friends—as components in their leadership development. Finally, in five instances participants pointed to single events such as a cancer diagnosis, professional training, and a school change as noteworthy. At this time in the research, I could not make inferences about the significance of these critical moments, but I made note to collect data that could reveal more nuances about the participants' leadership journeys.

Conversations about Equity

PAR Cycle One evidence demonstrated the collective learning of the CPR team and the work of building an understanding of educational equity, equity leadership, and culturally responsive theory and practice. Participants reflected on their leadership practice and applied their learning to their contexts. Conversations about equity emerged as a central idea in this category. I grouped the codes I developed into three subcategories: (1) equity aspirations, (2) critical self-examination, and (3) supportive learning. I collected this data from the first two CPR team meetings and the ensuing artifacts and member reflections. I kept a journal of Reflective

memos to inform my coding process and my process as a practitioner-researcher. The evidence illustrates the efforts of the CPR team to find a common language and develop individual values for serving all students. Figure 6 represents the frequency of codes in this category.

Equity Aspirations

The CPR team generated 49 comments of 74 in this category that I interpreted as evidence of equity aspirations from inputs I provided in two CPR meetings. By using these activities, we began to create a shared language for equitable practices. I organized participants' responses based on the input known as "equity stances," (Newlin, 2021) a culturally responsive leadership framework (Khalifa et al., 2018), and what it means to be an "equity warrior" (Leverett, 2002).

In the "equity stance" document, four of five participants identified "equity as equalization as opportunity" as most aligned with their understanding of equity. Participant TW commented, "This depends on the purpose of schooling. Gifted students can survive and learn (if schooling does align with societal advantages) whereas helping low-income students can increase their chances of survival. More feasible for society today as I know it" (CPR meeting, October 17, 2021). In 14 additional instances, participants analyzed and responded to positions in the same document and argued their perspectives. I collected quotes from a poster each participant created. I also directed members to consider and write arguments against each stance as well. For example, SB stated, "Dependency can be designed into a school system, yes. But so can independence. Students can be taught how to be independent learners. Fair is not everyone gets the same thing. Fair is everyone gets what they need to sustain their own success.

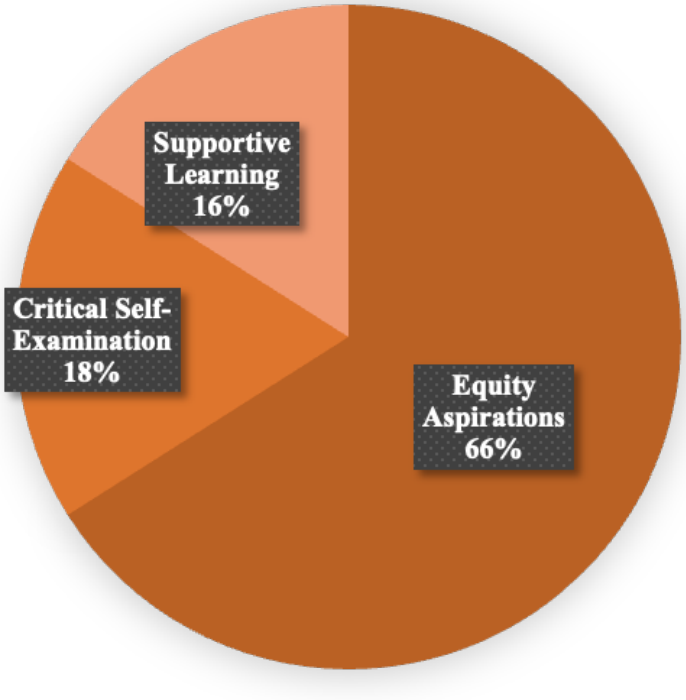


Figure 6. Frequency of codes for the category "conversations about equity".

Unlimited time requires more spaces and resources that schools may have in short supply. Community partnerships can benefit students that need more time after an appropriate extension" (CPR meeting, October 17, 2021).

I provided team members with a published CRSL framework for culturally responsive leadership (Khalifa et al., 2018), and I instructed participants to highlight areas of their strengths and areas of growth. I selected the CRSL framework to provide some common vocabulary. I designed the activity to see if there were patterns in how the CPR team thought and felt about their leadership. Patterns did emerge: Three of five participants identified "develops culturally responsive teachers" as an area of strength or focus in their leadership practice. Areas of growth were varied and depended on the person. These differences were meaningful for the collective learning of the group when each member explained their rationale for their choices to the team. For example, as a white woman and the curriculum coordinator at the school, SB listed growth areas that aligned with her leadership identity; thus I coded as CRSL growth: Challenges Whiteness and hegemonic epistemologies in school (Theoharis & Haddix, 2011); using equity audits to measure student inclusiveness, policy, and practice (Skrla et al., 2004); using school data to discover and track disparities in academic and disciplinary trends (Skiba et al., 2002; Skrla et al., 2004; Theoharis, 2007); acknowledges, values, and uses Indigenous cultural and social capital of students" (Khalifa, 2010). In addition to sharing, members asked follow-up questions or offered feedback.

In another CPR team meeting activity, I asked participants to select passages from the text "Are you an Equity Warrior?" (Leverett, 2002) that reflected their values. I asked team members to circle or highlight any keywords, phrases, or paragraphs they agreed with. My goal was to build a common language for equity leadership by tallying patterns in the team's

responses. I did find some consensus in responses. For example, four of five CPR team members highlighted the statements, "Equity warriors are needed at every level of the organization in equity-focused schools and districts," and "Equity warriors are driven by personal values and beliefs, have an area of knowledge or expertise that they are passionate about," (CPR meeting, December 5, 2021) as representative of their beliefs. In sum, the codes in this category show evidence that the participants were engaging with equity-centered texts and making meaning together as a group of leaders, along with some alignment of ideas.

Critical Self-Examination

After multiple CPR team meeting activities, each participant had opportunities to consider their leadership practice and envisioned the type of leader they wished to be. Thirteen data points stood out in PAR Cycle One as connected to team members' self-reflection. I collected reflections through questions embedded in the artifacts we created, handwritten notes on post-its after an activity, or short email responses from team members following the CPR team meetings. In one instance, member TW wondered on a post-it note, "To what extent am I perpetuating inequity? Am I moving towards who I want to become? Am I unaware of blind spots? Am I able to change things and bridge the gap in my current role and with my current combo of passion and skills?" (CPR meeting, October 17, 2021).

In another reflection, participant KC said that she wished to "think intentionally about my role as a leader in international education; how I may better serve low performing students." She also stated, "I'm realizing more and more how my identity impacts my leadership and the work I do in education. I found this true for many of my colleagues present" (CPR meeting, December 5, 2021). Participant SB asked herself, "Is my idea of modeling and teaching students to care about equitable communities a dream? At AISST, keep the doors open! At AISST, systems

thinking and design! How do we build systems of equity for our students with limited time?" (CPR meeting, December 5, 2021). Her comments reveal the potential of the PAR project to create a safe space for a group of leaders to learn together and develop a stronger sense of equity-centered values to support leadership actions. These reflections also served as early feedback to the PAR and research questions; the team seemed eager to learn more about CRSL and were already applying their learning to their leadership actions.

Supportive Learning

I recognized a subcategory in twelve codes that I termed "supportive learning." The CPR team members found the team meeting to be a safe and encouraging space to learn and reflect professionally. I collected the quotes I coded from CPR team meeting artifacts and notes on post-its from question prompts I provided the team. In twelve instances, participants appreciated being part of the CPR team and having an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss equity theory and practice. Quotes from team members indicated gratitude as well as personal and group accountability. TW said, "I feel lucky to be comfortable in a room of people with the power to influence policy and practice at AISST and to work alongside people with similar visions." KC stated, "I most remember having a feeling of community with my colleagues. It's often challenging to discuss these issues but having a group of like-minded people made it comfortable." SB reflected on the affinity of leadership journeys: "We've all made moves that serve us and allow us to serve others" (KC, SB, & TW, CPR meeting, October 17, 2021). The data in this subcategory indicates that participants have valued their time in the CPR team meetings.

The data from PAR Cycle One indicated that the work of the CPR team had been well-established and aligned with CLE axioms. Spending time in Cycle One to understand the stories

of members served to build trust for the more vulnerable work of discussing educational equity and culturally responsive theory and practice. The codes and subcodes and later the categories and subcategories that emerged represent the voices and experiences of the CPR team members as they worked to envision and achieve their best selves as school leaders.

In qualitative research coding, relationships among categories are essential to understanding potential conclusions, assertions, and eventual findings (Saldaña, 2016). After the first data collection cycle, I connected the research questions with the categories and how participants viewed themselves as culturally responsive leaders and then applied their beliefs to their work. The sharing of leadership journeys and CPR team activities served to build community within the team and develop a shared language, planting the seed for participants to think more explicitly about their work and the applications of the shared understandings in PAR Cycle Two. Likewise, the team bonded. The participants were eager for the time together as both CPR team meetings lasted hours past the time scheduled. The data showed thoughtful, reflective responses with a high engagement level.

Reflection on Leadership

As a practitioner and a researcher, the ecologies of knowing (Guajardo et al., 2016) are a point of reference for this study as I consider my ability to facilitate learning for leaders based on my experience and research (self and research question #3), how we build capacity for equity-centered leadership as a CPR Team (organization and research question #1), and in turn, how each member impacts the community through their evolving culturally responsive school leadership (community and research question #2). I found that most of the responses/quotes in Cycle One dealt with the micro, i.e., examinations of self, individuals' backgrounds, and their influence on their leadership.

Through research question #3, I explored my growth as a leader for equity and how I supported others in their leadership journeys. Throughout the study and through my graduate studies, I have used Reflective memos to document my process. Because of my schedule and work as the middle school principal, I faced the challenge of balancing my own time and responsibilities while completing my research and data collection. When I have a meaningful conversation with a member of the CPR team, will I have the capacity and discipline to document and memo before the data is lost?

As the facilitator of the CPR meetings and as a practitioner-researcher, I supported the CPR team intentionally by scheduling the meeting location, setting the learning environment, and providing food. For both meetings, I made a home-cooked meal that we enjoyed before the start of the agenda activities. I attempted to model vulnerability, probing questions, and critical examination as I participated in the team activities with team members and invested time in looking for equity-centered and CRSL inputs to help engage the team and engender vibrant conversations.

I hope that I will learn to build the leadership capacity of others. I will learn protocols in this study that will serve me as I continue my career. I hope my CPR team will gain courage and support each other to identify inequities and make positive change. I understand the necessity of creating the time to pause and reflect through resources like question prompts. I want to continue to do this using additional protocols that will provide multiple lenses for analyzing our own performance and the school system's.

Planning for PAR Cycle Two

PAR Cycle Two includes four CPR team meetings and interviews with each team member. One adjustment I made in planning for Cycle Two was to achieve a better balance

between the structures of the CPR team meetings and the learning activities. A strict agenda becomes less necessary when team members are eager to get to the central activity or conversation in each meeting and are already used to the meeting environment. In Cycle One I had hoped that members would complete post-meeting reflections via email, but most did not. I realized that working with a team of busy school administrators requires that I do not ask for members' time beyond the scheduled sessions and interviews. In Cycle Two, I included time in the meetings to write reflections. I plan to continue to incorporate ways for CPR team members to voice and articulate equity values and beliefs in ways that strengthen both their individual and our collective professional practice.

Conclusion

I assert in the PAR that creating structured meeting times for leaders to reflect using CLE protocols and analysis of texts on CRSL and educational equity in collaboration with the CPR team resulted in supporting leaders in developing their culturally responsive leadership philosophy and, in turn, supported their leadership actions.

CHAPTER 5: PAR CYCLE TWO AND FINDINGS

As a vital part of participatory action research (PAR) Cycle Two, the Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) members participated in team meetings and other shared experiences that sustained equity-centered values. In the previous cycle, we strengthened relationships among the CPR members and explored equity-centered activities. The CPR team of five school leaders included: three school principals, the school-wide curriculum coordinator, and the internship/community service coordinator. Although the Head of School was not on the CPR team, I consulted with him frequently on CPR team activities in my role of lead researcher. In PAR Cycle Two, we discussed the cultural identity and relational work that informed our collective work at the American International School in Southern Taiwan in Taiwan. Throughout PAR Cycle Two, CPR team members collaborated daily and made decisions as school leaders, including responding to situations in the school community due to COVID-19.

In addition to COVID challenges, the Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team responded to significant transitions at the school that occurred in the spring of 2022. The governing board and school leadership considered increasing enrollment and staffing and proposed adding time to the student schedule to increase student coursework opportunities while facing considerable turnover in teaching staff. In the middle of the semester, the governing board and Head of School approved the addition of a third Grade 5 classroom. At the same time, the Head of School proposed and the board approved a plan for campus renovations to add design labs and additional classrooms. The leadership team reflected on our collective educational philosophies as we considered the consequences of these initiatives on school programs and personnel.

During the CPR meetings, the five members of the CPR team, each of us leaders at the school, considered these changes differently because we had developed culturally responsive and

equity-centered perspectives. As the school leadership and governing board planned the expansion, the CPR team utilized its meetings to interpret, reflect, analyze, and plan for equity-centered actions. In addition to their day-to-day responsibilities, the CPR members spent time planning and carrying out new initiatives at school throughout the term. Each CPR team member facilitated change efforts in the school community throughout the current school year while planning for the next. As team members continued to develop their leadership identities and apply their learnings in multiple leadership scenarios, they paid particular attention to the cultural dynamic of working in an international school with Western values serving Taiwanese youth and families. Meanwhile, as a researcher-practitioner, I toggled among managing daily work with leaders, facilitating our shared learning journey, and reflecting on our process with the CPR team.

The COVID pandemic interfered with our ability to work in familiar ways. Changes resulting from COVID-19 and other circumstances contributed to a higher-than-usual staff turnover at the school. In Spring 2022, the team needed to hire as many as 40 positions in advance of the 2022–2023 school year. Thus, hiring practices and philosophies became a recurring topic for the CPR team members in determining equity-centered actions during a pandemic. In addition, many expatriate staff could not leave the country during school breaks and vacations due to Taiwan's strict quarantine measures. During the school year, Taiwan required 2 weeks of a hotel or home quarantine and an additional week of "self-health management" when staff were not permitted to be in school. These conditions impacted staff morale and prompted some staff to wish to return to their home countries or seek employment in countries with less strict COVID-19 controls for the next year.

Four of the five CPR team members spent considerable time on hiring during the Spring

2022 semester. In addition, four members participated in a conference on women in leadership and spoke about their professional relationships and philosophies; I used transcripts from this conference as part of the data collection in the study to examine how CPR team members applied culturally responsive and equity perspectives within and beyond the school.

After reviewing the activities of PAR Cycle Two, I identified themes that emerged from the data collection and analysis. I describe the activities of the CPR team and how I collected and analyzed data. I determined findings based on the data from two PAR cycles of inquiry and illustrate how the data provide evidence for the findings.

PAR Cycle Two Process

In PAR Cycle Two, I facilitated four monthly CPR Team meetings as the primary source of data collection; in addition, I conducted interviews and had conversations between sessions. The CPR team was an opportunity for professional conversations and an extension of our work together in school, a benefit to the study. In the conference panel that I included as part of the data collection, the organizer facilitated the discussion, and I collected data from the recorded transcripts. I coded and organized the data into subcategories, categories, and themes.

Spring 2022 Data Collection

In the spring of 2022, I collected data from these sources to address the research questions: monthly CPR team meetings, interviews with team members, and the leadership panel As I collected and analyzed data, I kept the research questions in mind:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders of equity?
2. To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally

responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' abilities to enact equity?

3. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices as equity leaders?

The CPR team met four times between February and May 2022. In PAR Cycle Two, I co-designed and implemented similar processes from the previous cycle to provide consistency in data collection across cycles. Participants created artifacts that I coded after the CPR team meetings, and I coded the transcripts from the interviews and field notes on informal conversations (see Table 6). I used a voice recording application for the interviews in this cycle and Atlas.ti to collect artifacts and interview transcripts (see Table 7).

CPR Team Meetings

The goal of the CPR team meetings was to cultivate a community of co-learners, process and reflect on equity-centered and anti-racist theories and practices, and nurture internal and external accountability for CPR team members to envision and become the leaders they hoped to be. During PAR Cycle One, I hosted two CPR team meetings during the fall semester and scheduled four meetings for PAR Cycle Two in the spring semester. I scheduled CPR meetings in advance with team members. I used the same agenda template to design the spring CPR team meetings I had used in the fall and worked to create a meeting atmosphere that would ensure trust and emotional safety for team members. I provided a homey atmosphere with food, and the meetings were always longer than scheduled. I selected readings that illustrated theories and practices of educational equity, anti-racism, and culturally responsive leadership. In designing the agendas for the CPR team meetings, I attempted to balance the formal activities with conversations that happened naturally and refrained from reminding participants that they were

Table 7

PAR Cycle Two Data Collection, Spring 2022

Source	Data	Dates	Participants
CPR Team Meetings	Meeting Artifacts	Monthly meetings, February, March, April, May 2022	KC, JC, SB, TW, BP
CPR Team Member Interviews and Conversations	Interview Transcripts Field Notes	Intermittent, February through May 2022	KC, JC, SB, TW
Panel Discussion	Zoom Transcript	April 22, 2022	KC, JC, SB, BP

straying from the agenda. In some meetings, I adhered to a given protocol; in others, I decided to forego a protocol if a conversation had momentum and contributed to the study goals. At first, following the agenda more closely was useful in establishing the meeting norms and objectives. However, as we continued to meet, team members seemed more comfortable with a less structured agenda.

At each meeting, I chose a reading as the catalyst for conversation. For example, at the February 2022 meeting, I used a chapter from *Culturally Responsive School Leadership* (Khalifa, 2018). After team members read passages, I facilitated writing and discussion activities. At times, team members revisited the readings in later meetings or conversations. In the March 2022 CPR meeting, we used the National Equity Project *Liberatory Design Mindsets* to generate meeting artifacts. Although I had planned other activities for the meeting, in this case the analysis of one reading alone extended the session's length.

In another CPR team meeting, we read excerpts from *Reframing Community Partnerships in Education* (Guajardo et al., 2016) and discussed the ecologies of knowing framework. Participants created graphic representations of the framework as the meeting's central artifact and data collection. They each applied the framework to a current challenge they were managing related to educational equity in school at the time. CPR team members identified one "liberatory design "(Anaissie, et al., 2021)" element from the previous CPR team meeting that might help them address the challenge and presented it to the whole group.

Interviews

In PAR Cycle Two, I interviewed CPR team members formally and informally between CPR team meetings and asked them to reflect upon or process further inputs. The interview questions ranged from open-ended check-in questions to specific follow-up questions from CPR

team meetings. Because we all worked together in the same school, I often had unscheduled, shorter conversations and took advantage of a moment before or after school, before or after school meetings, or during free moments in the school day. Because I used this informal process, I did not have the same number of interviews with each member. Often, I recorded the conversations to document, transcribe, and code them later.

Women in Leadership Panel

In Spring 2022, CPR team members and I participated on a panel at a regional conference for East Asian administrators entitled "Creating Space for Women in International School Leadership," sponsored by the East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS). As the panel was a Zoom event, I could use the transcript for data collection. Through their participation on the panel, the team members spoke about their leadership roles, reflected on their participation in the CPR team, and told conference participants how relational trust had grown among us as a team and as work colleagues by virtue of the shared experiences.

Data Analysis

In PAR Cycle Two, I analyzed data from the artifacts from CPR team meetings, interviews, and the leadership panel described in the previous section. I reflected on my process through memos. I showed CPR team members their quotes throughout the cycle and paraphrased their comments to ensure I was representing their comments correctly. The CPR team made digital artifacts using Google slides to design graphic representations from CPR team meeting discussions. Both processes allowed for easier editing for accuracy and transcription into the codebook.

I relied on open coding for new data with attention to the confirming the codes I had developed previously. I continued to use Saldaña (2016) as the basis for qualitative data analysis,

primarily using verbatim, descriptive, and in vivo coding. I pre-coded by looking for participant quotes and passages connected to the research questions and then highlighted the quotes in Atlas.ti. I then copied and pasted the highlighted quotes to organize selections into codes and subcodes. I built a second codebook for PAR Cycle Two and then consolidated and linked the codes to the research questions. I reviewed the initial PAR Cycle Two codes a second and third time (sometimes more) to "pattern code," renaming the codes and categories through clustering similar data.

In summary, each of the PAR Cycle Two activities supported the research questions and deepened my understanding of leadership development for educational equity within the CPR team connected to broader implications of educational equity and culturally responsive leadership in an international school setting. Because the CPR team members were colleagues and research group participants, I had ongoing access to team members' reflections and analyses of leadership actions. In turn, the group learning process deepened relational trust. As a result, I identified two themes from the study.

Equity Leadership

Two themes emerged from the data analysis in PAR Cycle Two: (1) generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences and (2) collective leadership in action. Reciprocity through interaction are crucial components of effective learning experiences (Dewey, 1938). As a result, of our close collaboration in both the research project and everyday school matters, we could better envision ourselves as culturally responsive leaders and leaders for educational equity and could more effectively act on our espoused beliefs (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The themes, categories, subcategories, and codes are represented in Table 8.

As a practitioner-researcher and as principal and part of our school's leadership team with

the members of the CPR team, I was uniquely placed to see the cycle of inquiry flow among the CPR team members and our work and observe the interplay between leadership vision and beliefs and leadership practice; we held each other accountable to a shared commitment to educational equity. The process was dynamic; we continued to discuss and define cultural responsiveness in our school and made meaning of our equity challenges together. As with the previous cycle of inquiry, I considered the individual data sets and the entirety of data to evaluate what categories emerged.

Generative and Reciprocal Collective Leadership Experiences

In PAR Cycle Two, the CPR team demonstrated how a team of school leaders could individually and collaboratively reflect as leaders for educational equity and manifest their beliefs in leadership actions. CPR team members created their collective vision of equity-centered leadership through both their individual experiences and the resources and tools I provided in the team meetings. Two categories support the theme of generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences: (1) strengthening an understanding of equity (56% of the evidence) and (2) self-awareness (44%; see Figure 7).

In the Guajardo et al. (2016) Ecologies of Knowing Framework, understanding the self as a leader of equity is essential for making decisions in the "best interest of the self and the organization" (p. 28). This theme aligned with this research question: To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders for equity?

Strengthening an Understanding of Equity

The CPR team co-constructed the meaning of educational cultural responsiveness and equity; the members strengthened their understanding of equity dimensions and fortified their individual and collective commitments as leaders for equity. These fundamental elements

Table 8

Themes, Categories, Subcategories, and Codes by Frequency and Percentage of the Whole for the Category

Emergent Themes	Categories	Subcategories	Codes/ Subcode
Generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences (86 or 100%)	Strengthening Understanding of Equity (48 or 56%)	Resources and Tools (24 or 28%)	Response to Inputs (22) Ecologies LDM Mandalas Questions Arise (2)
		Learning Conversations (15 or 18%)	Calibrations of Beliefs (9) Applications (6)
		Relationship Building (9 or 11%)	Safe Space (8) Teaming (1)
	Self-Awareness (38 or 44%)	Identity Markers (24 or 28%)	Cultural Tension (16) Values (8)
		How I affect others (14 or 17%)	Epistemology (3) Point of View (11)
Collective leadership in action (46 or 100%)	Vision of Equity (24 or 52%)	Building Equitable Systems (15 or 33%)	Policies (7) Barriers (6) Allies (2)
		Developing Equitable Hiring Practices (9 or 20%)	Demographics (2) Audits (7)
	Sustainability (22 or 48%)	Building Equity Capacity (14 or 30%)	Community Members (10)
			Public Stance (4)
		Empowering Others (8 or17%)	Give space (3) Share power (5)

included: resources and tools (28%), learning conversations (18%), and relationship building (11%) (see Figure 7).

Resources and Tools. I sought to build equity literacy within the CPR team through sharing readings and encouraging discussion among team members; 50% of the data in "strengthening an understanding of equity" reflected the importance of using appropriate resources and tools. Wong et al. (2020) name frameworks or protocols as material mediators for learning on teams. Because members then engage in discourse with peers, what Vygotsky (1978) terms intersubjectivity, they co-construct knowledge and share experiences and thereby develop the reciprocity necessary for new learning and then actions (Dewey, 1938). Praxis, the generative reflection to action that Freire (2018) recommends for social justice educators, was critical to our group and our ability to act.

Because I documented CPR team responses in response to inputs (n=22 of the 24 responses), I can infer that CPR members attributed their ability to strengthen their understanding of equity to the resources I provided and the tools I used to facilitate meetings—especially readings and frameworks that broadened our knowledge base and afforded us a common language.

For example, CPR team members shared that their equity lenses widened through interactions with specific resources and tools. In response to the National Equity Project's Liberatory Design Mindsets documents, team member SB stated:

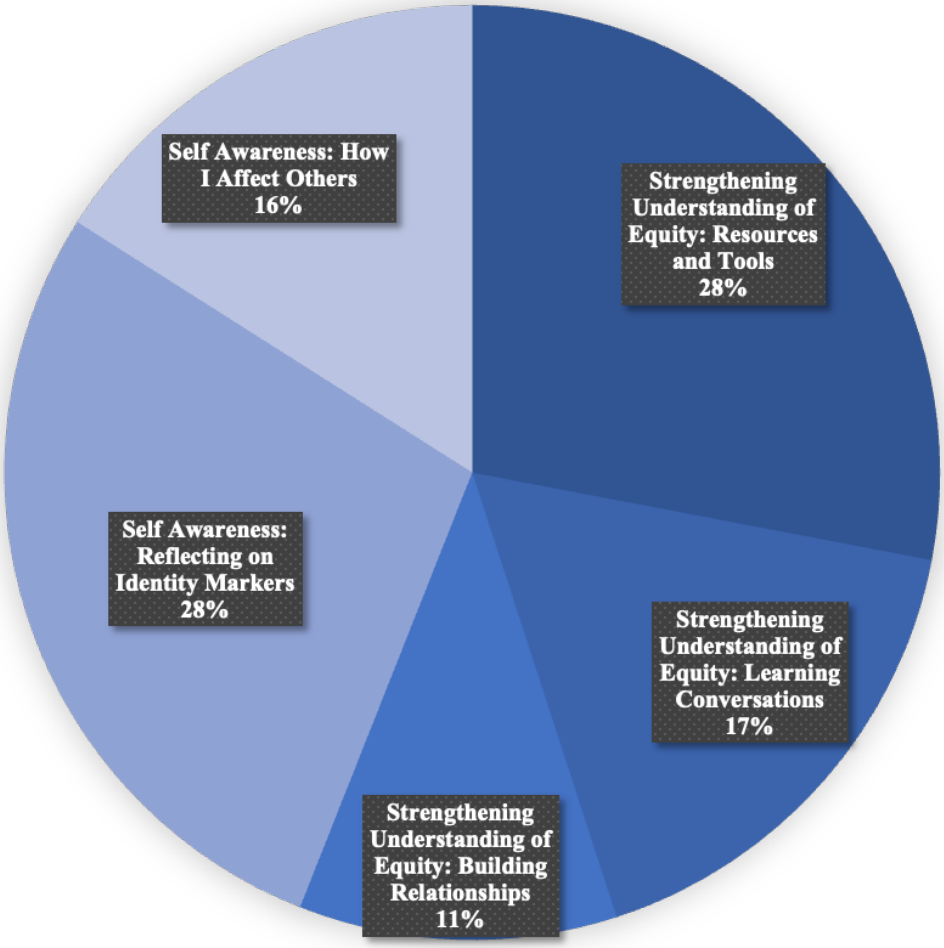


Figure 7. Visual representation of the theme, generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences, categories, and subcategories.

> Nothing is as it seems at the surface. To establish meaningful and lasting change…current systems must be understood so that they can be re-created to empower more learners. Determining root causes of problems/barriers, asking for multiple perspectives. Leaning into not having an answer for everything at first, leaving a conversation with new insight (SB, CPR meeting, March 20, 2022).

In another instance, member JC reacted to the Ecologies of Knowing framework (Guajardo et al., 2016) by making the following notes: 'The Self: Empower, Equitable, Distributed Leadership, Respect" (JC, CPR meeting, April 17, 2022). Team member KC reacted to a comparison of the ecologies of knowing and liberatory design mindsets by sharing a reflection on a student group she co-facilitated at the school: "Through listening to the experiences of students, we identified oppression that some students may be feeling. Through storytelling and being vulnerable, trust seemed to develop authentically within the group" (KC, CPR meeting, April 17, 2022).

We used multiple tools or protocols based on the Community Learning Exchange and the concept of critical friends, a framework that guides educators in forming trusting, collaborative, and reflective teams (Bambino, 2002). In one meeting, I asked CPR members to create a mandala, a graphic representation of their values as educators. I directed participants to answer reflective questions on family backgrounds, sense of community and relationships, and their moral imperatives as educators. We shared our mandalas and reflected on what it had meant to us to be part of the research team learning about ourselves and each other.

We suppose as educators that shared values are at the heart of organizational change; however, documenting how strongly these values are shared and how to calibrate those values in a meaningful way requires an intentional process. Gorski and Swalwell (2015) argue that equity

literacy is needed for educators to support each other in their learning process to be advocates for educational equity.

Learning Conversations. The CLE axioms state that conversations are critical for relationships. Our discussions of literature and frameworks on culturally responsive leadership in CPR team meetings that I facilitated using Community Learning Exchange protocols yielded robust evidence that reflected our learning together; 31% of the data for this category pertained to our learning conversations. The CPR team time allowed members to deepen their understanding of concepts and created supportive relationships among members. For example, in the mandala conversations, CPR member JC said:

> I think it's been interesting that I've been thinking more about this as time passes and I get older, and when I see my role as a leader, I always think about how I can empower people. And I think learning comes from within, and you'll see that as a theme. This is how I help people. I believe in a constructivist approach of helping people make their own meaning, and people learn more when they can have an experience rather than when you tell them. And so, we teach relationships (JC, CPR team meeting, May 15, 2022).

Member SB reflected during the same activity that the CPR team had challenged her thinking and her sense of purpose as an international school educator. She spoke of learning to "lean in to difficult and uncomfortable conversations" about educational equity and "[hoped] for professional relationships like this in the future" (SB, CPR team meeting, May 22, 2022).

Member TW described how the CPR team conversations helped her to notice subtle aspects of student life at AISST that she had not considered before. She shared that some of her discoveries made her feel "emotional" as a graduate. However, our group's focus on solutions gave her a sense of hope and responsibility to create change (TW, interview, February 19, 2022)

Relationship Building. Our ability to build, nurture, and sustain relationships throughout the project and study and during our response to COVID resulted from our time together in CPR meetings. These ongoing conversations impacted how the team worked together at school, especially on the issues of equity with which we grappled; 19% of the responses indicated that team members thought that building relationships led to professional friendships that were critical to their work as leaders. Much like the process of critical friends' groups (Bambino, 2002), we used methods that supported what *critical* means in this situation—a place that is vital to each person's daily functioning, a place where each person feels as if the others "have her or his back," a place to encourage each other's courage to act, and a place to be utterly authentic without fear of judgment. Team member JC, when asked what the concept of critical friendship meant to him, said about the CPR team, "For me, that's a place where I can be vulnerable. That's a place where I can air my dirty laundry, and I don't feel like I'm going to be judged for it." He continued, "I'm giving you what I value and what helps me feel safe and what helps me with my inner saboteur and my self-talk" (JC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). Finally, he added that as a leader he wanted to hear the truth from other even if it was hard.

In another instance, KC shared an example of how the team's strong relationships helped to address a microaggression:

> This year we had a mishap with someone on the senior leadership team because of something that might have been misinterpreted by others during a recorded zoom meeting. It took us to discuss it with each other and to say, 'We need to fix this.' And this might have come off a certain way to the community, and so it is that critical friend piece, in my opinion, that allowed us to feel comfortable enough to challenge one

another, challenge our supervisor with a positive outcome. And so it's really important to have trust within your group (KC, Panel discussion, April 2, 2022).

Member JC summed up the group dynamic of the CPR team by saying that we provided a critical friends' space for each other. He said we were "partners and a support system … personally and professionally so that when I'm having a tough day, or this is a typical conversation or an uncomfortable topic, I have somebody to debrief with and bounce ideas off" (KC, interview, February 18, 2022). Aguilar (2016) discusses the importance of a team's members knowing each other well to be effective and of activities that build teams by allowing members to express themselves and their values. I found this true in the CPR team as our activities gave members a safe space to process beliefs, ideas, and reactions to professional challenges.

Building relationships within the team helped members develop a leadership vision for themselves and for their needs as leaders. Aguilar (2016) argues that reflection is critical to the team process. As seen in the member quotes above, participation in the CPR team made members feel more effective as leaders. "Building relational trust through storytelling and being vulnerable, trust seemed to develop authentically within the group" (KC, CPR meeting, April 17, 2022). Gorski and Swalwell (2015) assert that educators must hold a deep understanding of equity, inequity, and justice to achieve educational equity in schools, and this was evident in the PAR as team members learned together; individual and collective understandings of equity were a complement to the inward journey of team members.

I recognized that we could achieve team building by using the CPR team meetings to analyze resources with tools that effectively strengthen our collective inner core as equity leaders. As we shared stories of identity and personal and professional history, studied theory

and frameworks on educational equity, and shared dilemmas of practice, we developed not only an awareness of self but of a team whose members could depend on each other.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness was a second vital expression of developing leadership personas in the CPR team. In this category, two subcategories surfaced: (1) reflection on identity markers (63% of the data for the category); and (2) how I affect others based on who I am (37% of the data). I documented the growing self-awareness of team members as leaders for equity because of their ability to reflect on their identities. More importantly for purposes of this study and collaboration, they developed a sense of how they affected others in this group and the school. The latter factor was critical as we developed an ability to maintain critical friendships and have difficult conversations because we had formed strong bonds based on awareness of self and our impact on others in the team and at school. Both kinds of self-awareness were crucial as we were four Western expatriate educators working with one Taiwanese CPR member.

The National Equity Project (n.d.) identified the concept of cultural synchronicity, which is the ability to reflect upon one's identity markers such as age, ethnicity, race, native language, and gender *and* to consider how others may experience one based on those factors. In the context of the study in an international school in Taiwan, the self-awareness concept reoccurred in the many CPR discussions as we explored the tension between the idea of an American school in Taiwan serving Taiwanese students and the educational implications for students and staff. Likewise, members considered the pressures of serving students across differences when four of five CPR team members were non-Taiwanese from the US embedded in a school where Taiwanese culture, ethnicity, and Mandarin language were dominant factors in student identities.

Reflecting on Identity Markers. Team members named and discussed the cultural factors and tensions of our context in Taiwan and the school. In each of the CPR team meetings, I facilitated opportunities for team members to share personal narratives so that members could connect readings to their experiences and values.

Team member TW, the one member who was native to Taiwan and a graduate of the American International School in Southern Taiwan, shared many insights throughout the study about the cultural tensions produced when the Western ways of education were juxtaposed against the culture and experiences of local students. TW reflected as an adult on her time in school:

> I didn't like the teacher when I was a student here, and I kept going back and forth between, Did I like the teacher or not? And then it wasn't until very recently that I realized it was that she was a white teacher teaching East Asian studies in a way that was not East Asian and from a white savior perspective. So, I think it was really not on the surface; it wasn't harming me to the extent that I didn't want to come to school, but it was like in the back of my mind and something heavy and something I couldn't understand. It's kind of difficult, so I'll think a lot of [current AISST] students are experiencing this right now (TW, Interview, March 30, 2022).

Member SB of the CPR team recognized the same feeling that values did not always align with families she encountered in Taiwan, and she was seeking to find common ground. In her first year of leadership, she stated: "I want[ed] to honor the culture of the host country that I live in and support the students and their families as best as possible," even if she didn't agree with a family's actions or recognized a difference between a student's families' values and her own (SB, Interview, March 14, 2022). For SB and TW, naming cultural tensions helped each to

reflect on their actions as leaders and as a step toward recognizing inequities and what to do about them. Khalifa (2018) outlines the critical self-reflection of school leaders needed for culturally responsive school leadership that includes an ability to recognize one's own "background and privilege" to recognize "oppressive contexts" (Khalifa, 2018, p. 61).

Defining core values emerged as another frequent topic for team members in PAR Cycle Two and intersected with the learning conversations and our discussions of beliefs. CPR team members had multiple opportunities in CPR meetings and interviews to think and talk about their values as leaders for equity in alignment with the critical self-reflection endorsed by Khalifa (2018). Members compared their values to their actions. Member JC said, "I've been trying to work on my reflection and being open to feedback that even feels uncomfortable or salty," and "by embracing that…I've gotten more perspective of my gaps and my blind spots." He felt that this focus had helped him improve as a leader (JC, interview, February 19, 2022).

> Member SB also reflected on identifying shared values with her students and families:
>
> I mean, there are other values; the love of family is also very fascinating and profound to me because they are so tight, and that's something to really treasure as well. So, there's definitely a dichotomy with that value. I think what's important about epistemology is that you see students as mentors. That's really influential for me; you don't ever work for a school or a state or city or whatever district; you work for the families, and so I think that's still true here. Still, I carry that with me wherever I go, so I think it is important to understand families' epistemology (SB, interview, March 14, 2022).

The public sharing of values among the team, along with members' reflections on how they achieve those values, helped members define themselves as leaders for equity.

Determining How Identity Affects Others. Members reflected on their biases and how the influence of their biases affects their interactions with others. For example, Khalifa's definition of epistemology for educators led to a robust conversation among members. Khalifa (2018) makes the point that "one person's (or group's) truth is often not truth for others" (Khalifa, 2018, p. 11). CPR team members consistently concurred with this view in their interviews. Member JC interpreted epistemology to be "how our experiences, background, and identity influence and shape our definition of success and ways in which we learn" (JC, CPR meeting #3, March 14, 2022). SB's interpretation was that epistemology is "groups of people—their beliefs and what they believe to be accurate…values-based," and "not necessarily facts but things that they believe to be true" (SB, interview, March 22, 2022). Conversations on epistemology, or how we come to know and then believe what we know, led to deeper explorations throughout the study in which the intersectionality of team members surfaced. Oluo (2019) describes intersectionality as the "myriad of identities that inform our experiences in life and our interactions with the world" (Oluo, 2019, p. 75). They considered the components of their identity and how these elements influenced their work with others and others' experience of them. For example, KC felt that her identity as a Black woman has a pervasive influence on her interactions.

> I am obviously an African American woman who identifies as a lesbian, and I do feel like my personal identity directly relates to my passion for education and also directly relates to how I view my role as a leader, and I will definitely be upfront. To say that I feel as though my racial identity sometimes far outweighs, I think, even my gender and sexual orientation identity, and so my experience is sort of navigating the world of education

may look very different, for example, than a white woman's leadership journey (KC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022).

Member JC felt similarly about being a gay man in leadership. He thought that he concentrated on the curriculum early in his leadership career and did not acknowledge the vital role of his identity, how he built relationships, and how he might empower others to be transparent. Thus, intersectionality surfaced throughout the study and within the theme of the inner leader as members related the close relationships among identity, experience, and interactions with others.

As I organized the data from the four CPR team meetings, interviews, and the leadership panel in the spring semester of 2022, I discovered a clear connection between generative and reciprocal leadership experiences and the corresponding research questions. Likewise, I reviewed related literature to ensure that the themes were grounded in other research and leading theories in educational equity and culturally responsive leadership. The statements I gathered from the CPR team members confirmed my hypothesis that the CPR team experience led members to enact collective leadership.

Collective Leadership in Action. In examining the ecologies of knowing, the relationship and interplay among the self, the organization, and the community as a means of liberation for participants in Community Learning Exchanges (CLEs) are critical for building cohesion in any group (Guajardo et al., 2016). This interplay, the essence of collective leadership, offers participants opportunities to foster and sustain individual and collective reflection and action through dialogue (Freire, 2018). In PAR Cycle Two, the CPR team served as an accountability space for members as we considered our leadership actions from the perspective of the leadership values we shared and had established through our team meetings

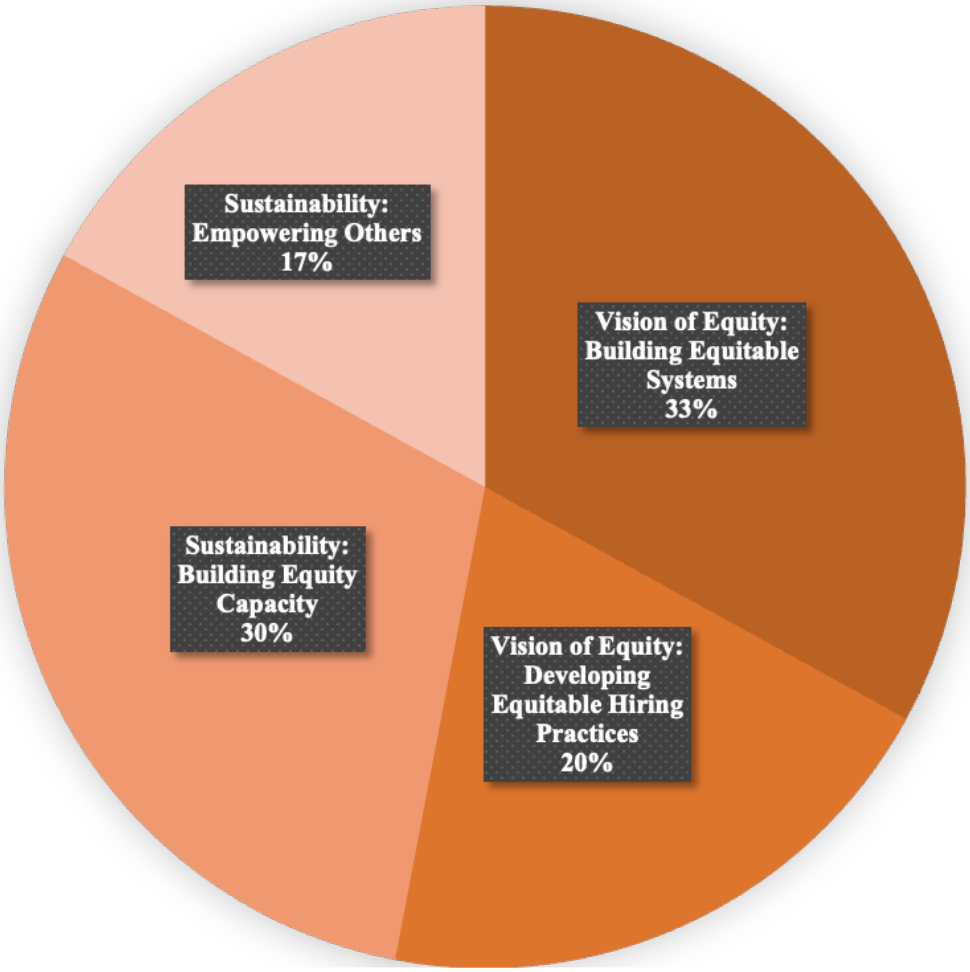


Figure 8. Visual representation of the theme "collective leadership in action," categories, and subcategories.

and work together in school. Figure 8 illustrates the categories and subcategories within this theme.

The data I gathered in Cycle Two illustrates applied learning from the CPR team that showed CPR members acting based on their beliefs. I determined two categories within the theme: vision of equity and leadership sustainability (see Figure 8). In describing each category in detail, I connect each to relevant literature and to the theme of Collective Leadership in Action.

Vision of Equity

In PAR Cycle Two, the CPR team members considered how to move beliefs into actions and engaged in an iterative process of comparing our professional challenges at American International School in Southern Taiwan to the learning we did together in the CPR team meetings. Aguilar (2016) defines a great team as getting something done that is valuable, useful, and appreciated. Singleton and Linton (2006) urge leaders for equity to enunciate their core values to their school communities and to act on those values. I analyzed and sorted the data into two subcategories: building equitable systems and developing equitable hiring practices.

Building Equitable Systems. CPR team members applied their learning from CPR team discussions to their leadership work, which was demonstrated in how they addressed policies and barriers to change. Team members authored or revised policies with equity lenses and then identified that work in CPR team artifacts or interviews. For example, JC talked about a slight policy shift in his role as elementary principal that he felt had had a significant impact:

> I didn't feel like the Teaching Assistants were empowered as much as I wanted them be; I didn't feel like they had the voice that I wanted them to have. I wanted them to have more respect in the community as well. Well, and so the first thing I did was put their

> names on the door, and again, I know that sounds like maybe something that's trivial. But I do think that had a big impact on them being part of the team. I think it helps people feel valued and more human (JC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022).

In building equitable systems, team members considered the role of power, position, and responsibility. For example, TW, in her role as internship coordinator for the school, thought about how policy could influence school culture. “I think to have a successful program for the younger generation and make it relevant to them, I have to be responding to their culture and to have successful communication with parents.” She wanted to be a part of building systems that are culturally responsive and ensuring that that cultural responsiveness be a part of all her communication and policy building (TW, interview, February 22, 2022).

In another instance, TW recognized that she had power and responsibility in the service learning and internship program, stating: “I think that this is a great opportunity for me to increase or improve equitable programs or to normalize equity by building systems that are framed around equity” (TW, interview, February 19, 2022). For TW, the team provided a place to process and practice framing ideas before and after engaging the community. Although changes were small and incremental in building equitable systems, Tyack and Cuban (1995) assert that school improvement results from the "steady, reflective efforts of practitioners that work in schools" (location 1774). Cuban (2012) discusses how interrupting dynamic conservatism is necessary because teachers or leaders tend to try innovative ideas and practices for a moment and then abandon them and return to former practices. Interrupting that to sustain lasting change is a complex and incremental process.

The team faced barriers to their goal of public equity leadership. The trust-building activities of the CPR team made the members more willing to show vulnerability, think through

barriers with colleagues, and consider how to overcome those challenges. Thus, while the number of instances of CPR member quotes was small, the time we spent discussing these was critical as these complexities weighed on the team members and caused stress. Team members described how they interpreted barriers with the CPR team with an equity or CRP perspective. For example, KC shared her feelings of anxiety:

> Right now, it is completely stressful and exhausting, and I know that's how I'm feeling; my first year and my first principalship ... but I feel like I'm dealing with a lot of, like, faculty morale issues and so on ... I started off with very lofty goals in my mind, and then now I think the goal is just to make it through the end of the school year in trying just to survive (KC, interview, February 18, 2022).

TW shared that although systemic equity work was tiring at times, working directly with students was a source of inspiration when she felt the lowest emotionally or when she lacked confidence in her work (TW, interview, March 15, 2022). Safir and Dugan (2021) discuss vulnerability as a core value for leaders and essential for showing empathy across differences and for accepting mistakes as vital to the learning process. My hope as CPR team facilitator was that sharing stories of vulnerability would enable members to deal with the barriers they faced and to feel safer and more assertive in their work at school, thus leading to equitable systems within their lexicon of control.

Developing Equitable Hiring Practices. As we re-imagined school hiring practices to accommodate school changes, team members translated their beliefs to actions. In Spring 2022, the team discussed what values we hoped to project to the community through our hiring practices and then applied a culturally responsive lens to building a diverse staff. In CPR

meetings and at school, the CPR team discussed shared diversity goals for staffing, interview questions, local versus expatriate hires, ethnicity, race, and language as factors.

Member KC commented on representation in hiring: "As a team, what does our faculty look like? Are we taking into consideration gender balance? Do we have women in science faculty positions? Looking at ... diversity of race: Does it reflect the diversity [of the United States]" (KC, Panel discussion, April 22, 2022)? On the same topic, SB felt that leaders, even with personal values about equity, should calibrate their hiring practices by having values-based conversations regularly. She added that these conversations should occur across the entire school organization to ensure consistency among the principals and others on hiring committees. After calibrating values and practices, she thought that discussing all candidates across the school with an eye to onboarding candidates who understand the school's diversity and equity policies was critical (SB, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). These responses show that team members valued our alignment regarding equitable hiring practices. Because of the time we spent together, the CPR team members reflected on their actions and school processes with equity in mind.

Sustainability

Taking on institutional change is a slow process for school leaders, and the work of naming inequities is emotional labor that requires participants to find a way to sustain themselves and their drive for equity. When only a few in a school are willing or able to pinpoint the implications of inequities resulting from dominant cultural practices, policies, and curriculum, sustaining those in leadership positions is critical. In the Resilience Manifesto, Aguilar (2018) states, "Resilience is cultivated through daily habits and thoughts that strengthen dispositions" (p. 18). I observed evidence of dispositions and actions taken by the CPR team as efforts related to sustainability, building equity capacity, and empowering others.

Building Equity Capacity. CPR team members considered how to build sustainable equity capacity individually and collectively in our community of practice. As indicated previously, we were dedicated to the work in the entire school (PreK-12). Therefore, sustaining our energy and commitment was a critical factor. Members consistently sought ways to encourage others to see themselves as leaders for equity. In addition, members showed a desire to take a public stance on social justice issues or values to set an example for others to build their equity leadership capacity. Member JC desired to show a teacher leader team that he valued normalizing mistake-making as a means of learning and discussed "withholding judgment" while showing patience and support. Member SB addressed the value of building the equity mindset of the school community. She thought that that the school should be devoted to the school mission and not just be concerned with college preparation but with better Taiwanese-American relationships (SB, interview, February 19, 2022). Both leaders expressed a desire to work with community members rather than being directive or authoritative in school change management.

Empowering Others. The CPR team statements reflected their shared desire to use their positional power as leaders to foster leadership roles in others. They wanted to encourage others to address systemic inequities and take ownership of organizational change. Member JC found the idea of supporting leadership growth in his school team essential to creating authentic buy-in and collaboration with staff by building their confidence and providing space for his team to reflect on their practice:

> I think one of the biggest impacts I made is I created a teacher leader position for our teaching assistants to give them voice and to empower them going back to that theme of empowerment and then talking to her [the teaching assistant leader], having conversations with her, being a thinking partner with her, not telling her how to lead her

> team, you know ... giving her tools, talking. We do leadership training together as teacher leaders, and then I let them go off and lead on their own. Then we reflect upon their leadership when we come back. I think that has been empowering for the group, and they are ... participating more. I'm ... receiving more feedback, sometimes positive, sometimes not. But I think that's part of the journey of helping them have voice in an organization (JC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022).

Likewise, member TW, in her role of student internship coordinator, sought to include students in designing the program with an equity lens. She was clear that students were already interested in equity work and, as emerging adults, they were "definitely very open to different ideas and ways of doing things, and they're very receptive to two different kinds of feedback. And I think they're great and also challenging my perception of what equity work should mean for them" (TW, interview, February 19, 2022).

The CPR team members applied their insights to their micro contexts as leaders to become more purposeful and strategic in pursuit of equitable student outcomes. Members SB and KC partnered with teachers to empower them to lead equity work using CRP. SB discussed working with teachers using instructional differentiation strategies to help them reflect on barriers to students' learning. KC mentioned incidents in which she assisted others in reflecting on teaching practices by asking questions that allowed teachers to think about their practices (SB, interview, February 19, 2022; KC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). Leverett (2002) says that "'equity warriors' are needed at every level of the organization in equity-focused schools and districts" (p. 1). CPR members fulfilled Leverett's imperative to leaders to build capacity in others throughout the study.

The group members' statements in the sustainability in leadership category reflected team

members' desire to share responsibility for culturally responsive leadership and to reflect on school systems with a lens of building teams for educational equity. DuFour and Sparks (1991) argue that "enabling individuals to improve their effectiveness is key to any school improvement effort" and that "school improvement means people improvement" (DuFour & Sparks, 1991, p. 7). The experiences we created in the CPR team meetings, coupled with CPR team members' work in school, resulted in team members applying their learning with their work teams.

In PAR Cycle Two, the CPR team translated equity-centered beliefs into leadership actions. From the evidence from our conversations and meetings, I demonstrate in the study how members used the CPR team meetings and relationships to crystallize their values and leadership stances and then apply those convictions to their work. The data revealed that the CPR team valued the leadership affinity space where they could think through issues at school or confidentially discuss leadership challenges. As a result, members felt better equipped to implement their leadership visions as supervisors and facilitators and build capacity in the school community. As a researcher-practitioner using CLE axioms and protocols with the CPR team, I modeled a tangible example of culturally responsive leadership practices as tools for sustainability and building capacity in others.

Findings

In the PAR study, I identified a set of practices that accelerated the individual and collective equity beliefs and actions of school leadership team members: The CPR team members' commitment to the experiential conditions of the CPR team meetings resulted in members acting in their leadership roles based on their values for educational equity. Through generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences and actions, the CPR team and I witnessed how an administrative affinity space for school leaders committed to educational

equity and culturally responsive practices made possible the transfer of leadership beliefs to actions in an international school setting. Awati (2014) in discussing Habermas analyzed the interaction between what he called the "lifeworld," the social world of humans, and the system or system world. He explained Habermas' theory of how capitalist institutions have colonized human relationships and interactions so that the relationships are transactional in nature. This invasion of the system in our lifeworld(s) causes an imbalance between work and personal lives and results in a sense of alienation from shared purpose. The findings of the study provide an antidote to this paradigm; through the work of the CPR team, members' lifeworlds began to influence the system as members applied their values and their passions to their work in the school. The relationships among members became more personal and more connected through shared beliefs. Habermas further asserted that critical leaning and radical democracy aimed at the systems world is only generated in civil society

> where people can discuss matters of mutual concern as peers, and learn about facts, events, and the opinions, interests, and perspectives of others in an atmosphere free of coercion and of inequalities that would incline individuals to acquiesce or be silent. (Fleming, 2000, p. 2).

For the CPR team members, the CPR team meetings and relationships between the members provided a micro example of a space in which our lifeworlds could drive our systems world.

In PAR Cycle Two, the CPR team translated equity-centered beliefs into leadership actions, thereby becoming transformative leadership (Shields, 2010). The evidence from the PAR study demonstrated how members used the CPR team meetings and relationships—including the tools and resources presented in meetings—to crystallize their values and leadership stances and then apply those convictions to their work at American International

School in Southern Taiwan. The data revealed that in the CPR team's leadership affinity space, we could think through issues at school or reshape leadership practices in a safe environment. Through these sustained interactions, leaders reported feeling better equipped to implement their leadership visions and to build capacity among the school community members they supervised and in the meetings they facilitated.

As a researcher-practitioner using CLE axioms and protocols with the CPR team, I modeled tangible examples of culturally responsive leadership practices as tools for sustaining relationships and building capacity to enact our espoused values. Our work together in the CPR team accelerated our ability to act toward educational equity in our school. The CPR team facilitated internal leadership reflection and group accountability for the team through creating and maintaining an intentional support group for school leaders. I support this claim with three findings from the body of evidence from two cycles of inquiry/

1. Experiential conditions facilitated with the use of tools strengthened dialogue and understanding of our values.
2. School administrative leadership teams who critically examine their identities develop working relationships that help them cultivate a leadership identity.
3. A reflective team space is an accelerant of equitable actions (see Figure 9).

School leaders that employ experiential conditions can strengthen dialogue and understanding values. Dewey (1938) says the most important learning experiences are reciprocal and interactional; leaders who had these experiences were equipped to engage in critical self-examination and then facilitate similar experiences for teachers. At the CPR team meetings, I curated experiences that resulted in a shared understanding of equity leadership. I used tools in the form of specific texts, frameworks on culturally responsive practices, and CLE protocols to

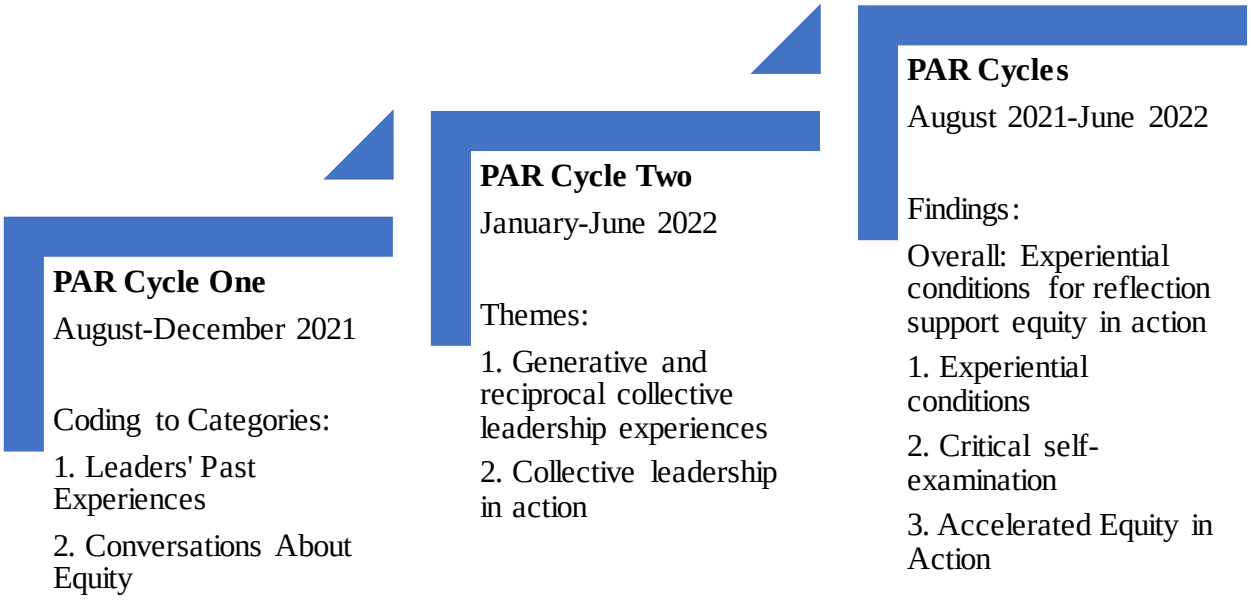
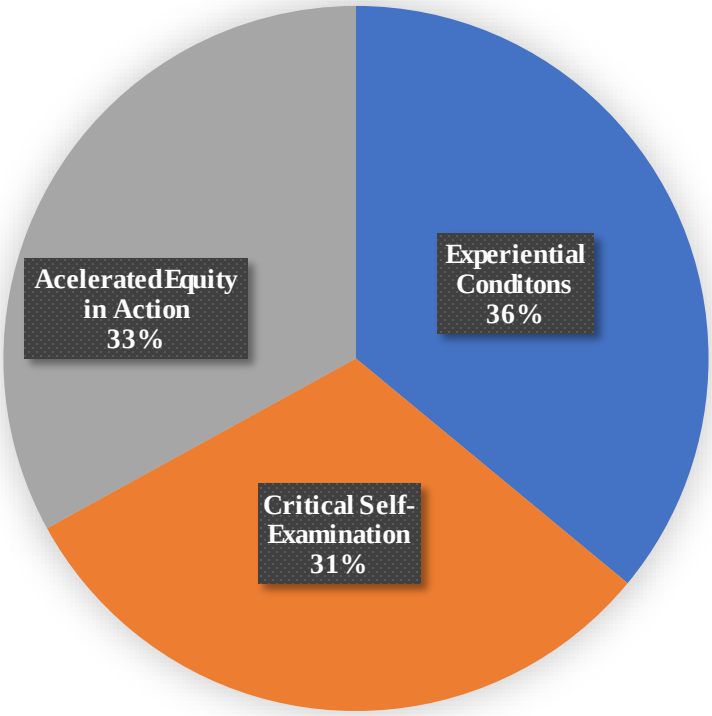


Figure 9. The categories and themes from PAR Cycles One and Two.

gradually build a learning community. We deepened our individual and collective understanding of leadership knowledge, skills, and dispositions by engaging in dialogue about readings and frameworks. These tools were material mediators for our critical reflection on ourselves and our roles as equity leaders (Wong et al., 2020).

The school administrative leadership team engaged in critical self-reflection on this question: What's it like for you to be a culturally responsive leader for equity? As they critically examined themselves, they cultivated a change in their leadership identities; they shifted from a generic sense of leadership to becoming leaders of equity in action. In the busy daily life of school management, leaders lack time to reflect and consider their values and how values affect their vision of themselves as leaders. However, once they have the time to reflect on how their identities and experiences inform their practices, the study participants could articulate the leadership qualities they wished to demonstrate in their practices. In this space, they could articulate what they wanted to do and gain strength and confidence from the conversations and group identity and support to act. As in Freire's (2018) praxis, the critical self-reflection resulted in a critical consciousness that supported action.

The reflective team space was an accelerant for equitable action. In this space, we experienced a stronger sense of who we are individually and collectively, made different decisions about who we wanted to be as leaders, and identified and strengthened our equity muscles to be leaders of equity in an international school. Having an opportunity to reflect on self, conditions, and relationships resulted in an accelerated ability to apply our learning to work at school in service to equitable outcomes for the school community. As we learned and together over the two inquiry cycles, we became more potent as a school team at recognizing and naming equity challenges in school decision-making and then taking appropriate action. In discussing



Note. (see Appendix I).

Figure 10. Key factors from the data collection that inform our ability to accelerate equity leadership.

each finding, I substantiate with evidence from the study (see Figure 10) and from the extant literature.

Experiential Conditions

As the leader researcher-practitioner in the PAR study, I found that the experiential conditions I created for CPR team meetings strengthened CPR team members' understanding of culturally responsive leadership practices and their understanding of educational equity at an international school in Taiwan. Experiential learning conditions exist when learners actively engage in learning using tools that promote robust inputs, inquiry, dialogic constructivism; define and challenge beliefs; and explore passions and purpose of participants in various topics. Relationships and trust are critical for experiential learning (Association for Experiential Education, 2011). The outcome was that the CPR team meetings eventually accelerated members' ability to reconnect to their espoused values as leaders of equity and to enact those values. I discuss in more detail the importance of resources and tools and learning conversations.

Tools

The CPR team used tools to establish and deepen our collective and individual understanding of CRP and educational equity in the team meetings. Tools act as material mediators for discussion; through dialogue as a social mediator, participants change ideas, perceptions, and self-conceptions (Resnick, 2012; Wong et al., 2020). I used readings and frameworks in the data collection cycles as tools for our learning. We used CLE protocols to ensure that our learning process was organized and outcome driven. School leaders faced complicated issues and needed regular opportunities to learn new information and ideas and time to process how to apply innovative ideas to institutional challenges (Wise & Jacobi, 2010).

The tools provided the basis for learning, processing, and discussing ideas. During both data cycles, team members referred to these tools as resources for their learning. In one interview, member TW discussed how a reading on developing an equity knowledge base helped guide a discussion with another team member about how school parents constructed their decisions based on their knowledge and experiences (TW, interview, February 23, 2022). Member SB described how the same resource reminded her that, as a school leader, she needed to articulate school values to the parent community during policy work and not assume that values are always aligned between the school staff and families in a Western-style school and a non-Western parent community (SB, CPR team meeting, February 20, 2022). As we developed a shared understanding of concepts that fortified our equity lenses, we applied those to the conditions at school.

Secondly, by using meeting protocols grounded in CLE philosophy as tools for collaboration, the team members processed information, interpreted concepts, and had discussions that ensured equity of voice among members and modeled the principles of culturally responsive practices. The protocols were concurrently an accelerant, a process, and a methodological tool for collecting key data. I chose readings so that members could process and apply the learning to their leadership growth and values. For example, in one CPR team meeting, I asked team members to read the Ecologies of Knowing framework and to apply a dilemma from their leadership practice by completing a graphic representation. I then facilitated a talking circle in which each participant shared a graphic and then offered comments and feedback to each other on post-it notes. I replicated this data collection model using resources and tools throughout the project. Wise and Jacobi (2010) contend from their research that leaders who share common values and experiences can engage in dialogue using tools to mediate their

learning. As a result, leaders can translate values to tangible planning and actions.

A consistent format for meeting agendas included clear outcomes, time for self-care and personal narratives, and useful content for the participants; these are critical factors for "moving the work forward." Across two data cycles and six meetings, the written plans served as a record of the meeting rituals we used to establish a productive space for experiences through tools and dialogue. As I collected data and coded, written agendas were a reference point for our CPR team activities (see Appendix H). As a planning tool, a facilitator should organize the agenda so that participants can prepare for the meeting and contribute more effectively (LeBlanc & Nosik, 2019). Even if the participants deviate from the agenda, the processes are designed strategically; in this case, the artifacts from the agendas provided evidence for the dissertation. However, meetings as a regular practice in schools require that leaders take seriously their responsibility for creating and facilitating a meaningful process. Participant responses are stronger when the agenda is not "stacked and packed" and when they feel a sense of accomplishment and can engage both personally and professionally. The participants in the meeting want to be recognized as persons who contribute usefully and therefore gain status within the group; in this case, our individual work translated to collective work because we recognized each other as individuals with a thriving and shared moral imperative. That motivated us to "behave no longer egocentrically, but rather in accordance with the intentions, desires, and needs of others," which represented our determination to act morally (Honneth, 2021, p. 85).

As a result, the leaders used the tools, frameworks, and agendas that I provided to discuss new information, examine themselves and their values, and deepen our collective understanding of equity. Consistently, the evidence from two cycles of inquiry indicated the value of our learning conversations.

Learning Conversations

The tools helped me as a facilitator to ensure that the learning conversations among team members strengthened our shared understanding of equity leadership and CRP. The CLE axioms state that conversations are essential to the learning process, and 10% of the total codes throughout the study showed that members' learning conversations contributed to their shared understanding of equity and CRP. In high-functioning CRP and CLEs, "the core of social learning theory is to create safe spaces and healthy relationships for participants ... to share their stories" (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 24). As CPR team members spent time together in our meetings, participants demonstrated increased vulnerability by sharing personal stories and professional dilemmas related to equity leadership. In our case, ensuring that we changed the tone of these meeting to connect the lifeworld with the systems world helped participants find their bearings and look forward to our time together (Kemmis et al., 2016b).

Most often, the team's learning conversations took place in the CPR team meetings after we interpreted the reading using a facilitation tool and then shared and discussed our interpretations. For example, in PAR Cycle One, I used the reading and activity "Equity Stances" (Newlin, 2021) to help the team calibrate our shared understanding of educational equity. One exchange among the team showed members expressing opinions on how parental privilege influences student achievement. TW shared how well-resourced students can thrive in almost any educational environment. She added that a lack of resources, combined with educators' racial stereotyping and/or students lack of English language proficiency, increases achievement gaps between students. SB discussed parent influence on school and how schools often respond to the most vocal families in a school instead of those most in need (SB, TW, CPR team meeting, October 17, 2021).

Using another tool to discuss a reading in a PAR Cycle One CPR team meeting, I asked team members to analyze a leadership framework (Khalifa et al., 2018) and identify their perceived strengths and areas of growth as leaders of equity. This activity helped members find a common language to discuss CRP (JC, KC, SB, TW, CPR team meeting, December 5, 2021). This pattern of learning conversations during CPR team meetings continued through both cycles and at all six CPR team meetings.

Members' commitment to equity leadership emerged from the experiential conditions we created in our CPR team meetings from a potent combination of guided readings on CRP and educational equity, facilitation tools for processing information and sharing ideas, and ensuing conversations in which members used shared language and interpreted points of view. These conditions led to team members' ability to engage in critical self-examination with each other; this shared process contributed to our collective learning and reflected the ways they wanted to "show up" as equity leaders in their professional practices.

Critical Self-Examination

Throughout the study and both cycles of inquiry, CPR team members reflected on and articulated their identity and values as leaders; they developed the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for individual and collective accountability and acted according to their beliefs. As a result, we developed authentic accountability and gave voice to the "I" that is a part of the "we," which Honneth (2021) says only occurs when we are recognized for who we are morally and not for the position we occupy. The ability to think and reflect critically on issues of social justice and educational equity was essential to transformation into action in culturally responsive leadership (Muhammad, 2020; Quadros-Meis, 2021). In the CPR team meetings and interviews with CPR team members, I asked: "What's it like to be a leader for equity?" I found 35% of the

evidence in the study highlighted the importance of critical self-examination of the CPR team leaders. Through the CPR team's experiential learning conditions, I facilitated reflection by team members as they considered our learnings through their identities and how they impacted others as educators and leaders.

Identity

Asking the leaders in the study how their age, race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, and other identity factors influenced their leadership led CPR team members to reflect upon their sense of purpose as leaders. As the team learned together in meetings and as I conducted interviews in both cycles, I consistently asked participants to connect or interpret concepts in terms of identity; sometimes, they did so without prompting. The opportunity to explore and share racial and cultural identity can lead to empathy, respect, and love for others (Muhammad, 2020). Through the data collection and analysis, I observed that participants gained clarity in their professional and personal sense of identity as leaders for equity.

During my initial interviews with CPR team members in PAR Cycle One, each member discussed race, culture, and socio-economic status as influential in their upbringing and career choice as educators. This self-awareness by members developed as the study continued (JC, KC, SB, TW, interviews, Fall 2021). Member KC said, "In terms of my leadership journey, I'm realizing more and more how my identity impacts my leadership and the work I do in education" (KC, CPR meeting, October 17, 2021). Following one CPR team activity in a meeting, member TW wondered, "To what extent am I perpetuating inequity? Am I moving toward who I want to become? Am I unaware of blind spots? Am I able to change things and bridge the gap in my current role and with my current combo of passion and skills?" (TW, CPR meeting, December 5, 2021).

By PAR Cycle Two, the team's other members reflected on leadership aspirations related to identity. Member KC said that she hoped to create a reality in which she and others would not have to second-guess the way they are being treated based on racial or gender identity but have equal access to opportunity in education (KC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). Member SB spoke about gender disproportionality in international school leadership that caused her to second-guess herself through negative self-talk and said how important female role models and mentors had become to her leadership development (SB panel discussion, April 22, 2022).

Impact on Others

Each member's identity awareness further influenced how they hoped to treat others. As I organized the total data and recognized how to accelerate their ability to act on their beliefs, I saw that leaders' ability to pause and consider the identity factors for themselves and others helped to anchor their actions in their values as leaders for equity and build partnerships across differences. They were aware of how their identities may influence their biases and impact others. While only 6% of the evidence, this factor was stronger in PAR Cycle Two and continued as a growth area for all participants.

Member KC reflected on the danger of the intersection of prejudice and power when school leaders act upon their bias. She talked about striving to recognize and understand her own bias, based on her identity and experiences, and then having the self-awareness to be sure that her bias did not influence her decision-making or perceptions of her staff. She believed she had a responsibility to "continuous learning" and to "stay curious" about people and cultures as an international school educator (KC, interviews, February 18, and March 30, 2022).

Members KC and JC identified as gay and lesbian, and they viewed their sexual orientation identity as inseparable from their leadership identity. Both expressed how this

awareness helped them analyze bias in their decision-making (KC & JC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). At various reflective junctures during the study, member SB returned to the idea of "checking in with herself" to be sure that she was paying attention to how her experiences as a white American may be influencing her relationships with Taiwanese school parents (SB, interview, February 19, 2022).

Member TW held a unique position in the study as the one Taiwanese member of the CPR team, a graduate of the school, and the youngest team member. Due to these identity markers, she felt a tremendous affinity for the school's students and empathy for how adults treated them. She repeatedly considered the role of student input in the systems she was building as the school's internship and community service coordinator. She called the CPR team's attention to times when she felt our learning conversations reflected a US perspective that she did not share (TW, interviews, Spring 2022).

Seeing how team members were able to process their identity as leaders for equity was powerful. Members felt safe enough in the team spaces to speak on deeply personal perspectives, and the interactions encouraged mutual accountability to act on beliefs and strive to be equity leaders who considered their identity as they worked with others. These factors proved to be accelerants for equitable actions in our school as we worked together.

Accelerants for Equitable Action

Various elements contributed to equitable actions on the part of our school leadership team. Learning together and reflecting on CRP and educational equity in the safe space of the CPR team meetings led to an increased ability to act on our individual and shared beliefs in our leadership positions at the school during Spring 2022. School team members often hesitate to share ideas or feelings due to barriers such as positionality, age, experience, lack of trust, or lack

of calibrated beliefs or philosophy. In the study, the time we spent together outside of work in an active learning environment helped us accelerate our actions and respond to barriers when issues of educational equity arose in our work. We applied our learnings, and members believed that our high-functioning teamwork was connected to participation in the CPR team. In the combined data collection cycles, 33% of the evidence focused on our collective leadership in action through our applied learning and what it meant for each member to be part of the CPT team.

Team Dynamics and Applying Learning to Actions for Equity

In Spring 2022, as the CPR team continued to convene in our monthly meetings and work together every day in school, we interpreted and analyzed our work in school through the lens of our learning on CRP and educational equity. We examined how our lenses and conversations guided our actions as individual leaders and as a leadership team. The leadership actions demonstrated our ability to translate our espoused values to action (Argyris & Schön, 1984).

For example, member JC shared extensively on building the equity capacity of his teacher leader team through coaching strategies and culturally responsive work he did with elementary school teaching assistants to increase their role in school governance (JC, panel discussion, April 22, 2022). Member TW applied her learnings as a new leader to develop her dual roles as internship and community service coordinator by including students' voices and drafting equity-centered policies (TW, interviews, Spring 2022). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, our work in the CPR team heavily influenced our efforts to hire a more diverse staff in Spring 2022. Members explicitly attributed their leadership actions to membership on the CPR team.

The relational trust of the team enabled the team to navigate leadership challenges together. In the spring of 2022, the school had our first COVID close- contact case and then our

first community case. The Taiwan government's strict COVID protection measures kept the country mostly COVID-free until the spring of 2022; however, because access to vaccines was comparatively slow compared to Western countries, many students at the school were vulnerable to transmission especially at the elementary level. The school leadership team, including CPR members and the head of school, had an intense, confidential meeting to formulate and communicate plans for the school community. The conversations centered on the rights to privacy of the community members with COVID and our obligation to protect others who may have been in close contact in school. We tried to minimize panic and build confidence within the school community that we could manage this crisis with grace and transparency. Despite team members' raised voices, expression of fear, uncertainty, disagreement, and frustration, we emerged from the meeting with consensus on a plan and a unified front as a team on our next best steps. Following the meeting, I reflected on the power of productive disagreement among a team and how our work together as a CPR team created the trust for members to express uncertainty under pressure in a way that unique for a school team; trust that resulted from members most honest and reflective thinking (Reflective memo, May 2022).

School leaders working in isolation in stressful situations often second-guess their actions or hesitate to act out of concern for others' negative perceptions or reactions (Khalifa, 2018). CPR team participation heightened our ability to rely on each other and make decisions in the best interests of students. One CPR member managed a complex child protection case in the spring of 2022. The team member was under stress due to student safety concerns, competing parents and staff narratives, and the team member's urgency to act. The team member consistently asked for help and processed information with the team. The member's willingness to share his decision-making ensured that we followed our school child protection policy, cross-

referenced local education laws, and developed communication plans for involved individuals. Aguilar (2020) connects the ability to process emotional responses to justice in school communities. The safety the team members felt in expressing our emotional response to a demanding situation allowed us to pause, reflect, gather more information, and rely on the policy we created to help us navigate the issue. The member's willingness to share decision-making led to shared responsibility for decisions by the team, grounded in a policy that was designed to protect community values (Reflective memo, April 2022).

Being Part of an Equity-Focused Team

Participating in the CPR team caused members to accelerate individual and collective actions for equity grounded in CRP. Aguilar (2016) lists indicators for trust on school teams, and by the end of the study, the CPR team demonstrated many of these qualities including vulnerability, personal care, appreciation, productive disagreement, and taking responsibility. When I reviewed the data from both cycles, I recognized how members spoke explicitly about the CPR team experience. As early as the first CPR team meeting, member TW reflected on how it felt to share her thoughts with the team: "Vulnerable, like therapy—I was tired but felt like I processed and let some weight go" (TW, CPR team meeting, October 17, 2021). At the same meeting, member SB reported feeling "more comfortable with my colleagues" (SB, CPR team meeting, October 17, 2021).

By the end of the second data collection cycle, members expressed the personal and professional significance of the CPR team. Member JC spoke of humor, laughter, and lighthearted teasing among team members that he saw as a reflection of safety and trust. Member KC shared an anecdote of a public microaggression by a staff member that the team addressed swiftly and gracefully. Due to our work together, members affirmed the incident and shared

responsibility for how to manage the next steps. KC spoke of an allyship across differences resulting from our work together. JC, KC, and SB appreciated a confidential process to reflect before addressing challenges at work (JC, KC, SB, panel discussion, April 22, 2017). In our final CPR team meeting, one member said:

> This team has been a safe space to discuss issues of equity and my leadership journey. More than the content of the meetings, I will remember the feeling of being able to express myself freely without judgment. I will remember my colleagues' equity journeys and the stories they shared. This CPR team has brought us all closer, both professionally and personally (KC, CPR meeting, May 15, 2022).

Another said:

> This team has been a space for me to think out loud and reflect upon myself and what it means to be a leader for equity. Through this work, I have come to shape my personal values and belief around equity. I believe equity is about empowering people to make choices for themselves and have the space to do so. This can be about their professional lives, work-life balance, treatment in the workplace, or salary and benefits (JC, CPR team meeting, May 15, 2022).

In summarizing the data collection from both cycles, I recognized that members' participation in CPR meetings led them to apply their learnings and feel accountable to each other for leadership actions for educational equity. Our ability to nurture authentic accountability is an antidote to dynamic conservatism in which school personnel reinforce unproductive systems (Cuban, 2012). The shared experiences of the CPR team helped the team members know each other on more intimate levels that may not often be achieved on a typical school leadership team encumbered by workplace hierarchy and positionality based on identity factors. The

distinct conditions of the study and participants led to increased knowledge and awareness of CRP and educational equity and then urgency and accountability to move beliefs to action in the school.

Conclusion

Based on the complete data from the PAR study, I saw that conditions for learning and reflection support equity in action. The team participation in time, space, and resources for leadership development in culturally responsive practices and educational equity grew into generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences and collective leadership actions. This claim is supported by three findings from the data collection of the study: (1) Experiential conditions that include resources and learning conversations strengthen the understanding of equity. (2) School administrative leadership teams who critically self-examine (*"What's it like for you to be a culturally response leader for equity?"*) cultivate leadership identity for equity in action. (3) A reflective visioning team space is an "accelerant" of equitable action by enabling leaders to experience a stronger sense of who are, who they want to be, and how to identify and strengthen equity in schools. Internal leadership reflection and group accountability empowered activist leadership.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In the participatory action research (PAR) project and study, I examined how school site leaders learned to be culturally responsive to improve educational equity at the American International School in Southern Taiwan (AISST) in Taiwan. I supported leaders in developing a stronger sense of leadership identity, values, and purpose so they could recognize and address equity issues in the complex landscape of international schools. The theory of action was: If a team of school leaders shares a facilitated leadership support group committed to understanding themselves as culturally responsive educators for educational equity, then leaders will enact culturally responsive practices. The members of the school leadership team wanted to critically examine school policy and practices for school improvement and had explored culturally responsive strategies in their roles. Each member of the Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team expressed a personal belief in social justice in education based on their experiences; they were eager to collaborate and improve their leadership skills. The team included three school principals (elementary, middle, and high), the curriculum coordinator, and the internship/community service coordinator. Each member had identified issues of individual or institutional educational equity at our school. The CPR team's enthusiasm and commitment were a main force in the study.

The PAR was a ten-month activist and action research project and study that included two data collection cycles mirroring the fall and spring semesters of the school year. Our goal was to increase our capacity for implementing culturally responsive practices (CRP) to improve educational equity in an international school setting. I facilitated monthly meetings of the CPR team as the basis for our learning and as the study's primary source for data collection. We used community learning exchange (CLE) axioms and protocols as anchors for our meetings; as

result, CPR members created artifacts as evidence of our work together. Throughout the two cycles of inquiry, I interviewed participants to discuss their learnings and reflection. In this chapter, I discuss the PAR findings by connecting them to the research questions and to the extant literature. Based on the findings, I present a framework for changing leadership practices. Finally, I address implications for policy, practice, and research and then discuss my leadership development as a practitioner-researcher.

Discussion of Findings

In comparing the PAR findings to the research questions, I revisit sources from the literature review and new sources, which I used to design a framework for leadership development of culturally responsive, equity-centered practices. Through the data collection and analysis, I observed that the findings aligned with the research questions and provided a guide for collective leadership development for educational equity grounded in the theory of culturally responsive practices.

The equity-centered challenge we sought to address through the PAR with the CPR team was how school leaders in a traditional international school and from Western backgrounds serve local students whose first language is Chinese. The curricular program is largely based on Western structure and content. The students attend this school because we are an English-speaking school; they want to learn English and be successful in their academic pursuits and careers. However, we sometimes ignored their cultural assets and language.

My interest was to define educational equity in these specific conditions, and I assumed that culturally responsive practices were best suited to combatting the inequities in international education, explore the related challenges and guide leadership development. After two cycles of data collection and analysis, tangible examples emerged of how to build a school leadership team

dedicated to equitable and culturally responsive practices and how, through that process, each leader in the CPR team and the team collectively acted on equity-centered values. In the following discussion, I present the responses to each research question, connect the questions to the findings, and then elaborate on the findings and their implications.

The overarching research question was: How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices for educational equity? The research sub-questions were:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of culturally responsive leadership for educational equity?
2. To what extent do school leaders enact culturally responsive knowledge and practices for educational equity?
3. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices for educational equity?

As a result of the study, the Co-Practitioner Researcher (CPR) team determined that our work together accelerated our ability to act as leaders for educational equity in our school. I support this claim with three findings:

- Experiential conditions facilitated with the use of tools strengthened dialogue and understanding of our values.
- School administrative leadership teams who critically examine their identities develop working relationships that help them cultivate a leadership identity.
- A reflective team space is an accelerant of equitable actions.

In my analysis of the PAR data, I saw alignment between the first two findings and the first research question. Likewise, I saw a connection between the third finding and the second

research question. I address the third research question regarding my personal leadership development later in this chapter. These connections are illustrated in Figure 11.

Experiential Conditions

> *I realized how much more grateful I could be to have such overwhelming amounts of admin support and a common vision. I feel lucky to be comfortable in a room of people with the power to influence policy and practice at AISST and to work alongside people with similar visions. This has inspired me and reframed my thinking about my work and how to go about it, and I think this calmer, more patient, and more 'big-picture' perspective is making me a more optimistic, hopeful, and confident leader.* (CPR team member, meeting reflection, Fall, 2021)

In the CPR meetings, I established the experiential conditions for effective adult learning that strengthened our collaborative dialogue about values and our identities. In the PAR study design, I both learned the tenets of culturally responsive leadership practices with the CPR team and modeled a culturally responsive learning environment for the participants. In the meetings, I relied on the necessary conditions for adult learning. As a result, the team members deepened their individual and collective understanding of educational equity so that we could enact our learning as leaders in the school. The central experiential conditions included four essential elements that led the CPR team members to enact equity leadership:

- Adult learning space
- Rituals and routines
- Leadership identity development
- Tools as mediators for adult learning

I discuss each element in this section. The CPR meetings served as the basis building the team through the shared experiences of our activities. We discussed beliefs, values, opinions, and reactions and decided collectively how to enact culturally responsive leadership in our school (see Figure 11 for the connection between the research questions and the findings).

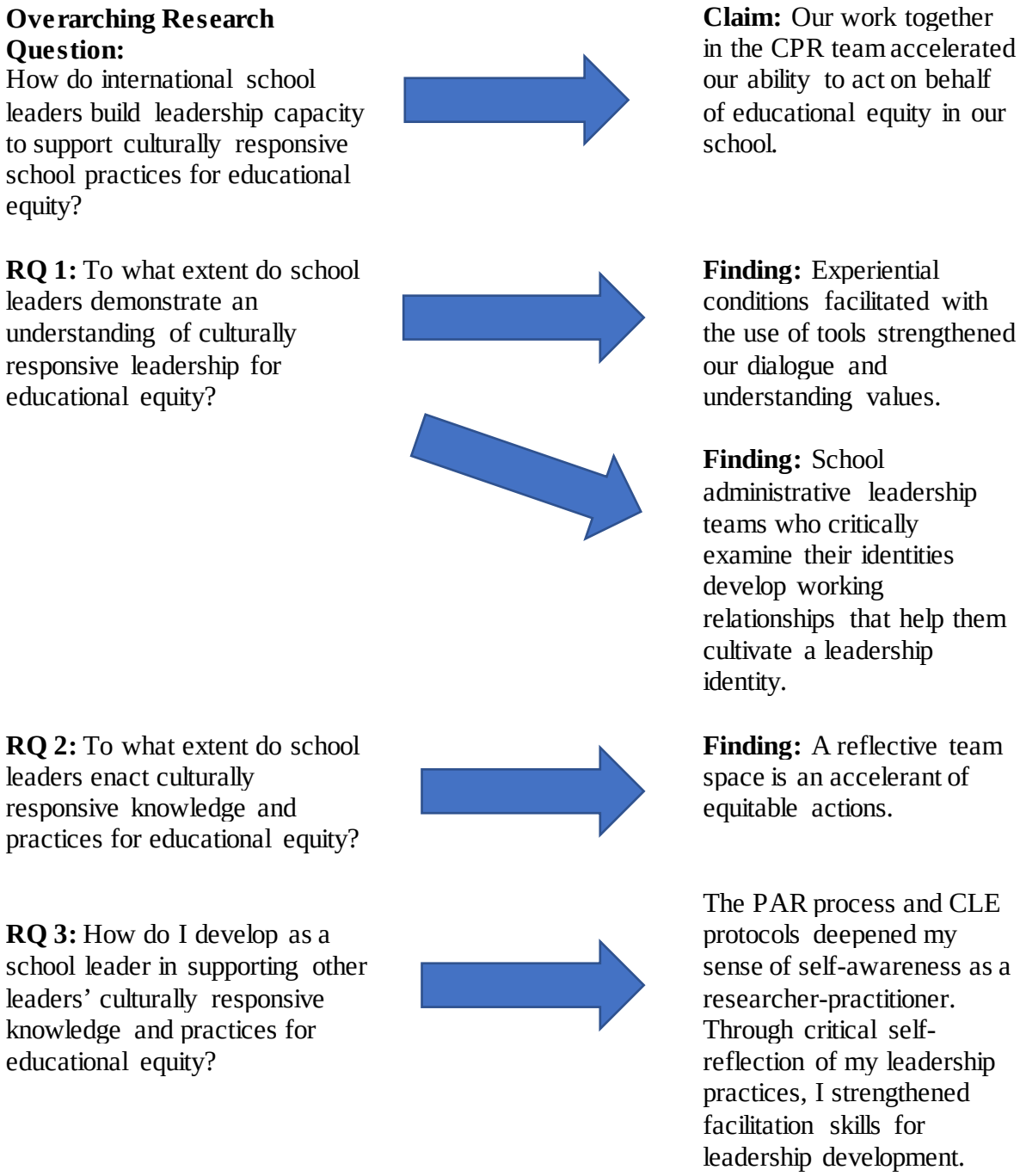


Figure 11. Research questions as they relate to the PAR findings.

Adult Learning

Culturally responsive educational practitioners seek to create safe and supportive environments through active learning. When facilitators set clear objectives, provide rigorous content, and establish a sense of shared purpose, and establish relational norms that encourage participants to make personal connections to content and each other through dialogue, learners develop ownership of their learning and empathy for others in the learning environment (Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Professional development for school leaders to address the complex equity challenges of schools requires learning spaces that build the "cognitive, affective, interpersonal, and intrapersonal capacities" of leaders (Drago-Severson, 2009, p. 6).

Rituals and Routines

> "*The world begins at a kitchen table. No matter what, we must eat to live. The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been since creation, and it will go on…. At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse. We give thanks.*" (Poetry Foundation & Harjo, 1994)

I set the table of learning so that others could learn with me, and together we could enlarge our understandings of each other. Then, as we gained knowledge and skill together, we became different professionals. Da Matta (1982), a Brazilian anthropologist, studied the importance of rituals as cultural glue; in using his theory for a similar study of schools in Argentina, Vain (2002) contends that school rituals can positively contribute reproductive elements that help participants construct an intentional social structure. Rituals offer a way to understand the values of an organization. In this case, according to De Matta (1982a), what I constructed was equivalent to a social recipe, albeit for composing a meeting ritual that could extend beyond our gathering. As Parker (2020) reminds us, every gathering is a political act and important for reinforcing our values and commitments.

> Why do we gather? We gather to solve problems we can't solve on our own.… We gather to make decisions. We gather because we need one another. We gather to show strength. We gather to honor and acknowledge. We gather to build companies and schools and neighborhoods. We gather to welcome, and we gather to say goodbye. Gathering is a sacred act. (p. 1)

I facilitated our time together using a format that included norms and personal narratives grounded in community learning exchange axioms that we read each time we met. I used member interviews in between meetings to check in with participants about our meetings to be sure members felt comfortable.

In the ritual of gathering, we reinforced important routines that we continued to use. More importantly we created a "we-ness." Honneth (2012) describes the importance of recognition of the "I" as a social necessity before we can feel a part of the "we." He recognizes that some recognition is simply for status, and the byproduct of that form of recognition simply reinforces hierarchy and the dominant system. A more authentic form of recognition occurs when people share moral values rather than merely acknowledge social status. As a result of this type of recognition, group members "adopt a particular self-conception that motivates them to voluntarily take on tasks or duties that serve society" (Honneth, 2012, p. 75). Thus, as Honneth learned from his mentor, Habermas, connecting the "life world" of our social selves to the "systems world" of our professional selves is a better frame for our work in organizations. If persons recognize in others a quality that motivates them intrinsically to act on their values, the persons "no longer [act] egocentrically but rather in accordance with the intentions, desires, and needs of others" (Honneth, 2012, p. 85). As a result of this type of recognition, they transform their habits and examine and act on institutional policies and practices.

In a CPR team activity, we created a personal mandala to help us see the connections between the life world and our systems world and to decide what the moral imperative for our work is. Because we started our CPR group with the concept of moral recognition and organized our discussions around it, we recognized each other and our group as an affirmative space for identity development, transparency, and active planning. By establishing a nourishing gathering space for the members, I furthered our possibility of co-creating a "we-ness" in which we were members of an organization whose "beliefs are no longer irrelevant for common decision-making" (Honneth, 2012, p. 205).

Leadership Identity Development

> *"I have gained clarity about what I find important and what I hope to see."*
> (CPR team member, meeting reflection, Spring 2022)

A key practice of our gatherings was to examine our identities as leaders. Wickner (2023) asserts that "education, at its deepest level, is the process of identity development." To respond to the first research question, I hoped to discover how school leaders developed an ethos of cultural responsiveness. The findings, based on the data collection and analysis, documented a self-discovery process for the members of the CPR team as they articulated a vision for themselves as leaders for equity. Effective equity leadership requires leaders to take a public stance based on equity values; leaders develop equity values from an exploration of their own identity and experience while considering the identities, experiences, culture, and values of the communities they serve (Rigby & Tredway, 2015). Likewise, the ecologies of knowing framework demonstrates that knowledge of self or the "I" of Honneth (2022) is imperative for authentic collaboration within an organization and a community, the "we-ness" (Guajardo et al., 2016).

As the team discussed cultural synchronization—building bridges across identity differences as described in Chapter 5—the expatriate members of the CPR team desired to understand local mores and build partnerships within the school community. However, theories of educational equity and culturally responsive practice stem from North American understandings of historical inequities based on race and culture. Some of the equity challenges we discussed as a team did not fit within those theoretical boundaries. As we considered our identities as leaders in an international school in Taiwan, we often returned to the question of what it meant to be a leader for equity in our unique educational conditions.

We grappled with leadership challenges in which we did not necessarily agree with the actions of school parents, even when we understood that their reactions were based on a feeling of cultural vulnerability. In some cases, families' actions were motivated by an identity threat, the concept that one's positive image is threatened by the perception of a negative stereotype (Steele et al., 2002). One case we discussed had to do with parents who did not fully speak or understand English. A parent complained to one of the CPR team members about a teacher's actions regarding an internal audition for a school performance group. They spoke to the parents through a translator. After listening, the leader understood why the parents were upset and talked to the teacher. The CPR team member perceived that the teacher had been using questionable practices regarding the auditions and encouraged the parent to work with the leader to challenge the results and allow the student another chance. After taking some time to respond, the parent refused to take the matter further and implored the leader to drop the complaint completely. The parents said they did not want to be or have their child be singled out for complaining against the teacher or for forcing a change to the performance program. The parents were extremely concerned that this incident would give them a bad reputation for causing problems and bring

them negative attention from peers and school staff. The passion of the leader to act to correct a perceived unfairness in their school was complex as the parent was responding to cultural norms while the leader was responding to a code of fairness developed as a part of their identity and experiences (Reflective memo, October 11, 2020).

Despite the complexity of identity exploration, the international school's members took the time to bring up and discuss values; our shared purpose led to the team's collective leadership development. Identity is the "notions of who we are, who others say we are, and whom we desire to be" (Muhammad, 2020, p. 67). The experiential conditions of the CPR team, coupled with sharing and discussion of how we interpreted culturally responsive leadership based on our experiences, led to a stronger sense of leadership identity for team members.

Tools as Mediators of Learning

CLE axioms and protocols are culturally responsive practices that guide participants to use agreements for interaction. We assumed that each participant brought wisdom to problem-solving based on personal knowledge of and experience with the issues at hand (Guajardo et al., 2016; Richardson Garcia, 2019). Each of these factors surfaced in the six CPR team meetings over the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022.

Facilitators are responsible for nurturing relational trust within a team so that members can have honest and difficult conversations about student learning and the student experiences in school. Building teams for equity must be strategic and purposeful and involves creating intentional team space and the use of tools that provide common language and understandings of concepts for team members, supported by facilitated conversation (Aguilar, 2016; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004; Mitchell, 2018; Wise & Jacobo, 2010). I created these conditions for the CPR team by using a consistent agenda template for the six CPR team meetings and using rituals

within the agenda to set the tone for information processing and discussion. My strategies for building and sustaining trust included having concrete learning objectives for the team for each meeting, establishing meeting norms so that participants knew how they were expected to engage with each other, using personal narratives, and taking time to reflect on the norms at the end of or after the meeting (Aguilar, 2016).

Meeting tools such as equity-centered content and frameworks and useful protocols to facilitate information processing and conversation are hallmarks of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) (Hammond, 2015). Adult learning for educational equity requires strategic sequencing and the use of literature that provokes participants' thinking and connects to their work as educators (Irby, 2021; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2004; Muhammad, 2020). For CPR meetings, I chose readings and frameworks that addressed educational equity and culturally responsive leadership practices. My intention was to build collective understanding and a common language of concepts and ideas that we could apply to our leadership practices in school. How educators learn together, and the protocols facilitators use are essential to deep adult learning (Little, 2011).

To determine facilitation strategies, I turned to CLE protocols (Guajardo et al., 2016), National Equity Project (n.d.), and School Reform Initiative (2019) resources. Each resource provides menus of protocols and strategies for information processing and collaboration grounded in CRP and promotes the use of personal narrative for participants to connect to literature and meeting outcomes. Throughout the study, CPR team members telling stories and applying their experiences to concepts were key elements for the data collection and analysis.

For the CPR team members, team meetings provided time for personal and professional trust-building through purposeful outcomes and tools to process and learn together. In this

study's case, these elements created experiential conditions that led to a stronger and more equity-focused school leadership team. As a result, our individual and collective reflection influenced how we worked together at school to "show up" as culturally responsive leaders and how we worked with others to foster equity.

Reflection Drives Action

"I have everything I need and many things I didn't know I needed: a blocked-off time dedicated to reflecting on our own practices but in the company and with input from others, a comfortable space to be challenged, a fun space to be serious, and a bunch of leaders to learn from who don't make me feel inadequate to be in that space, but rather lucky to be there."
(CPR team member, meeting reflection, Spring 2022)

Drago-Severson (2009) describes the adaptive challenges of school leadership; challenges for school leaders in which the critical issues may be unclear and the solutions may not be known. A leadership support group built upon the foundations of adult learning theory and CRP provided a place for leaders to workshop ideas in a safe space in which we could be vulnerable and create a network of support for learning. School leaders not only need a place to develop and strengthen their equity leadership dispositions but also need to consistently return to that place for iterative learning, fellowship, and voluntary accountability to sustain the work. The self-reflection of the CPR team members within the safe and supportive space of the CPR team proved to be essential for their leadership development for educational equity and was a key finding in the study that addressed Research Question 2.

I explored how leaders moved from beliefs to action, especially in the second cycle of inquiry. I found that when CPR team members were given time for reflection and self-examination, they became more connected to their values as educators and in turn more determined to be true to their own visions of themselves as equity leaders. Aguilar (2018) identifies the significance of the moment between an occurrence and one's reaction to that

occurrence as critical to one's resilience as a professional educator for equity. The idea that personal empowerment to act for justice is connected to reflection in a team space proved to be true in the study. CPR team participation enabled its members to develop a personal leadership framework and act on their values. In addition, our interactions in our team meetings transformed the school leadership as we fully trusted each other; as a result, we could huddle for a few minutes during the school day in pairs or small groups to discuss an issue and quickly resolve how to respond thoughtfully. I intentionally used these times to ask questions and query the CPR members about their work, which led to continuous data collection for the project and supported our reflection and actions. We felt as a group that we broadened our cultural competence to enact our espoused beliefs (Argyris & Schön, 1984).

Cultural Competence

To be culturally responsive or to demonstrate cultural competence, international school leaders need to understand the communities they serve (Carder et al., 2018; Robinson, 2012; Tanu, 2018). This assertion is at the heart of the core equity challenge I explored in the study—how does a Western-tradition international school serve Taiwanese students in their home country? Tanu (2018) describes the students as "Third Culture Kids" who, by virtue of their international school education, become disconnected from their native language and culture yet have a lack of connection to the English-speaking countries of the international schools' origin. The stories of AISST alumni and of one CPR team member, a school graduate herself, reflected this dynamic. Alumni recalled being punished in school for speaking Chinese, their mother tongue, because English was the language of instruction and the native language of the expatriate teaching staff. Carder et al. (2018) and Tanu (2018) point out the irony of international schools admonishing local students for speaking their native language in their home country and the

consequences of implicit bias directed at young people. The not so nuanced message is that their home culture and language are inferior to Western culture and English.

Nevertheless, school leaders can build cultural competence in staff through professional development, and they can interrupt harmful practices through critical reflection on school policies and operations (Byrd, 2016; Carder, et al., 2018; Orejel, 2021; Tanu, 2018; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014). The CPR team applied our learning on CRP and educational equity to our school and our specific roles and reflected on what we might do differently and how we might tether our actions to the equity-centered values we espoused. School leaders' reflection on values, especially when supported by frameworks and literature, leads to an imperative for action, based on those values (Muhammad, 2020; Oluo, 2019; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Zheng, 2022). Using tools and frameworks, CPR team members reflected on their work as leaders to develop a more specific idea of equity leadership in practice. For example, when the CPR team read and discussed Khalifa et al.'s (2018) framework for Culturally Responsive School Leadership in a CPR team, members immediately began to reflect on their work at school compared to the framework and to identify areas of strength and growth. CPR team members made commitments to improve areas of weakness.

In international schools, expatriate leaders striving to be culturally responsive have a responsibility to connect initiatives, policies, and practices to host country culture in collaboration with host country students, families, and staff (Tanu, 2018). International school practice could be defined as a form of isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) as they are a collection of independent schools and school systems that most often look to each other and to established international school programs to shape curriculum, instruction, and governance structures to attract tuition-paying families. In their urgency to adapt new best practices,

international schools are in danger of perpetuating the biases that reflect dominant Western epistemological viewpoints without considering the schema of the local students they serve. Caffyn (2013) discusses how international schools require ways of organizing and acting that do not always comport with the values of the students, families, and staff. "Space" in this description can mean physical classrooms, adult meetings, hallways, and lunchrooms, as well as mental space such as experiences or practices. Ritualizing the space becomes "an aspect of how to exercise power and control" (Caffyn, 2013, p. 210) to deal with these physical and theoretical boundaries:

- physical boundary of use and ownership of space—rules and regulations,
- mental and social boundaries of existing in an expatriate space,
- structural space that is hierarchical with curricular and pedagogical directives,
- cultural space of the clientele may be overlooked, and the host country culture largely ignored despite best intentions to learn about diversity (Caffyn, 2013, p. 211).

As a result, the potential for conflict over cultural boundaries is strong. For the CPR team, awareness, discussion, and reflection on racial, cultural, and political dynamics in our school created mutual accountability for culturally responsive action within the CPR team.

Enacting Culturally Responsive Leadership

The PAR study offered an affinity space for the leaders of the CPR team to reflect and define problems and solutions of school leadership with an equity perspective. In a longitudinal, meta-analysis study, Grissom et al. (2021) identify the qualities and skills of effective principals for school improvement: engaging in instructionally focused interactions with teachers, building a productive climate, facilitating collaboration and professional learning communities, and managing personnel and resources strategically. These assertions are self-evident to most

educators and represent clear and measurable outcomes. Nevertheless, how we develop school leaders to embody these qualities is worthy of our deep consideration; how leaders develop their capacities to enact their equity values is the black box of leadership, akin to the black box of teaching that Cuban (2016) identified. The response, of course, is that leaders need a network of support, and they need an affinity space where they can be vulnerable and work with persons who share their values, feel a sense of "we-ness" even when a leader must act alone, and use the support and ideas of others as a catalyst for their intention to be culturally responsible leaders of equity.

Each of the Grissom et al. (2021) responsibilities for successful leaders surfaced in the learning, discussions, and reflections of the CPR team over the course of the study and, at times, presented adaptive challenges for CPR members in their roles at school. This study and the work of the CPR team show how we can build the capacity of leaders to demonstrate and enact equity leadership qualities. A leadership support group built upon the foundations of adult learning theory and CRP provides a place for leaders to create a network of support for vulnerability and learning and a safe workshop for ideas. School leaders need a place to develop and strengthen their equity leadership dispositions and to consistently return to that place for iterative learning, fellowship, and voluntary accountability to sustain the work.

By the conclusion the PAR study, the CPR team had become more adept. From the first CPR team meeting, I observed the CPR team members applied their learnings on CRP and educational equity to their work as school leaders. Initially, as CPR team facilitator, I purposefully connected our application of learning to our work in school using CLE protocols and CRP strategies. As we continued to learn and work together, build trust, and calibrate our values, our collective equity work accelerated. Bound by shared experiences, we formed a high-

quality team that was relational and represented the collective leadership that is essential to sustain equity work in schools (Quick, 2015). We formed personal and professional relationships in which our life world seemed fused to our systems or organizational world, and we interpreted our decision-making and actions as a leadership team with an equity lens. Strong leadership teams calibrate espoused and enacted values, and actions should be consonant with beliefs (Argyris & Schön, 1974). As we reduced the barriers between the "lifeworld and systems world" (Awati, 2014), we recognized and articulated the connection between our work and our deeply individual senses of identity and purpose through open and honest discussion of issues of educational equity at our school. Freire (2018) describes praxis as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Awati, 2014, p. 57). The work of the CPR team made progress toward this ideal.

Framework for Change

From this PAR project and study, I developed a leadership development framework for culturally responsive practices using the concept of a mandala as the basis of creating the figure. We used personal mandalas initially to think about ourselves as leaders. Figure 12 represents the framework for change in leadership practice based on the findings of the PAR, but more importantly, the mandala exemplifies our collective journey to our practice of the sacred work we do as leaders of schools, of teachers, of families, of students who we are entrusted to nurture through memory and hope. As we explored the concept of education equity at an international school, we shifted our leadership practices. A facilitated support group for a team of school leaders served as the basis for our learning. To move from learning to action requires experiential conditions and reflection in a trusting environment. As a result, we now know for the remainder of our careers how to create and nurture a high functioning leadership team.

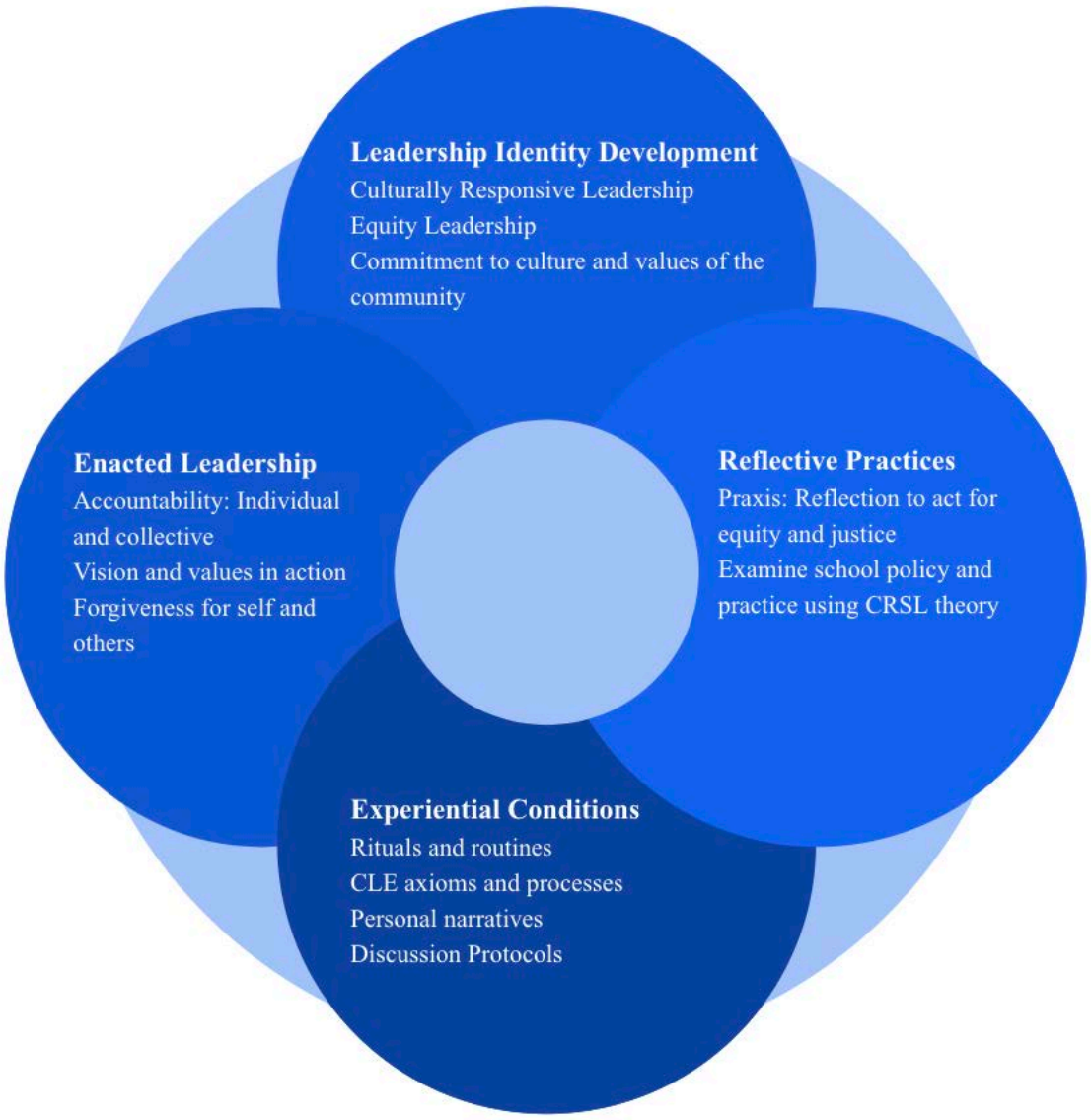


Figure 12. A framework for leadership development for educational equity.

My learning about and using mandalas as a tool to process culturally responsive theory was a reoccurring element of the study; I used mandala-making as an introductory activity with international school teachers in the fall of 2020 at the start of the inquiry process, and again as a summative, final activity with the CPR team in the late spring of 2022 to chart our individual and collective leadership growth. A mandala is a geometric configuration of symbols, most often a circle with four quadrants. In various spiritual traditions, mandalas may be employed as a spiritual guidance tool for establishing a sacred space and as an aid to meditation. According to Herman (2013), "In all contexts the mandala seems to represent the connection between the whole and the part; the tension between the unity of existence and the infinite ways in which the whole can be fragmented" (Herman, 2013, p. 117). Taiwanese scholar Kwang-Ko Hwang's mandala model of the self, "embodies the harmony and balance of the various opposed forces within the human psyche, which are influenced by its socio-cultural or collective life experience and values" (Wu, 2017, p. 4).

Each of the quadrants of the mandala represent an element of leadership development; experiential conditions, leadership identity development, reflective practices, and enacted equity leadership. The process of leadership development in the study was cyclical as the work is never completed, and leaders' resilience depends on returning to the leadership affinity space for critical friendship and the individual and collective accountability to realize one's vision for leadership. Further, critical friends forgive each other and themselves when we make mistakes. Sustaining equity work in schools is difficult, and one is bound to make mistakes; fear of mistakes can paralyze one from action and, by default, cause one to defer to the traditions of the institution. When leaders have a place to process missteps and find forgiveness from respected peers, they find the resilience to continue equity work. In my practice as a school leader, when I

have been faced with the adaptive challenges, most often, my values, experience, trusted colleagues, and various leadership frameworks have helped me to determine my actions and to ensure alignment between values and actions. In this sense, the framework I have designed from the findings of this project is an offering to serve other school leaders a tool for developing the skills for navigating equity challenges.

Implications

The PAR project and study findings have implications for practice, policy, and research. Many international school leaders are interested in leadership development using culturally responsive practices to serve local students in a Western-tradition educational system. Schools hoping to build high functioning leadership teams anchored in shared values can use our processes to enact their espoused values of equity. School leaders may be interested in identifying and addressing issues of educational equity in their schools and communities using the frameworks and protocols for collaboration.

Practice

The location and conditions of the study were unique -- an international school in southern Taiwan. We were primed for the PAR study through the support of the heads of school and staff members, students, and families who were willing to critically reflect on the school's practices from micro, meso, and macro perspectives.

The results of the study suggest that the leadership team/CPR team participants benefited from their participation and could develop their leadership skills in service to the school community. At the least, having a confidential and safe space for leaders to reflect on leadership dilemmas and decision-making and then connecting one's actions to values is a benefit to any school leader. At best, a school leadership team could follow these processes that we have used

and adapted from others to calibrate commitments to educational equity for their school and to align their values with school vision and mission statements. As a result, the team could create lasting organizational change in service to all students, especially those who historically have needed extra attention such as students with academic, behavioral, or social-emotional issues (Caffyn, 2013).

With the use of CLE axioms and protocols and culturally responsive strategies in an international school, other school leaders could model effective practices in adult learning spaces to build the culturally responsive instructional capacity of leaders and teachers. The CPR tools are useful as strategies to achieve educational equity through active learning and valuing the contributions of all community members in governance and instructional practices.

Policy

The framework can be used as a guide to build a strong school team for equity but only as a guide, not a mandate. The important part of any framework is adjusting that framework to the context and adapting practices to the context (Morel et al., 2019). Often, those responsible for oversight of an entire school or system of schools overlook the necessary steps to co-creating a shared vision of equity that serves as foundation of relational trust. Thus, I urge those in international schools who are responsible for school policy to calibrate values and apply those to school mission and vision statements and to develop more culturally responsive practices regarding use of home language.

The time we invested in building a leadership team for equity using specific facilitation strategies had individual and collective leadership benefits: a stronger sense of trust, deeper understanding of moral purpose as it relates to work in schools, and a clearer sense of action to address leadership challenges. By using CLE axioms and protocols to promote a commitment to

recognizing community assets in solving problems, school and district organizations could interrupt their emphasis on transactional leadership and support leaders to be transformational (Shields, 2010).

Particularly in a climate of the global marketization of international schools, schools or school systems risk becoming transactional in nature; parents pay tuition, and schools deliver English proficiency for students and admissions to international universities. In addition, international schools are often isomorphic and look to each other and to the international school system to determine policies and the educational program. As international schools serve more local students in their home countries using dominant values of the West, schools would benefit from a stronger connection to local language and culture and a recognition of the unique assets of bilingual and bicultural students, who are uniquely poised to be successful in the 21st century.

Research

The PAR project and study on culturally responsive school leadership development provides a model of participatory action and activist research for practitioner-researchers and university educational researchers. They could conduct research in their schools based on iterative cycles of inquiry and use the evidence for school.

In the PAR study, my proximity as the lead researcher and a leadership team member at the school gave me access to data and evidence that were both useful to participants (Hale, 2008) and a standard of validity. The participants and I could observe and participate in our learning together through our actions at work. Activist research requires that researcher-practitioners be embedded in the topic and issues of study that they are trying to understand (hunter et al., 2013; Kemmis et al., 2016a). Activist research is useful for understanding organizations and communities and contributing to goals or the mission of the organization through collaboration

with community members and observing and experiencing the daily life of the organization (Hale, 2017).

We used CLE axioms and protocols as our primary tool to facilitate the PAR process, and the CLE axioms are reflected in the findings. The axioms emphasize that personal narratives of participants are essential to connect to assets and challenges within an organization, that the collective wisdom of participants is essential to co-construct solutions to problems, and that learning and conversations are liberatory processes (Guajardo et al., 2016). The study findings indicate that adherence to the axioms resulted in a higher-functioning school team anchored by relational trust and a shared commitment to educational equity within the school and our work together. Using the CLEs as tools and methodology was useful to the study and could provide culturally responsive methods for collecting data for action researchers.

One possibility for further practitioner research would be to study longer-term implications on leadership development at a single school and raise corresponding research questions. Another study might track how leaders at the same school apply CLE axioms and protocols to other shared leadership or shared governance structures at the school such as teacher leadership teams, student, or parent advisory teams, or the school governing board. Using PAR as the primary methodology and combined with the CLE framework, I learned that adherence to these structures led to outcomes and findings for the study as I charted the growth of the school leadership team in their sense of higher purpose, cohesion as a team, and commitment to action. Similar studies in other international schools might replicate our research processes. In reflecting on the complete study and considering what I might do differently, a subsequent research question might be, "How do leaders build a curriculum for leadership development in CRP and educational equity?"

Limitations

The limitations of the qualitative research study are typical of participatory action research in that the conditions were narrow and specific to a small team of leaders in a single school. The biases of participants' positionality, sample size, selection criteria, and participant pool, coupled with the personal nature of the research data from the individual and collective experiences and reflections of the participants (Hale, 2008; Saldaña, 2016), limit the generalizability of the findings to other settings. However, the processes we used in the study for meeting facilitation, our use of frameworks such as CLE, and the methods for data collection have high potential applications in other similar settings.

Personal Leadership Development

"Leadership is validated and uniformly informed in our communities by the invisibility of things that are associated with leadership in mainstream communities. Degrees, lists of achievements, lists of high-powered jobs, the wearing of power suits are nothing. What counts is how much we give to our communities. This leadership can be given in various forms. You can be an artist, a diplomat, a storyteller, an auntie, a grandmother, and a sister." (Green, 1990, p. 66)

The quote is emblematic of my leadership journey through the participatory action research project and study (Kemmis et al., 2016b) as I have seen that leadership is defined through commitment and actions in support of community values. Through community learning exchange protocols, we expressed democratic ideals and shared governance frameworks. Using the PAR process, I deepened my sense of self-awareness as a practitioner-researcher and engaged in regular critical self-reflection about my leadership practices.

I have been an educator for more than 25 years. Although I have found belonging and purpose in working in schools, the equity challenge from my earliest days of teaching has been to understand how I, as a straight, white male, may serve students and families from communities that do not share my identity. How can I avoid false generosity and show

partnership? What do I have to offer students whose ancestors have never benefited from dominant culture institutions? I often reflect on how students, families, and colleagues of color experience me based on my outward identity and how I mitigate that to achieve cultural synchronization and authentic connection for teacher and student empowerment. I found myself wanting to show leadership in supporting other white people understand institutional racism and what to do about it. A gift of my professional experiences has been the many friends, colleagues, and students that do not share my identity markers. Over the course of my adult life and through this study, they have bestowed upon me their patience, their stories, their humor, their anger and pain, and their love as I learned cultural humility.

As a white male school leader striving to be an antiracist, I reinforced through this experience a firm commitment to culturally responsive instructional practices (CRP) for school and community leadership, continue to use the CLE axioms as an anchor, and use the action research principles and processes in my work as a school leader. Through CRP, we can establish safe and supportive learning spaces through personal relationships, rituals, and routines that allow participants to feel a sense of emotional safety. CRP supposes that facilitators use rigorous inputs that reflect participants' experiences and cultures while building empathy across differences. Most importantly, CRP relies upon a powerful sense of purpose connected to environmental, racial, and cultural social justice.

Secondly, the PAR study has deepened my understanding of the community learning exchange axioms as a powerful tool of CRP and demonstrated that well-facilitated dialogic constructivism is a means to individual and collective liberation.

Facilitating community learning exchange axioms and protocols to support programmatic improvement has been a key part of my leadership development. CLEs build community

member agency by looking at qualitative and quantitative data in a continuous improvement cycle. As a CLE facilitator, I strive to center the practice on adult relational trust-building. Using protocols, norms, and design thinking, our faculty can be bold and innovative while respecting and learning from each other. The CPR team started with the questions, "What do we believe is the problem we are trying to solve, and to whom do we believe we are in service?" As a CPR team, we examined issues of identity and belonging, centered around student ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, and sexuality. My most significant learning in this area is that the role of the leader is crucial in setting the tone and direction for this work.

Through the PAR study, I learned to be a practitioner-researcher committed to the inquiry-action-reflection praxis cycle. I intend to continue to deepen my professional leadership practice so that I can manifest a commitment to understanding the strengths and challenges in school and district communities from the people closest to the issues and ensuring authentic collaboration toward innovative and iterative improvement.

In the study, as I documented evidence of each member's leadership journey, I became a witness to how I could be a leader of humility who can support others—white or people of color—in providing a more culturally inclusive, racially just environment for students. I take Mills (1997) advice seriously that, as a white person, I might be an ally, but at times I might have to be a race-traitor in the sense that I do not identify with white-dominant Western norms and the racial hierarchy of white supremacy that those norms represent.

For my journey as a leader-facilitator, I built and will continue to nurture courage and skills to leverage my positional power to provide space for disrupting systemic inequities. I have learned that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) work must infuse all aspects of the school and district communities. I hold as a core value that DEIJ work is fundamentally both

social/emotional and academic in a culturally responsive school. Honoring identity is essential to well-being and the sense of connection and belonging to the school. I am responsible for demonstrating cultural humility and awareness of the staff, students, and families I serve to achieve new realities of access and achievement for all students.

The true essence of leadership is to build leadership capacity in others through structures and community agreements that facilitate productive struggle towards achieving the mission and vision of a school community. The through-line in my educational philosophy and leadership style reflects a commitment to culturally responsive practices and policies, community learning exchange axioms and processes, and activist research to inform school improvement decisions.

Conclusion

Leverett (2002) says that "Equity warriors are people who, regardless of their role in a school or district, passionately lead and embrace the mission of high levels of achievement for all students regardless of race, social class, ethnicity, culture, disability or language proficiency" (Leverett, 2002, p. 1). In addition, he says leaders are driven by personal values and beliefs and develop the knowledge or expertise that guides them to equity work beyond their assigned role. Equity warriors are willing to grow and learn as they advance equity in their schools and communities.

The equity dilemma of the PAR study was to explore the tension between the Western-centric curriculum of international schools that now serve local, non-Western students and the impact of implicit and explicit messaging that suggests cultural or linguistic superiority at the expense of local language and culture. I hoped to determine how school leaders may empower the cross-cultural and intersectional identities of the community in our school and move schools towards culturally responsive practices and policies.

The primary causes of inequity in international schools are the crypto growth of the schools (Bunnell, 2021) and stealth marketization (Kim & Mobrand, 2019). Some international schools are part of the neoliberal movement in international education as international schools have proliferated in Asia with minimal local government oversight. Affluent families in Taiwan can enroll in international schools outside of the high stakes, test-driven local system while ensuring English proficiency and access to English-speaking colleges and universities worldwide. In a basic sense, international schools are in danger of being reduced to a transaction in which tuition is exchanged for specific outcomes.

This inequity is in sharp contrast to the historical ideal of international schools that promised internationalist values of diversity and world peace or even the pragmatic colonial history of expatriate schools designed for eventual student re-entry into western education systems in European or North American countries. Culturally responsive leadership can serve as an antidote to neoliberalism by empowering the activist voice of the communities that international school systems serve. I hope that the development of culturally responsive leadership engenders critical self-reflection on policies and practices to increase institutional awareness of the impact of international schooling on our students. For the team of leaders in my CPR team, participation in the study led to a deeper sense of leadership identity, a commitment to teamwork based on the discovery of shared values despite differences in identity and experience, and internal and external accountability to strive to be our best selves as leaders. The study and the deep experiences from the study are a north star for me for the remainder of my leadership career.

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APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board
4N-64 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · rede.ecu.edu/umcirb/

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: Barnaby Payne
CC: Matthew Militello
Date: 8/27/2021
Re: UMCIRB 21-001520
Leading with Purpose

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on . This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category # 1 & 2ab.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

Document	Description
B. Payne IRB Study Proposal(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
CLE Artifact Protocol(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions
CLE Artifact Protocol(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
CLE Participant Consent(0.01)	Consent Forms
CPR Participant Consent(0.01)	Consent Forms
Individual Interview Protocol(0.01)	Study Protocol or Grant Application
Individual Interview Protocol(0.01)	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions

For research studies where a waiver or alteration of HIPAA Authorization has been approved, the IRB states that each of the waiver criteria in 45 CFR 164.512(i)(1)(i)(A) and (2)(i) through (v) have been met. Additionally, the elements of PHI to be collected as described in items 1 and 2 of the Application for Waiver of Authorization have been determined to be the minimal necessary for the specified research.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

APPENDIX B: CITI TRAINING CERTIFICATE

Completion Date 22-Dec-2020
Expiration Date 22-Dec-2023
Record ID 40066243

This is to certify that:

Barnaby Payne

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Human Research
(Curriculum Group)
Group 2.Social / Behavioral Research Investigators and Key Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

East Carolina University

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w5e55a5b2-366b-4d3a-8a4e-2ac8f2a018ba-40066243

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL APPROVAL

KAOHSIUNG AMERICAN SCHOOL
PREPARING BALANCED INDIVIDUALS, INDEPENDENT LEARNERS, AND GLOBAL CITIZENS

James Laney, Jr. *Interim Superintendent of Schools*
Kimberly Clark *HS Principal*

Jessie Coyle *ES Principal*
Barnaby Payne *MS Principal*

July 12, 2021

To Barnaby Payne:

Kaohsiung American School recognizes the benefits of participating in relevant, well-designed research studies proposed by qualified individuals. Approval for conducting such studies is based primarily on the extent to which substantial benefits can be shown for Kaohsiung American School and its mission of educating students. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of the **approval** to use conduct your dissertation study titled, "Leading with Purpose: Culturally Responsive International Schools" with participants in our schools. We also give permission to utilize the following spaces at Kaohsiung American School to collect data and conduct interviews for the dissertation project: Administrative offices, school meeting spaces as needed such as conference rooms, the Media Center, Exhibition Hall, and Dining Hall.

The project meets all of our school/district guidelines, procedures, and safeguards for conducting research on our campus. Moreover, there is ample space for Barnaby Payne to conduct his study and his project will not interfere with any functions of Kaohsiung American School. Finally, the following conditions must be met, as agreed upon by the researcher, and Kaohsiung American School:

- Participant data only includes information captured from the stated data collection strategies.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Participants can choose to leave the study without penalty at any time.
- Any issues with participation in the study are reported to the school administration in a timely manner.
- An executive summary of your findings is shared with the school administration once the study is complete.

In addition to these conditions, the study must follow all of the East Carolina University IRB guidelines.

We are excited to support this important work.

Respectfully,

Jim Laney

Mr. Jim Laney, Jr.
Head of School
Kaohsiung American School

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM FOR ADULTS IN CPR TEAM

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: LEADING WITH PURPOSE: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Principal Investigator: Barnaby Payne (Person in Charge of this Study)
Institution, Department or Division: ECU College of Education, Department of Education Leadership
Address: Kaohsiung American School, 889 Cueihua Road, Zuoying, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
Telephone #: (415) 425-6748
Study Coordinator: Dr. Matt Militello
Telephone #: (919) 518-4008

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study issues related to society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing t take part in research.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?
The purpose of this research **is a** study on culturally responsive international school leadership. School leaders face multiple equity dilemmas related to student outcomes, staff development, and parent communication. Support space for leaders anchored in culturally responsive theory will strengthen the leadership practices of the team in service to the school community. In addition, through Participatory Action Research and Community Learning Exchanges, the leadership team will understand community hopes and needs in realizing the school's strategic plan.

You are being invited to take part in this research because you are in a leadership role at an international school.

The decision to take part in this research is yours to make. By doing this research, we hope to learn the qualities, actions, and protocols that support culturally responsive leadership practices in international schools.

If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about five people to do so.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?
There are no known risks to participation in this study.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?
You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

*Consent Version # or Date:*_____

The research will be conducted at the Kaohsiung American School in Taiwan. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 10-20 hours, over the next 12 months.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked to do the following:

- Develop a sense of self-identity as a culturally responsive leader
- Develop a shared and ongoing understanding of culturally relevant leadership practices
- Identify a personal equity stance/equity challenge as it relates to your role at KAS in alignment with your job responsibilities, the KAS strategic plan, IB report, or otherwise.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate Community Learning Exchanges to gain a deeper understanding of and to build collaboration towards your equity challenge
- Attend a monthly or bi-weekly CPR team meeting
- Attend 1:1 meetings with the researcher monthly or bi-weekly
- Reflect upon data with the researcher. In this case, the evidence is artifacts that we collect from team meetings, faculty meetings, or conversations (could be teacher or student surveys, unit plans, meeting notes, meeting posters, or post its, reflections, notes from interviews, and discussions)

What might I experience if I take part in the research?
We don't know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. We don't know if you will benefit from taking part in this study. There may not be any personal benefit to you but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?
We will not be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study

Will it cost me to take part in this research?
It will not cost you any money to be part of the research

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?
ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates human research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the North Carolina Department of Health, and the Office for Human Research Protections.
- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify you.

How will you keep the information you collect about me be kept secure?
The security of the data collected and the confidentiality of the participants are of the utmost importance in this study, and every precaution will be taken to protect the data and the participants from contamination. Identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information. The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored securely on a computer and in a location of which only the researcher has access. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

What if I decide I don't want to continue in this research?
You can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if you stop and you will not be criticized. You will not lose any benefits that you normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?
The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at 1-415-425-6748, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm.

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director for Human Research Protections, at 252-744-2914.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?
The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

_____

Participant's Name (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

_____

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM: ADULT CLE PARTICIPANTS

Informed Consent to Participate in Research - CLE
Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: LEADING WITH PURPOSE: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Principal Investigator: Barnaby Payne (Person in Charge of this Study)
Institution, Department or Division: ECU College of Education, Department of Education Leadership
Address: Kaohsiung American School, 889 Cueihua Road, Zuoying, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
Telephone #: (415) 425-6748
Study Coordinator: Dr. Matt Militello
Telephone #: (919) 518-4008

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study issues related to society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?
You are being invited to participate in a Community Learning Exchange. The community learning exchange (CLE) is a holistic method for facilitating group or organizational conversations designed to bring voice and action to those closest to issues. For this study, the CLE serves to provide processes and protocols to implement the research. Any organization using the CLE frameworks assumes that organizational issues are often complex, have diverse members and diverse needs, and require deep understanding. CLE implementation includes as a basic assumption by community members that each member brings wisdom, value, experience, and assets to the process of identifying problems and solutions to equity-centered challenges.

The purpose of this research is a study on culturally responsive international school leadership. School leaders face multiple equity dilemmas related to student outcomes, staff development, and parent communication. Support space for leaders anchored in culturally responsive theory will strengthen the leadership practices of the team in service to the school community. In addition, through Participatory Action Research and Community Learning Exchanges, the leadership team will understand community hopes and needs in realizing the school's strategic plan.

You are being invited to take part in this research because you are a member of the school community.

The decision to take part in this research is yours to make. By doing this research, we hope to learn the qualities, actions, and protocols that support culturally responsive leadership practices in international schools.

*Consent Version # or Date:*_____

If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about five people to do so.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?
There are no known risks to participation in this study.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?
You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?
The research will be conducted at the Kaohsiung American School in Taiwan. The total amount of time you will be asked to volunteer for this study is 1-2 hours, over a day or two, during the 2021-2022 school year.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked to do the following:

- Participate in a facilitated meeting
- Share your experiences and opinions
- Develop solutions to school-related challenges with others

What might I experience if I take part in the research?
We don't know of any risks (the chance of harm) associated with this research. Any risks that may occur with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life. We don't know if you will benefit from taking part in this study. There may not be any personal benefit to you but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?
We will not be able to pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study

Will it cost me to take part in this research?
It will not cost you any money to be part of the research

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?
ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates human research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the North Carolina Department of Health, and the Office for Human Research Protections.
- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research and may need to see research records that identify you.

How will you keep the information you collect about me be kept secure?
The security of the data collected and the confidentiality of the participants are of the utmost importance in this study, and every precaution will be taken to protect the data and the participants from contamination. Identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information. The information in the study will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored securely on a computer and in a location of which only the researcher has access. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study.

What if I decide I don't want to continue in this research?
You can stop at any time after it has already started. There will be no consequences if you stop and you will not be criticized. You will not lose any benefits that you normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?
The people conducting this study will be able to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at 1-415-425-6748, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm.

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (ORIC) at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director for Human Research Protections, at 252-744-2914.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?
The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

_____ _____

Participant's Name (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

_____ _____

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

APPENDIX F: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

LEADING WITH PURPOSE:
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
Individual Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to meet with me today. I appreciate your willingness to participate in this interview and will limit the time to one hour.

My name is Barnaby Payne. I am doing a study on culturally responsive international school leadership. School leaders face multiple equity dilemmas related to student outcomes, staff development, and parent communication. Support space for leaders anchored in culturally responsive theory will strengthen the leadership practices of the team in service to the school community. In addition, through Participatory Action Research and Community Learning Exchanges, the leadership team will understand community hopes and needs in realizing the school's strategic plan.

Disclosures:

- Your participation in the study is voluntary. It is your decision whether or not to participate and you may elect to stop participating in the interview at any time.
- The interview will be digitally recorded in order to capture a comprehensive record of our conversation. All information collected will be kept confidential. Any information collected during the session that may identify any participant will only be disclosed with your prior permission. A coding system will be used in the management and analysis of the interview data with no names or school identifiers associated with any of the recorded discussion.
- The interview will be conducted using a semi-structured and informal format. Several questions will be asked about both the individual knowledge and skills gained and the organization practices used.
- The interview will last approximately one hour.

Interview Questions

TURN RECORDER ON AND STATE THE FOLLOWING:
"This is *(Your Name),* interviewing (*Interviewees Name)* on *(Date)* for the Evaluation Capacity Building Problem of Practice Study.
Overarching Research Question:
"How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices?"
The research questions are:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders?
2. To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' ability to enact culturally responsive knowledge and practices?
3. To what extent does a culturally responsive leadership team co-create culturally responsive learning practices and processes with community members?
4. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices?

ample Interview Questions:

1. What do you want to achieve from this coaching session?
2. What goal do you want to achieve?
3. What would you like to happen with _____?
4. What do you *really* want?
5. What would you like to accomplish?
6. What result are you trying to achieve?
7. What outcome would be ideal?
8. What do you want to change?
9. *Why* are you hoping to achieve this goal?
10. What would the benefits be if you achieved this goal?
11. What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)? What is the effect or result of this?
12. Have you already taken any steps towards your goal?
13. How would you describe what you did?
14. Where are you now in relation to your goal?
15. What has contributed to your success so far?
16. What progress have you made so far?
17. What is working well right now?
18. What is required of you?
19. Why haven't you reached that goal already?
20. What do you think is stopping you?
21. What do you think was really happening?
22. Do you know other people who have achieved that goal?
23. What did you learn from _____?
24. What have you already tried?
25. How could you turn this around this time?
26. What could you do better this time?
27. If you asked ____, what would they say about you?
28. If someone said/did that to you, what would you think/feel/do?
29. What are your options?
30. What do you think you need to do next?
31. What could be your first step?
32. What do you think you need to do to get a better result (or closer to your goal)?

APPENDIX G: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT: CLE ARTIFACTS

Protocol
Community Learning Exchange (CLE) Artifacts

Each semester for the duration of the participatory action research study, the researcher will host a Community Learning Exchange on a topic related to the research questions in the participatory action research (PAR) project. At the CLE, the researcher will collect and analyze artifacts that respond to the specific questions listed below. The researcher will collect qualitative data based on the activities in which the participants engage at the CLE. The data will be in the form of posters and notes that participants write and drawings that participants make in response to prompts related to the research questions.

Participants will include the Co-Practitioner Researchers and other participants who sign consent forms.

Date of CLEs: Fall 2021/Spring 2022

Number of Participants: 20 – 100 persons

Purpose of CLE:
I am doing a study on culturally responsive international school leadership. School leaders face multiple equity dilemmas related to student outcomes, staff development, and parent communication. Support space for leaders anchored in culturally responsive theory will strengthen the leadership practices of the team in service to the school community. In addition, through Participatory Action Research and Community Learning Exchanges, the leadership team will understand community hopes and needs in realizing the school's strategic plan.

Questions for Data Collection:
Overarching Research Question:

"How do international school leaders build leadership capacity to support culturally responsive school practices?"

The research questions are:

1. To what extent do school leaders demonstrate an understanding of themselves as culturally responsive leaders?
2. To what extent does active engagement in professional learning about culturally responsive knowledge and practices influence school leaders' ability to enact culturally responsive knowledge and practices?

3. To what extent does a culturally responsive leadership team co-create culturally responsive learning practices and processes with community members?
4. How do I develop as a school leader in supporting other leaders' culturally responsive knowledge and practices?

Sample CLE Questions:

- How has KAS prepared students for college in the US? Academically and culturally? Where are the gaps?
- What has been the student/adult experience at KAS based on your identity and culture?
- What is one essential message community members would share with faculty and leadership at KAS to support students as they leave Taiwan and go abroad?
- What does it mean for a Taiwanese student to attend KAS/an American School?
- What are the benefits and challenges of attending KAS (in terms of Taiwanese identity)?
- Do Taiwanese students lose something or gain something by being at a non-local school?
- In what ways does KAS enhance or diminish Taiwanese identity?
- In what ways does KAS center or empower Taiwanese identity?
- To what extent does the KAS classroom experience inform student identity?

APPENDIX H: SAMPLE CPR TEAM MEETING AGENDA

Co-Practitioner Team Agenda

Culturally Responsive Leadership

Sunday, October 17, 2021, 12 pm

"Leadership like a participatory art form is fluid, flexible, and relational. Community leaders emerge situationally and temporarily to meet the challenges of the day."

-Manette Benham

"Leadership is validated and uniformly informed in our communities, by the invisibility of things that are associated with leadership in mainstream communities. Degrees, lists of achievements, lists of high-powered jobs, the wearing of power suits are nothing. What counts is how much we give to our communities. This leadership can be given in various forms. You can be an artist, a diplomat, a storyteller, an auntie, a grandmother, and a sister."

- Rayana Green

A community learning exchange is an opportunity for people in the local context to collaborate and engage in reciprocal learning about a topic/goal of common interest. Community Learning Exchanges are based on five principles or axioms.

1. **Learning and leading are dynamic social processes.**
2. **Conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes.**
3. **The people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns.**
4. **Crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational processes.**
5. **Hope and change are built on the assets and dreams of locals and their communities.**

Learning Outcomes	Agreements
Develop a shared understanding of Equity Leadership and start to apply it to our work	• Speak your truth • Equity of Voice • Stay Curious

Pre-Assignment	**Bring a definition of what it means to be culturally responsive, based on your own experience or research**	
Time	**Activity**	**Protocol**
Noon	**Welcome and Intro / Framing** **Dynamic Mindfulness** - Thankfulness, good thoughts for someone else, one thing you want to do today. The Focus of Practice	Post it- if you hear something you don't want to forget, write it down!
	Personal Narrative and rationale for the PN in every meeting Journey Line: What are the moments that led you to leadership or defined who you are as a leader? Share out.	ECU Protocol x/y axis Time/Impact
	Equity Stances Activity Three levels of text protocol How does your learning apply to KAS?	Equity Stance Protocol from SRI Colored post its
1:30 pm	**Debrief, next steps, and Appreciations**, celebrations, and affirmations: gratitude as an antidote to anger and fear	

APPENDIX I: FINDINGS

Finding	Theme	Categories (n=4)	Codes	Cycle One (instances)	Cycle Two (instances)	All Cycles (instances)
Claim: Experiential conditions for reflection support equity in action (280 instances)	Generative and reciprocal collective leadership experiences (67%)	**Strengthened Understanding of Equity** (Conversations About Equity) (36%)	Resources and Tools (26%)	(49)	(24)	(73)
			Supportive Learning Conversations (10%)	(12)	(15)	(27)
		Critical Self-Examination/ (Self-Awareness & Leaders' Past Experiences) (31%)	Leadership Identity (18%)	(9)	(24)	(33)
			How I Affect Others (6%)	(4)	(14)	(18)
			Memories (6%)	(18)	--	(18)
			Social / Cultural (6%)	(18)	--	(18)
	Collective leadership in action (33%)	**Equity Vision in Action** (25%)	Key Moments (in Leadership) (11%)	(31)	--	(31)
			Connecting Past to Present (6%)	(16)	--	(16)
			Building Equitable Systems (5%)	--	(15)	(15)
			Developing Equitable Hiring Practices (3%)	--	(9)	(9)
		Sustainability (8%)	Building Equity Capacity (5%)	--	(14)	(14)
			Empowering Others (3%)	--	(8)	(8)
			(Being Part of the CPR Team)		(3)	(9)

Note:

1. Percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number
2. The categories that are within the parenthesis mark indicate that the titles from PAR Cycle One are tethered with PAR Cycle Two

All PAR Cycles: *Findings from themes, categories, and codes. Experiential conditions for reflection support equity in action*
August 2021 to June 2022